

THE MIRROR

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K u n s a n g a r - 2 0 0 1



By Lynn Geary

On the way to Russia I became for several hours the kind of passenger other passengers tell horror stories about. "And there was this woman who coughed and sneezed and blew her nose for the entire journey. It was disgusting!" The coughs, sneezes and runny nose (which had come upon me in the last days before leaving Australia) and I all arrived on time at the Sheremetyevo Airport after thirty hours and then made a slow procession through passport control and customs. Suddenly amidst the unfamiliar language and the swirl of people there was a piece of paper with my name, and above it the smiling welcoming faces of Anna and Misha.

They were also meeting Rosa who arrived just a little while later and then we were driving through the outskirts of Moscow with Misha saying cheerfully (apropos of seat belts) "In Russia everyone is responsible for their own lives", as he negotiated with great aplomb the twin hazards of Russian drivers and the winter-damaged Russian roads. Away from Moscow we went swiftly through villages and into the woods and through the gate into Kunsangar, and immediately into the newly constructed Vajra Hall, filled with practitioners because there was a Ganapuja. I was so very happy to enter this mandala and

almost speechless with joy to see and speak with Rinpoche. Then I was ushered into the dorm and inducted into all its workings by Lena - our commandant extraordinaire.

Over the next days impressions crowded in, flavored with jet-lag and incomprehension of even the written word. Pine trees and long evening light, cold weather ("very unusual for June"), students of S.M.S. attending teachings or studying for first or second level exams, the newly painted dance mandalas in the Vajra Hall, the mosquitoes - so numerous that opening the mouth created a serious risk of suffocation - the newly developed catering area producing three meals a day. And buildings everywhere - dormitory blocks, little houses, boiler house, pump house, and one huge incomplete building with a half-finished swimming pool in the lower level. Here and there was also rusty playground equipment and statues of Russian youth - ghostly reminders that this was once a summer camp for children.

And all the while the community of Kunsangar working tirelessly to maintain the program of exams and teachings and to prepare for the big retreat, and offering kindness and welcome to their somewhat disoriented Aussie Vajra sister.

When it was my turn to do a S.M.S. exam I was confronted yet again with my own ignorance and distraction and with the great preciousness of the Santi Maha Sangha and the boundless compassion and generosity of our Master in giving us these teachings. In the days after the exam Rinpoche gave teachings in the morning, and Jim and Adriano explained practices and answered questions with great patience and good humor in the afternoons and on countless other occasions as students from so many distant places asked for help in understanding texts and practices. Amongst the travelers at Kunsangar were some who had been to Namgyalgar at different times. Meeting them again, and meeting for the first time so many practitioners from so many places strengthened the awareness of this Dzogchen Community as truly international. All the colors and flavors of the different cultures were there, and never more apparent than when thirty or more of us were crowded into a six-bed room to sing and to listen to the glorious, soulful Russian songs, the cheeky Italian, the bluesy American.

"...and didn't it rain children." (unusual for this time of the year.) while in the big open field strange flowers appeared - the brilliantly colored canopies in preparation for

the retreat. "...rain all the time." So Rinpoche lead us in the practice of Serkyem and the rain finished as hundreds and hundreds of people arrived. For a person familiar with the preparation for retreats in Namgyalgar for maybe 230 people, this was an awe-inspiring organizational task. How did they do it? Not understanding the language meant that I could experience the results of collaboration while being ignorant of the details. I noticed the fantastic sound-system, the careful security, the long hours put in by workers in the office and shop, meetings and discussions, people working all the time, and the great crowd of people arriving each morning to attend the teachings.

Rinpoche taught us about the purpose and significance of such a retreat, what it means to become a student, to have a root master; the importance of working with circumstances, of our behavior towards each other in the community and of the community in the local area - understanding and paying respect to the different dimensions. He explained and gave transmission of Guru Yoga and Shitro, gave the

lung of many other practices and taught us how to integrate the teachings in our daily lives with Guru Yoga and the practice of night.

Then the crowds melted away, the colored canopies disappeared and a rhythm of early morning practice, dance courses, and study developed. There was time for some conversations with members of the Gakyil, now able to rest a little, and for a flying visit to Moscow. Rinpoche walked through the Gar to identify the places for retreat huts and indicated the future development for the big unfinished building - including the completion of the swimming pool - clarifying the vision for the next phase of development.

As Rinpoche returned to his house I stepped forward and said good-bye - and only the knowledge that I was headed to Merigar stopped me from wailing.

Terrible Tuesday

New York City

September 11th, 2001

"What we can do to help these poor people who died is through practice." Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

The practitioners of the International Dzogchen Community responded quickly to the terrible tragedy of September 11th, in New York City, with Shitro practice to assist the thousands of innocent people who died. Chögyal Namkhai Norbu had also recommended Shitro practice.

Here in Conway, at Tsegialgar, we received the news that morning as did most of the rest of planet, with great shock and horror and then tremendous sadness. Some of the New York Community members were direct witnesses, some living near by assisted rescue workers, and one was even miraculously rescued from under one of the towers which fell down on an underground structure called the Winter Garden where she was locking up her bicycle that morning.

We found a television in the neighborhood which had 24 hour news access and after the initial impact some of us went there to watch the terrible image over and over together to help us assimilate the unbelievable, unacceptable event and also to be together in our fear and grief. Numb. We were numb.

What can one say about the unexpected, calculated, unfathomable terror that occurred on one beautiful September morning in New York City?

We can say that there is nothing unexpected in samsara. There is no concrete, permanent reality. Suffering is the nature of our relative

existence. Maybe we can say that this is a deeply important teaching, important in the understanding of the value of the vast numbers of all innocent lives lost everywhere and families devastated in the blink of an eye, and important in the value of the enormous teaching on impermanence: from one moment to the next normal life in New York City on a golden autumn day going to work was instantaneously transformed into hell on earth.

There are no guarantees in samsara. That is its nature and this is what drives us to practice, to somehow fathom the confounding nature of our perceived reality from our limited vision by opening that vision. And to offer what assistance we can from our understanding and methods.

by Naomi Zeitz

NAMKHAIR NORBU RINPOCHE'S SCHEDULE 2001-2002

To all people who were planning to attend the December Retreat in Margarita Island in Venezuela:

Please be advised that Rinpoche has informed us that he has decided to hold the coming Christmas and Longde Retreats, in Tashigar South (Argentina), instead of in Margarita Island, Venezuela (Tashigar North).

He will stay in Venezuela until December, at which time he will leave for Argentina. Rinpoche will return to Margarita in January. We will be posting all relevant information, regarding Margarita and planned 2002 activities, on our WEB page, to be presented shortly. We trust that everyone concerned will be able to make the necessary changes in their travel arrangements.

Hugo Groening

For the Venezuelan Gakyil and Tashigar North Committee

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu's Schedule 2001 - 2002

October 7th
Leave for Margarita Island

TASHIGAR, ARGENTINA
Christmas Retreat
December 26th, 2001 - January 2nd, 2002

(Updates for the schedule of 2002 TBA)

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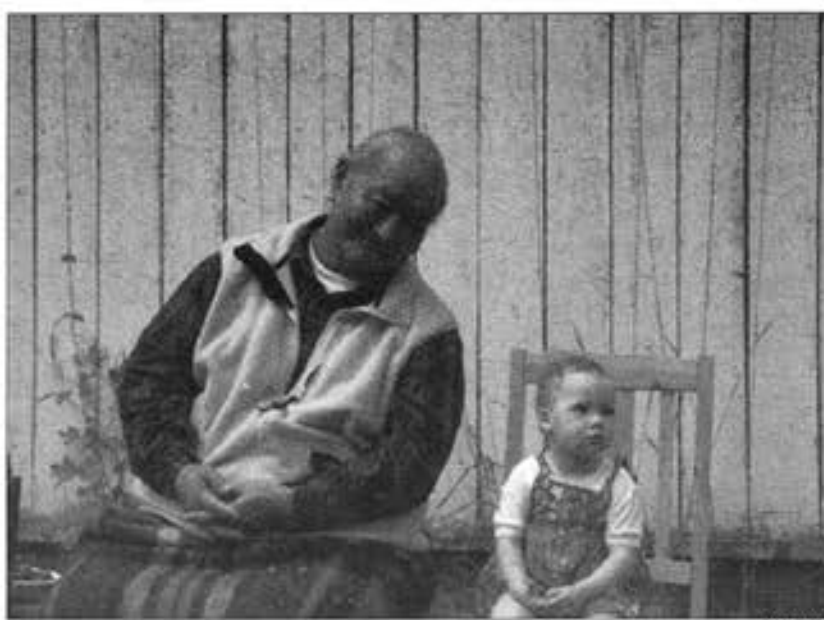


Welcome to everyone, particularly to people who have traveled a long distance. I hope you enjoy it here and things go well. Merigar is a very nice place, but sometimes it is not so comfortable - parking places, the road, etc. Knowing this, you can try and be aware. It's very important that when we do a retreat we can do it without problems. That is not only for a retreat, but in general. When we have no problems and do something successfully, then we enjoy. So it depends on us; we must be aware and this depends on our practice.

Also, everyone can try and feel a little at home here at Merigar. Of course, if it's your first time here, you will feel a little strange because people who live here meet every day, work together, know each other and have many things to say. If someone is coming for the first time they might feel a little different. So it's important that we know that this is a place for Dzogchen practitioners, and we are practitioners. So for that reason you must feel that this is your home. It doesn't mean you always live here. Maybe when you finish the retreat you go back to your home where you work and live, but it's important that this place is always like a base of our teaching and practice for you. When you are here you can feel it's your home, and when you go away you have contact and you know and remember that.

For practitioners it is very important that we know time and how our condition is. We think there is a long retreat for ten days, it seems long, but it is nothing. Ten days pass very quickly. Not only ten days, but our lives pass very quickly. We know that and for this short time we live on this earth and do our best to collaborate with each other; doing practice together so that we have a meaningful life. Particularly practitioners must be aware about this. Some people have an idea that their lives seem very long, but nobody knows what it means, "all my life". "All my life" can be also one week, one month, maybe one year, or maybe some years more. That is not only for old people but also for young people, it's the same. We live in circumstances and in circumstances there are many things, also things which are negative for our lives. It is not necessary that we concentrate on it, but we know that and we are aware. Knowing everything is related to circumstances is something very useful for our lives. Concentrating on problems sometimes creates problems because we are more pessimistic. It doesn't help. Being aware, which means knowing how the situation is in this case, we can work with the circumstances.

You already know, and particularly older students remember, that I always ask people and advise people to please work with circumstances. This is what we teach in the Dzogchen teachings. Why? Because circumstances change everyday - today is not tomorrow, tomorrow is not the day after tomorrow, we always have different situations, so if we know how the situation is and we know how to work with it, we don't have many problems. We don't always need to write, call or speak with the teacher



Working with Circumstances

Teaching at Merigar

August 10th, 2001

when we have some problem. We do not need to be like a small baby with the mother. Through the teaching we learn that we become more responsible for ourselves.

We can be responsible for ourselves if we know how to work with circumstances. If we don't know how to work with circumstances and we think, "Now I am independent, I am autonomous", then it's not true. So it is very important that we learn that and that's why in the Dzogchen teachings we say that we remember to not always be distracted. Not distracted means being present and being present means being aware. If we are aware when we have problems, like we feel fear or there are some problems, we understand how it is. We can also easily understand what the cause of that is. These are some very important things.

We should do this practice during the retreat. That's why I say to try to be aware of the circumstances. When we follow the teachings we must be aware, not only thinking, "Now I am in front of the teacher and the teacher is giving some teachings. I listen to what the teacher says about how I should sit and how I should do the visualization". These are not the main teachings; these are secondary teachings. The teacher teaches something more important than that, but many people don't notice it. If the teacher says, "Now we will use a technique of sitting practice", for example, then everybody is more attentive. You can learn hundreds and millions of these kinds of teachings. These kinds of teachings never end. For that reason they are all secondary things. When you learn the teaching from a teacher, particularly if you are learning Dzogchen teaching, then you are not only thinking how to do practice, how to sing, how to use mudra and mantra, etc. You couldn't have much benefit even if you learn these things. If you learned well then maybe you can do a sitting practice, but your life is not only sitting practice. After sitting practice you have your ordinary life. More important is that you are trying to be in your real dimension. This is what a teacher teaches. Then you think, "I should be in my real dimension but how is my real dimension, how can I be in that state?" You can have a different idea and when the teacher gives the teaching precisely, you can understand better.

First of all, it is very important when we follow the teaching that we remember why we are following the teaching. Why are we interested in the teaching? Some people think, "Well, my friend is following the teaching, so I am also interested". This is not a real reason. The real reason is that we need the teaching and knowledge because we have problems. Otherwise we would just go to the beach in these days and enjoy them. If we go to the beach and spend one week there, one week is finished then all is finished. We have not obtained anything; we only enjoyed a little. But when we go back to our home and work, the situation is the same. If we go to do a retreat, we learn just a little about how we can get in our real condition and why we need that.

I will give you a very simple example. Sometimes, for example, in a circumstance there are many negativities. If we feel something negative, agitated with our energy level or our physical level, if we have this kind of problem, what do we do? We have no idea of how to overcome this particularly if we have some problem of the energy level - if we go to the doctor and ask the doctor to check us and we tell the doctor that we have some problem, the doctor checks everything and says, "Oh you are very healthy and have no problem." If the doctor says we have no problem and we still feel something, it doesn't help very much. In this case what do you do? You think, "Oh I have some problem with my energy level, and the doctor doesn't understand". Then you go to a teacher who has a little idea or experience of energy and say, "Oh, please teacher help me, I have this kind of problem." The teacher cannot do a kind of miracle. The teacher knows your energy is disordered and gives you some method, some breathing exercise, or movement exercise to coordinate your energy. You try and do that practice. You spend one, two or three days doing that practice and then you feel better. You feel happy also, but it is not sufficient because you are living in circumstance.

Today you coordinate your energy and you have no problem. Maybe after two or three days you have this problem again because your circumstance is always going ahead in time. That is relative with your physical body and your energy. If you are doing this practice everyday then maybe you can have

some benefit. If you are not, then you always have this problem. Why do you have this kind of problem? Because you are not being in your real nature. You have dualistic vision, you think, "I am here and the problem is there". I received this problem and it disturbed me.

As long as we are living with this dualistic vision then we will always have this kind of problem. If we need really, definitively, to overcome this problem, then we must have such method, capacity or understanding to go beyond dualistic vision. That's why we need to do meditation and through meditation try to get into our real condition. Until we have that kind of realization we are always in samsara. Samsara is a production of our karma. As long as we have karma and we are in samsara, then there are always these kinds of problems. That is why we are interested in the teaching, so it's very important we know why we are interested in the teachings. Even if we follow the teachings we need to find out how to overcome these problems.

Discovering Your Dzogchen

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

Kunsangar, Russia

June 15th, 2001

Good evening everybody. Welcome to this retreat. I know that many people have traveled long distances, which means making a sacrifice, so when we make a sacrifice it needs to have sense. We have an idea of going to a retreat, but then when we are actually at the retreat it depends - sometimes we do a very simple retreat, sometimes we learn something, and sometimes we only have an idea we did a retreat. We try and do our best, which means that if you sacrifice it has benefit. So in this retreat, for some days, we will try and do different things in our program, day by day. We will go ahead that way, because in the Dzogchen teaching we have a principle of working with circumstances and we don't know all of our circumstances, so we should go ahead day by day.

When we do a retreat, first of all, we must observe ourselves a little. Our effort to do retreat must become something useful, and it becomes useful only if we are doing something more concrete; and concrete not only in a formal way by studying or listening or doing something. In general we say, "Oh, we want to listen to a teaching from a teacher". Many people have an idea that the teaching is a kind of a blessing, particularly if we do some rituals. People are satisfied, but then something concrete doesn't remain after. That means that we are not proceeding in a concrete way, so to proceed in a concrete way we must observe ourselves a little. We must think a little, "Why am I interested to do a retreat? What is the reason I am

learning and following this teaching?" Then there is a very precise idea in a real sense.

When we discover that and work concretely, then we also have concrete benefit. That means, for example, that we are not only learning a kind of technique of practice or a kind of analysis. We live in samsara and live concrete lives, so the teaching must be useful for our lives. Of course, if we believe that we have future lives, then we still need more. But even in this moment for living in society, the teaching is very important. So for practitioners, old or new, there is no difference; we should all go in a concrete way.

Many people interested in Buddhist teachings are reading many books. They think they know this and that, they read this or that, etc. If we want to do a kind of collection of arguments or techniques, that is good. But if we want to have some concrete realization, it won't work this way. Even if we know only one or two things, but they correspond with something in our real condition, then it becomes really useful for everybody. For that reason it becomes really useful to observe ourselves a little. Our attitude and way of being; everything is related to the teaching.

Many people have the idea that when they learn the teaching they must learn how it should be and which kind of rules they should follow. Sometimes it is useful and we can also learn in that way, but the best way of learning is that we become responsible for ourselves and that means working with circumstance and how the situation is, where we live, where we go, everything.

For example, we are here now in this place, and in this place there are some houses, but not enough for everyone living here, so many of you also live outside and you are traveling around in this countryside. In this village people are not practitioners and they are not followers of Dzogchen teachings. You sacrificed for many days and arrived here to follow the teachings, so you already know that your situation and the situation of this village is a little different. You must be also aware of where you are and what your situation is. For example, these people are looking and they see us gathering and they want to know what we do and how we look. If our people are aware and know how the situation is and how to work with the situation, then there will not be any surprises and they won't find any strange things. But if we are not aware, and everybody or some people have strange ideas, for example, strange ways of dressing, ways of being, ways of walking, ways of doing things, and still more if someone is using alcohol or smoking, then they become even more unusual. Then the people of the village see us and what can they think? So if we observe ourselves we can understand that.

This is only the situation of this moment, but this moment is the example of all moments of our lives. Even if we are not in this village, we are somewhere on earth; there are always people with their attitudes and their way of seeing differently. That's why we must be aware of circumstances. In the Dzogchen teaching it says we

continued on next page

should always learn how to work with circumstances, so when we are here to learn and apply the teaching we should start to work that way. You try and do your best, also in this village and around here, and also when you go away, you try and do in your country that way. If we are being aware then that means we are also becoming responsible for ourselves. In that way we can also govern ourselves, and that means we are not dependent on a rule or a special system. So it is very important that in general we should learn this. People who are already doing practice are thinking, "Oh I am old practitioner, I don't care about these things". Old practitioners must be aware more than new practitioners, because old practitioners think, "I am old practitioner, I know this and that", and then they go outside of the real condition. So they must be even more careful about their attitudes and observing themselves. When we learn the teaching, the teaching is not only technique of practice. Most people concentrate on different kinds of technique. If we say, "Oh, we should sit this way and chant this kind of mantra", then everyone is careful. But there exist infinite practice techniques, and you can change and do them in different ways; that is not the aim of what you should learn.

What you should learn in the Dzogchen teaching is, we say in Dzogchen, *chig she kun drol* (*gcig shes kun grol*). That is what you should learn. *Chig she* means when you discover, when you have learned one, then you discover all. You cannot learn everything that exists in our samsara. Even if you learn for many lives, you never finish. But if you want to learn how you discover your real nature and how you can get in your real nature, then there are possibilities. Your real nature, your real condition, is relative with everything. Just like our eyes. We have two eyes and with two eyes we can see everything. If we close our eyes we can't see anything. If we want to cover all that we can see in front of us, it is impossible. But covering our two eyes is not so difficult. That is an example, by learning with our real condition we can learn everything.

You remember when you say, "We learn the Dzogchen teaching", you remember what Dzogchen means. It doesn't mean that Dzogchen is a book or a school or a

tradition of teaching. Dzogchen is our condition, and to discover our condition we need a teaching. That teaching is called Dzogchen teaching. You are learning the Dzogchen teaching to discover your Dzogchen. Then you can have a little idea of what you can do. You learn and apply this teaching and discover your real condition. Discovering your real condition is also very useful for living in society. For example, if you have some illness, to cure that illness or overcome that problem of illness, what should you do? First of all, you should discover which kind of illness you have and for that you go to a doctor. We go to a doctor because we are not expert for discovering and there is someone more skillful than ourselves. We go to a doctor and try and discover. Even if the doctor is an expert, he doesn't know immediately which kind of illness you have. To discover your illness the doctor asks you what kind of food you eat, which kind of attitude you have, and all this. From your explanation the doctor does some kind of analysis and maybe discovers what your illness is. You can understand why we go to a doctor, because we do not have this knowledge.

In the same way, we go to a teacher to learn the Dzogchen teaching. To discover our real Dzogchen. The teacher is working with you, observing your condition, and then the teacher and student work together and maybe there is a possibility to discover. When we discover we can overcome all our problems of samsara. When the doctor discovers your illness, then he gives you medicine and advice. In the same way, the teacher knows your condition and which kind of practice you need, and he can teach you some kind of technique of practice. In this case you need a technique of practice, but everyone does not need to practice in the same way. Someone might have an illness of the liver, someone has *lung*, someone has a skin problem, etc. The doctor gives you different kinds of advice and in the same way the teacher gives different kinds of teachings and advice. So you see what the teaching means, for discovering or getting in our real nature.

*transcribed and edited
by Naomi Zeitz*

Web Cast Project

Distribution and coverage of costs

Dear Gars:

I am very pleased with the results of the first experiments with the web cast projects. Many people wrote me with their appreciation and were very happy with this new possibility to remain in contact even from far away.

For this reason I would like to continue and develop this experience for the benefit of all our practitioners. In order to do so, I have decided to assign the coordination and organizational responsibilities connected with the web casts to the Shang-Shung Institute in America which has been involved with the web casts since the beginning.

In the current system each web cast has an actual cost of approximately \$1,000 and I have decided that the most appropriate solution for the coverage of this expenses will be their distribution among the Gars. Therefore, I would like to ask each Gar to forward to the Shang-Shung

Institute in America - for each web cast - the corresponding amount indicated in the table below.

- * Merigar: \$250
- * Tsegylgar: \$250
- * Namgyalgar: \$250
- * Tashigar: \$50
- * Kunsangar: \$100
- * Retreat originated web cast: \$100 + telephone costs for transmission.

If it is easier for the Gars it can be forwarded in advance the full amount of the scheduled five web casts per year I have decided to realize.

This are my instructions for the time being. If in the future there will be any change, we'll ~~change~~ how to work with the new circumstances.

Thank you all.
With many tashi delegs,
Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

Christmas Retreat with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

TASHIGAR, ARGENTINA

December 26th, 2001 - January 2nd, 2002

Congratulations to the Namkhai family!

With great joy, Yeshe, Chögyal Namkhai Norbu's son, and his wife Egle announced that they are expecting a child in June, 2002. On behalf of the International Dzogchen Community and The Mirror we send all our best wishes and congratulations to the future grandparents and parents. Even in the most difficult moments, a ray of light appears to cheer us up.

Interview with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

Vladivostok, Russia

1999

by Anna Rudneva and Luda Kislichenko

Anna & Luda: Rinpoche, how do the Gars in the Dzogchen Community get revenue for developing and surviving?

Rinpoche: There is no rule that says: "The Gar can get income in this way." But I think that we must understand what a Gar is and be interested in having a Gar. If you are interested to have a Gar, of course, the money for the Gar is related to that. For example, if you want to have a house, then somehow you need to have money to buy or rent this house; for maintaining the house you need money continually. Otherwise you can't have a house.

It's the same thing when we want to have a Gar; all the people interested are responsible. They must also be interested somehow in maintaining and developing the Gar. To maintain and develop the Gar in modern society we need money; this is the first thing. If there is no money, there is no possibility.

Then we must think in which way we can make money. Maybe there is some possibility to make money or maybe someone generously wants to offer. It depends upon the circumstances. The important thing is that everybody feels responsible, just like a family. If a family is composed of ten people, for example, and someone has more capacity, someone has less capacity, someone has a job, someone is going in a school; everybody cannot maintain and contribute in the same way, but everybody tries to do their best.

The Gar must go that way. It means that people should really think a little what a Gar is. A Gar is for all people, not for just a few people.

Particularly, when we refer to a Gar like Kunsangar, it is for all the Russian speaking people, from European countries until Vladivostok. Russia is a huge country and there are so many people. They are all interested to have a Gar. To have a Gar means to have the possibility to develop transmission, to study, to deal with the teaching; not only for today, but also for tomorrow. This is something important.

For example, today there is a teacher in the Dzogchen Community, and the teacher is working and helping. But everything is impermanent. We cannot have the same situation continually every year. We must prepare something and take responsibility. For example, with Santi Maha Sangha, we are qualifying people and can maintain the transmission. So, in this case, the Gar becomes indispensable. If people know how important the Gar is, then money is relative.

If people don't understand or are not interested to have a Gar, then, of course, it becomes very complicated and difficult. Since the beginning we are interested and have tried to have a Gar [Kunsangar]. We already have houses, land, etc. We know very well that all this is expensive and costs much money, but we have succeeded. So, now we must develop and continue, and people must somehow take responsibility. Everybody must think and reflect about this.

A & L: There is your famous saying: "lo godo, noi godiamo" (I enjoy, we enjoy). From the point of view of the ordinary mind enjoying, that depends very much on good circumstances like health, wealth, good life, and good emotions. People create these circumstances. What is the principle of your "lo godo"?

Rinpoche: "lo godo", "I enjoy" doesn't mean I enjoy drinking and smoking. People think this is joyful, it's not meant in that way. "I enjoy" means that I know what it means "to enjoy" and I also know how I can be in that state. In this case, it means that there is the possibility to enjoy. Otherwise, we always have too much dualistic vision. We are thinking, "Oh, today I'm enjoying", but then you are already falling onto the side of limitation, so tomorrow you'll have a problem. Knowing how our life is, that it's a part of our quality, of our existence, knowing this we are not limiting and not falling too much into dualistic vision. Just what it is. We are in that condition and we enjoy. If we know how to enjoy in that way, then we really can enjoy.

A&L: Could you speak a little about the function of the Gekö in the Gar and which qualities she or he must have or develop?

Rinpoche: The Gekö is actually more responsible for the Gar. Even though the Gakyil is responsible for deciding this or that, in daily life the Gekö must apply all these decisions. Therefore the Gekö becomes something important.

Firstly, the Gekö controls the place, houses, people; the Gekö is responsible for everything. Particularly, if the Gakyil and the responsables of the Dzogchen Community decide to do this or that, to bring this into daily life, the Gekö is important. The Gekö must be very much present. Sometimes the Gekö personally does things in a more limited way and then we can have problems, but if there are such kinds of problems and we are going to do some work, etc., at that moment it's better the Gakyil people or general responsables of the Community do not discuss with the Gekö. Even if the Gekö is doing something not very correct, it's better to respect him/her. Otherwise, later it becomes very complicated. Sometimes we have these kinds of problems. We have many experiences in different places. If something is wrong, not correct, then when there is a Gakyil meeting, it can be explained in a correct and very precise way. In general, everyone should pay respect to each other, the Gakyil and the Gekö, and then the Gekö really takes responsibility. Then everything goes very easily.

The qualities, since the beginning, when you choose the Gekö and the Gakyil - but particularly the Gekö - you must ask, "Do you have patience or not?" This is very important. Many people do not have much patience, they get angry with people and insult them. When such people do the job of the Gekö, it becomes a problem for the Community. The qualities of the Gekö should be: an open person who knows how to communicate with people and pays respect to the dimension of other people. Particularly they must be patient and when there are problems they know that the problems are relative and they can go ahead. Then there is no problem.

Home Sweet Home!

by Charles Wright



It was August at Merigar, and as usual, samsara was making a nuisance of itself. For several nights, meteorite showers had etched the prospect of significant events across the clear mountain skies.

There had been a near miss a week before the retreat, when Rinpoche, wielding a large pair of pruning shears, led a force of reincarnated lumberjacks on the overgrown boschetto - the grove of trees below the Gonpa.

Presumably overcome by the fumes from his hyperactive chain saw, one of the karma yogis got himself entangled in a falling tree. Both came crashing to the ground in unison, requiring a liberal application of bandages and antiseptic lotion.

As the retreat began, an overnight windstorm tore away the ornately decorated Tibetan canopy over the ASIA tent.

And now a fire was racing up the ridge towards the Gonpa and the camping grounds. Helicopters were beating overhead, informing those below to "abbandonare la zona".

At his house farther down the slope, Rinpoche was firmly resisting all entreaties from firefighters and civil authorities to abandon his zona. As the inhabitants of the camping ground frantically uprooted their tents and dragged them uphill, Rinpoche remained calmly at home, on his couch.

The calm, alas, had not extended to the Gonpa. Back there, a frantic effort was being made to save the cushions and offering bowls. They also decided to rescue all the sound equipment - wires and all - dispatching two carloads of the stuff to safety.

Given the Italian temperament, this would later prove to be a small problem. When the expected disaster failed to arise, some of the equipment went missing, and nobody remembered which car they'd put it in.

Welcome home, to Italy. You might not fully appreciate what Rinpoche actually means when he says, from time to time, that Merigar is our home. He said it again, on the first day of this retreat. Merigar is our home. It belongs to all of us. We all have responsibility for its running. Sometimes it can be an interesting experience.

For those of us who practice overseas, the images of Merigar - on postcards and posters, snapshots and amateur video - do not show the way the mountains hold each ridge and slope in their embrace.

One has no sense of the seasons. The way the snow settles in winter, providing moisture for the spring grass; the way it turns yellow in the sun, is mown for hay, and the "fieno" rolled by machines into what the Italians call balle: the way the remaining stubble browns off, the way it can flare into a "fuoco di paglia" that can move with alarming speed.

I had heard conflicting stories about the place. The Italians were disorganized. The Italians were officious. They were distant and unhelpful. They were friendly and cooperative. I was curious to find out what this alternate home of mine was like.

I had hired a car and driven up from Rome for a weekend before the retreat. Like most visitors, I stayed in one of those international hotels, so curiously

immune to any sense of place. I might not have been in Tuscany at all.

I quickly reassessed my plans. I wanted to spend more time at Merigar, but I did not want to stay in this hotel. When you go home, you do not stay in hotels. You stay with your family. With the help of my friend Andrea Di Castro, who had spent years at Merigar, but now lived near me in Australia, I looked for a temporary home with a member of the Community.

The search took me to a former farm near Pescina, high above the village of Castel del Piano. It was 20 minutes drive, much of it through forest and chestnut groves, from Arcidosso and Merigar.

I turned left down a bumpy dirt road, and found one of those rough stone farmhouses with the regulation red tile roof and grape vines. It fulfilled every dream I'd ever had about Tuscan retreats. In the hazy summer heat you could see the world dropping away below you. At dusk a flock of sheep, bells around their necks, strolled like wandering minstrels to their night quarters.

Luca Tirello and Lucia Antonelli and their infant son Emanuele, were trying to turn the place into an agriturismo - basically a bed and breakfast farm. Half the house was rented to Angelo Fontana, and there was a constant turnover in visits - a style of life the Italians call "via vai". Each night, it seemed, there was an exchange of delicious pastas and pizzas and slow-cooked meats, seafood, and biscotti and tiramisu. I had been transported to a culinary heaven.

You do not understand the Italian character until you drive on the narrow, winding country roads. My excursions to Castel del Piano and Arcidosso were challenging enough, given the fact that I was driving on what, for me, was the wrong side of the road. What really concentrated my attention, however, was the fact that the Italians regard the center line as negotiable territory. Deep into a blind turn, you'd find an oncoming vehicle just meters ahead of you, on your side of the road, demanding an urgent change of direction by both drivers. At first terrifying, it quickly got to be fun. Within a week, I was happily terrorizing other drivers in my little black Ford Fiesta.

The same sort of thing was happening in the Gonpa. It is not the Italian way to adopt a regimented attitude to personal space. It is not the Italian way to arrive early. The Italian way involves arriving with minutes to spare - perhaps even as Rinpoche is walking into the Gonpa - and improvising a seat in the most minute space.

So all the cushions have disappeared before you get there? Take one home with you. It was hot in the Gonpa, and not only from the sun. The Germans and the Anglo Saxons, whose sense of order was being routinely offended, were fuming like furnaces.

It was the perfect environment for Rinpoche's instructions on the artificial construct of I and The Other, We and the Others, from which conflict and tension arises.

There were rich pickings throughout this retreat for diligent Santi Maha Sangha students studying for the exams that followed. They could be seen stealing away, copies of The Precious Vase in hand, to study and make notes.

Meanwhile the epicureans were exploring places like the restaurant Aiolo, where the host, Ugo has cultivated a rough humor, a fertile mustache, and sublime peasant dishes.

At night time we explored the mysteries of Brunello di Montalcino, prince of chiantis, at the local wine cellars, or the Flash Bar. We studied grappa at the Osteria del Bandito in Bagnore, and bathed in one of the many hot springs.

On the hottest of days we drove to Zancona where an icy creek, with a population of tadpoles to indicate its clarity, cascades over weirs. It's so nice to be home.

WORLDWIDE TRANSMISSION PRACTICE DAY

Anniversary of Adzom Drukpa
9th Tibetan month - 25th day
Celebration at 5pm, Oddiyana time

Tuesday, November 10th, 2000

02:00	Hawaii
04:00	San Francisco, Los Angeles (US Pacific Time)
05:00	Denver (US Mountain Time)
06:00	Chicago, Mexico City (US Central Time)
07:00	Montreal, New York, Havana (US Eastern Time)
08:00	Caracas
09:00	Buenos Aires, Santiago
10:00	Sao Paulo
12:00	GMT, Dublin, London, Lisbon
13:00	Rome, Berlin, Oslo, Paris, Madrid, Amsterdam
14:00	Johannesburg, Helsinki, Athens, Jerusalem
15:00	Moscow
17:00	Oddiyana (Karachi-Pakistan)
17:30	Delhi, Bombay
17:45	Katmandu
18:00	Dacca
19:00	Bangkok
20:00	Hong Kong
21:00	Tokyo
21:30	Darwin
23:00	Sydney, Melbourne

Visionary Paintings by Dugu Choegyal Rinpoche

Tibet House, New York City
September 6th - November 2nd, 2001

Dugu Choegyal Rinpoche has an exhibition of his uniquely beautiful paintings at Tibet House, New York City, from September 6th until November 2nd, 2001. Dugu Choegyal has exhibited across Europe, North and South Americas, as well as in several Asian countries.



The paintings of Lodu Di-me, Rinpoche's student who also has some paintings in exhibition at Tibet House, have been exhibited in Switzerland, Italy, Argentina and Taiwan.

Dugu Choegyal talks about his art work:

"Art, spiritual training and meditation practice were inseparable since I was a young child in the Dugu region of Tibet. I began painting as a hobby from which I derived much inspiration and delight. During those first years in India I was very homesick and painted fond memories of earlier times.

Later I began what might be called 'spontaneous paintings'. These works are the craziness of my flowing inner energy. They manifest by themselves. With brush and color I let everything flow and move without effort and without inserting myself.

Some of the works here [in this exhibit] were painted with elements of both traditional and spontaneous methods.

The works in this exhibit differ in style and technique, but more important is what they have in common: the Buddha's vision expressed in the Tantric teachings; that everything is living light energy that includes the five wisdom colors."

Dugu Choegyal Rinpoche's Website

Announcing a website dedicated to and authorized by Dugu Choegyal Rinpoche
<http://www.dugu.org>

A Very Big Thank You! from Merigar

The organization and running of the two retreats given by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu this summer were greatly helped by the collaboration of a number of people who assisted the Gakyil and the Gekö. The retreats were organized well in advance in every detail and many practitioners volunteered to help.

In particular we would like to thank the group who introduced a new way of organizing a large Ganapuja. A heartfelt thanks to the translators, the audio and video people, the assistants, the hostesses, the parking attendants, the people in charge of the camping and the dormitory. Our gratitude also to those who took care of registration and checking registration. Several young people from the Czech Republic were very helpful in the daily running of Serkhang (Golden House) and the canteen under the direction of our cook and his helpers.

Thank you to the Vajra Dance and Yantra Yoga teachers and the practitioners who helped the 'new' people to understand the practices. A very big thank you for everyone who helped in running of the retreats by giving their collaboration!

The Gekö and Gakyil of Merigar

Merigar July & August Retreat CDs are ready!

The Mp3 CD of the July retreat in Merigar (almost 10 hours of recording in one CD) is currently available. The Master speaks in English with Italian translation.

Also included in the same CD is a 10 minutes video clip of the Master singing the Song of the Vajra. The CD can be used in all recent PC and Mac systems (as well as in Mp3 CD players and in some new DVD players) and it costs 45,000 Lit (approx. 20 USD).

The video of the whole July retreat will be available in August on four VHS PAL cassettes. The cost of the cassettes (one for each day) is 35,000 Lit, each if bought separately or 120,000 Lit, for the whole set of 4.

For placing orders and for mailing information please contact the secretary of the Shang -Shung

Institute: ssinst@amiata.net.

The Mp3 CDs of the August retreat in Merigar (almost 20 hours of recording in two CDs) is currently available. The Master speaks in English with Italian translation.

The cost is 50 Euros or approx. 100,000 Lit for the set of 2 CDs, plus mailing expenses. For those who were registered at the retreat, there is a 50% discount.

For placing orders and for mailing/payment information please contact the secretary of the Shang-Shung Institute: ssinst@amiata.net.

The Shang Shung Institute Digital Archives - Merigar

Advice for the Western Vajrayana Practitioner

Interview with Chökyi Nyima Rinpoche
June 10, 2001
Massachusetts, USA



N.21172

The Mirror: Good morning Rinpoche. You have been teaching Western students for 28 years now. What advice do you have for the Western Vajrayana student - what do you see as our strengths and weaknesses and how we might better focus our practice?

Chökyi Nyima Rinpoche: I don't see any big difference between Westerners and Easterners, they are all human beings, going the same way, but Buddha's teachings are very profound and go all the way to the depth, so therefore they are equally beneficial for both Westerners and Easterners. What I suggest is that people begin by studying to gain understanding, to reflect, and then they put that understanding into practice. In other words, our progress can be really authentic through study, reflection and practice, and become of really good quality.

It has been the tradition all the way from the time of the Buddha in India and also through the centuries in Tibet, to spend the time in studying, reflecting and practicing in a very particular way. One would go through detailed studies, like in the monastic college known as Shedra, sometimes for eight, nine or even fifteen or twenty years. Sometimes a whole lifetime would be spent studying, reflecting and debating, but at the same time the meaning should be applied to one's experience in meditation practice to insure sound understanding. This has been the tradition and it has also been the tradition that after the monastic studies were completed, one would go into a three

year retreat or after that even go to stay in caves in the mountains or other secluded places and focus one-pointedly on practice to bring forth the full accomplishment.

These days with the Dharma moving to the West it seems the situation is a little different because people are occupied with their work, responsibilities, duties and so forth, and they don't seem to be able to drop out and go to a monastery. Studies are still important though, but we need to focus on studying exactly what we practice so we have some clarity about what we are doing; that is the bare minimum. We need to clear away any doubts or uncertainty about a particular practice so we know what we are doing and continue with confidence. In order to receive teachings we need to connect with someone who is qualified, not to study with just anyone, but someone competent. We need to study with that person and then our doubts and uncertainty can be cleared away. When we have a sound understanding and we know how to practice, we can practice in an authentic way. I find it really important that we gain personal experience and through that we can feel real certainty.

Let me give you an example of the essential way of practicing the teachings we receive from the different masters we connect with. In the Tibetan tradition of Buddhism we practice the three vehicles, not only one, but all three of them together, in an indivisible and combined way. The practice that essentializes the Hinayana vehicle is to take

refuge in the three precious ones: the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha. The reason is that the confused mind all by itself does not attain liberation without taking support from an already awakened Buddha, the teachings and the companions who assist that. So once we see the value of that, from the core of our heart we place our trust in the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha. This is true whether we are practicing Hinayana, Mahayana or Vajrayana, every single sadhana always starts with taking refuge; there is almost no exception there.

Next, for Mahayana, the most important is the bodhisattva heart, called bodhichitta, and that means for the sake of all sentient beings, "I vow to take enlightenment in order to benefit them". Bodhichitta has two aspects, relative and ultimate, and the relative has two aspects, the aspiring resolve and the applied resolve. The aspiring resolve is to set our mind on it and the applied is to put it into practice through the six paramitas and so forth. In other words, it is not just for myself I am doing these practices, it is truly for the benefit of others. As Mahayana practitioners, we try to cultivate loving kindness and compassion for everyone, not just for a few. We put ourselves in others' place, we exchange ourselves with others, and we regard others as being more important than ourselves. We can measure this progress in our own daily situations: when we are able to regard others as more important than our selves, and that is not just for a few but everyone without any limitation, then we can say we truly brought forth the bodhisattva's heart. This was in the sense of relative bodhichitta. The practice of refuge and bodhichitta are the essential preparation for any kind of training. The root of liberation is taking refuge and the root of omniscient enlightenment is bodhichitta.

Then comes the main part beyond concepts. This is the very heart of Buddhist practice, which makes it unique and special. To train in a way where no focus or concepts are held in mind whatsoever, whether we call it Mahamudra, the Middle Way, or Dzogchen, essentially it's the same, to be able to be completely awake without conceptualizing. Mahamudra calls this the original, coemergent wakefulness or ordinary mind, the Middle Way calls it profound emptiness devoid of all constructs and Dzogchen call it self-existing awareness, the heart of all Buddhas. That is what we train in. There is a very good reason for training that way, and that is because everything, from the aggregate of form all the way up to complete omniscient enlightenment, is by nature, devoid of true existence, and in the state of forming no concepts we are actually facing that fact. So training in this is the most profound and most important.

Now, for the conclusion of any practice we do, we dedicate the merit, and make aspirations. Dedicating the merit requires that we actually did some practice ourselves and then we can

share what we did with other sentient beings. Making aspirations is to imitate the great wishes other enlightened beings have formed. Usually we take the example of Manjushri and the bodhisattva Samantabhadra, who profoundly made the most perfect aspirations, so we use the same kind of aspirations.

When we embrace any kind of practice with these three excellences - the excellent preparation of refuge and bodhichitta, the excellent main part beyond concepts, and the excellent conclusion of dedication and aspiration, we ensure that our practice, even though it is little, becomes authentic, genuine and extremely effective. This is important, especially if one has only a little time.

We may practice a lot but if we don't saturate our practice with these principles, just saying the prayers and go through the motions, accumulating numbers and so forth, it doesn't really go to the core of our heart, to the marrow of our bones. As this is so important, I would like you to give these principles special emphasis. Put your whole heart into the practice, not just your lips and your tongue. Do so from the bottom of your heart, in a way that is truly authentic, in which you are really present, and you will always be covering the most profound key points in whatever you do. Even if you practice only for a little while this insures you have progress immediately. Otherwise we may look back and say we have practiced for so many years now but what really happened? Not that much. Why? Because we didn't put complete sincerity into our practice. This I consider one of the most important points.

Westerners are usually well educated and intelligent, they have sharp minds, and when they look at the Dharma teachings, they immediately, because of the habit of instant gratification and that things happen automatically, immediately, they look for what is the highest view, what is the most effective. "All right! Dzogchen!" Mahamudra! Vajrayana! I'm told this is the most effective, the highest. That's what I want. I will just grab it right now." This may be very clever and intelligent, but we must look at what is practical and whether it is realistic, because when a child begins in school he usually starts with ABC and not with his Ph.D. paper, and there is good reason for that. We may be better served by the pragmatic way of going about things.

Of course we need to realize the Buddha mind, which is the view of Mahamudra and Dzogchen, there's no question about that. From the omniscient state of enlightenment the Buddha perceives the conducive factors of being able to do so, and what prevents it. The Buddha's teachings are meant to be kind, and they are meant for people to use because that's what they need. We shouldn't belittle any aspect of the Buddha's teachings, just because it doesn't seem to be instant enough. Rather, when we look at the four mind-changings, ngöndro, the preliminary practices, the mind

training, development stage and completion stage and so forth, all of these are especially designed to remove what prevents the natural state and to make it more easily realized. As you go through these trainings you will notice that actually they work. Don't belittle mind training, the four mind changings, and ngöndro; they're very effective. Please keep this in mind all of you.

The Mirror: We in the West, at least in America, have become aware of the escalating violence in our country and the apparent decline in altruistic feeling and behavior; it seems that we are more self-interested and violent and less compassionate. Do you have any insight or advice for the American practitioner regarding this problem?

Chökyi Nyima Rinpoche: I don't consider this specifically an American problem. It happens everywhere in the world at present. We need to cultivate the opposite of that, we need to develop more loving kindness and compassion, and reduce our selfishness and selfish tendencies; that is the only way to have peace and harmony among human beings. There doesn't seem to be another way. Selfishness when given free reins, which is often the case, creates disharmony, breaks peace and destroys, and makes even war among countries. Not just among families and neighbors, but on a large scale which can be extremely dangerous. So we need to put more emphasis on developing the good heart, the good will, first between two people and then on a larger and larger scale. That is very important.

I'm not specifically speaking from a spiritual point of view here. This is just a common understanding among all human beings, that if one is interested in hurting others it's not nice and if one is helpful it's nice. Everyone agrees that this is what we all need. If you are Buddhist, or have a religion, it is called a virtue, a specific spiritual quality. And if you are not a spiritual person, it's just called being nice. Don't be unpleasant and nasty, be the opposite. It's what we all need.

Whoever follows these basic principles is in harmony with the Buddha's teachings. Whether they're Buddhist or not, religious or free thinkers, it doesn't matter. If we don't follow these basic principles, we cause disharmony and destroy peace. So we as Buddhists, especially, should take it upon ourselves and see that it is our responsibility to be less selfish, to care more for others, this I consider extremely important.

The Mirror: That is very clear. Thank you Rinpoche.



2 0 0 1 Merigar's Twenty Years

Twenty years have passed since Chögyal Namkhai Norbu founded Merigar on the slopes of Mount Amiata in Tuscany, Italy. Twenty years that have seen a great deal of change and growth within the Gar. To commemorate this special occasion a day of festivities was organized on July 5th, a moment to greet old friends, meet new ones and look forward with enthusiasm to the next twenty years in the young life of the Gar.

Among the many guests that day, Merigar was particularly honored and happy to host representatives of the four Gars - Lynn Geary from Namgyalgar, Australia, Adriana Battisti from Tashigar, Argentina, Grisha Mokhin from Kunsangar, Russia, and Lauri Denyer from Tsegialgar, USA. A heartfelt thanks for your gifts and your presence! Other guests included members of ASIA, the Istituto Shang Shung, Edizioni Shang Shung, as well as the local authorities in the person of the Mayor of Arcidosso and the Minister of Culture for Grosseto Province. The opening ceremony took place in the Gonpa where Chögyal Namkhai Norbu gave the introductory speech followed by the Mayor who spoke about the growing friendship and collaboration that had been established between the Community and the territory over the years. The Minister of Culture delivered a letter to Rinpoche (reprinted below) from the President of the Province who had not been able to attend the event.

The formalities over, a lively picnic was held on the lawn behind the Serkhang (Golden House) for the public while the special guests lunched on the new patio on the other side of the house. At this time many of those present observed a rainbow appear unexpectedly around the sun - a most auspicious sign!

During the afternoon the guests were taken around the Gar to visit the Stupa and the Gonpa while in the evening the Drammamundi theatrical group - all Community people - presented an edited version of "The Life of Pema Woobar", a fable cum epic tale complete with masks and ethnic songs and music to the great and enthusiastic joy of their audience. Everyone who participat-

ed in this very special day expressed their hope to meet again in the future to celebrate the Gar in an atmosphere of harmony and peace.

The following article about the 20 years festivities at Merigar appeared in the "Tirreno", an Italian daily newspaper, on July 5th.

Arcidosso. Twenty years have gone by since the Cultural Association of the Dzogchen Community made its home on the territory of Arcidosso to become a significant and fully integrated presence. The Dzogchen Community is made up of a group of people who have gathered spontaneously around Prof. Namkhai Norbu, previously professor of Tibetan and Mongolian language at the University of Oriental Languages in Naples. An internationally renowned scholar and researcher of the ancient Tibetan culture, Prof. Namkhai is also a holder of precious spiritual teachings which he has taught with dedication around the world for many years.

It is to him that we owe not only the existence of the Community but also several organizations connected with it such as ASIA which for years has been involved in programs of long distance adoption of Tibetan children and in numerous projects which include among others the construction of schools and hospitals in various areas of Tibet. The Shang-Shung International Institute for Tibetan Studies was founded over ten years ago and inaugurated by the Dalai Lama during his visit to Merigar in 1990. Then there is the Shang-Shung publishing house and Coabit, an agricultural cooperative made up of members of the Community.

Over the years numerous initiatives have been undertaken by the Community, many of them at the international level, activities which have involved and been supported by the local authorities and which have brought about even closer links between the Community, the local population and various public bodies.

The Dzogchen Community celebrated their twenty years on Mount Amiata with a great happening, inviting numerous representatives from various departments of local, provincial and regional government, members of the Dzogchen Community and other

authorities. The program began in the Gonpa at Merigar with a public talk followed by a guided visit to the Gonpa and the Stupa, then a comic-acrobatic show for children, and a theatrical performance, "The Life of Pema Woobar" by the Drammamundi company with artists from the Dzogchen Community. The local population was invited to the event emphasizing how rooted the Community has become in this area and the benevolent attitude extended by the local authorities and population to the numerous sympathizers and members of the Community over the years.



Drammamundi



Drammamundi



Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, the Mayor of Arcidosso (to his right) and other guests

A translation of the letter from the President of the Province of Grosseto to Chögyal Namkhai Norbu on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of Merigar

Grosseto, July 5, 2001

In the history of a territory, twenty years is a brief period a time, an interlude within the centuries. In the lifetime of man, however, it is an important length of time that makes its mark, leaves memories and transforms.

The anniversary of the first twenty years of Merigar in Grosseto Province gives me the opportunity to thank the Community, first of all, for choosing this place and for being chosen by many fellow citizens. This meeting has not been an accident. For centuries pilgrims have crossed our land. Many of them have remained and found the place they were looking for in a valley, a wood or at the peak of a mountain.

Merigar is a special place to stop.

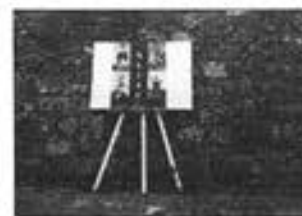
I like to think that Grosseto Province has been chosen as a place

in which people can search for their freedom. The energy to bring to life a place such as the Merigar Community is, I feel, based on the opportunity offered by members of the Community to undertake a path of individual and collective research through their awareness. The Dzogchen Community has made this journey within the "diversity" of Merigar without, however, keeping itself separate from the rest of the population. For this reason, your "first" twenty years have been a meaningful period for our area.

"Thought" transforms, enriches and makes a territory vital. I am very sorry that I will not be able to accept your kind invitation [to attend the 20 year festivities] because of unavoidable commitments. I would have very much liked to have been with you and meet the founder of your Community, Prof. Chögyal Namkhai Norbu.

I send my apologies, kindest regards and all best wishes that we will be able to meet on another occasion.

Lio Scheggi



The ASIAE Exhibition of Photographs

Martine Franck, John Stewart and Fosco Maraini

From August 5th to 31st an exhibition of photographs by three internationally renowned photographers - Martine Franck, John Stewart and Fosco Maraini - was presented at the Aldobrandescan Castle of Arcidosso, near Merigar. The exhibition was organized by the Arcidosso Department of Culture in collaboration with the "Porto Franco" project of Tuscany, Grosseto Province, Rossi & Rossi (London), John Stewart, the Gabinetto G.P. Vieusseux of Florence, the M.A.F.O.S.-ICCD Museum of Rome, the Istituto Shang-Shung and the Indo-Roman Collection, Rome-London. The curator was Filippo Salviati.

The focus of the event was on East Asian religions with a particular emphasis on Tibet. In the section dedicated to Martine Franck's work there were a number of striking portraits of young Tibetan

tulkus with their teachers taken in the monasteries in India and Nepal where the Tibetan communities in exile are located. These works had already been shown in London at the Rossi & Rossi Gallery in November 2000 and Tibetan House, New York in March 2001 under the title "Tibetan tulkus, images of continuity".

John Stewart's photographs were taken at the end of the 1980s during his travels in parts of Tibet that were closed to foreigners at the time. They will be published in a book shortly and were presented at the exhibition as a world premiere. Fosco Maraini's photographs were taken in 1947 during his travels with the famous Italian Tibetologist Giuseppe Tucci during his explorations of the "Roof of the World". The photographs of Tibet were on loan by the Shang-Shung Institute of Tibetan Studies.

In addition there were photographs on display from the Museum of Historical Photography in Rome of landscapes of Sikkim, Ladakh and the Hindu-kush mountain range taken by Italian travelers to these regions in the late 19th and early 20th century.

The web site of the exhibition can be visited at: www.asiae2001.org



the vajra dance interview with ans swart about the painting of the large mandala

Ans Swart, an artist and Community member from Amsterdam, Netherlands, has made a painting of the large Vajra Dance Mandala. Postcards of this painting are now available from Shang Shung Editions in Italy. (See below for details.)

Here is a small interview with Ans about the inspiration for this painting and some details about the large Mandala.

The Mirror: Why did you decide to paint the large mandala?

Ans: I had already painted the small Mandala and made a postcard which is available through Shang Shung Editions, but I wanted to see the large Mandala. I had shown Rinpoche my other paintings based on the Six Lokas and he agreed that I could paint the large Mandala.

M: How did you discover what to

paint, the details and measurements, and how did you execute it?

A: I received the information mainly from Prima Mai and the rest from Merigar. I painted by hand on paper with acrylic paint. The original, which is 70 by 70 centimeters, was given to Rinpoche. The Dutch Community offered to print the postcards which are now available through Shang Shung Editions. We have also discovered that people would like posters of the large Mandala, so we hope these will be available in the future.

M: Can you describe the large Mandala?

A: Firstly, for each of the three Mandalas, small, medium and large, there are three sizes. The small one represents the Earth, the medium the Solar System and the large the Universe.

In the large Mandala there are

twenty-one thighs enclosed by a ring of fire. I have heard that when we dance on this large Mandala, musicians are included and they dance on the outside. It also includes the five elements as do all the Mandalas. The actual Mandala is 20 meters in diameter, so it is very big.

I used a computer for the postcard to make it more precise and there is a yellow circle around the Mandala to make it more brilliant next to the blue color.

The postcards are now available from Shang Shung Editions:

*Shang Shung Edizioni, 58031 Arcidosso, GR, Italy.
Tel: 0564 966039*

*Email: ssed@amata.net
If anyone is interested to donate to the cost of making posters please contact the Dutch Community at:
Email: aussywart@dds.nl*

Goma Devi Thangka

The Shang-Shung Institute in America is currently 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 turn is related to the "Longsel Nyingthig" 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, to Guyajana, the joyous dark blue Dakini which represents the inner form of Simhamukha, to Garab Dorje, the Master who introduced the knowledge of Dzogchen into our world, and then to Laskyi Wangmo, Queen of Karma. The main figure will be Princess Goma Devi, who is one of the ancient 21 Semde masters. She sits in royal splendor appearing like a Tara. She is adorned with all of the 13 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, USA, or wired into the Institute's bank account. For further information, please contact the Institute through Jacqueline Gens at
Tel: 802 254 9114 or
Email: jgens@sover.net*



Vajra Dance Costume

Vajra Dance Courses & Practice Retreats Around the World

OCTOBER & NOVEMBER, 2001

RUSSIA

The Russian Community is happy to announce a course of Dance of the Song of Vajra in Kunsangar with Adriana dal Borgo. October 4th - 14th and November 1st - 4th (from October 19th until October 29th, Adriana will be giving a course in Saint-Petersburg). The price is \$45 US with a discount for Dzogchen Community members.

For further information please contact

Kunsangar
<kunsang@gar.legko.ru>

SWITZERLAND

The Swiss Community is very happy to announce a course of the Dance of the Liberation of the Six Lokas for beginners in Geneva. October 26th-28th, 2001 with Prima Mai
Cost of the course: 200CHF with discounts for members.

For further details and registration please contact:

Monique Leguen
Tel: 0041 22 797 37 21
Email: leguen@infomaniak.ch

FRANCE

The French Community is happy to announce a course of Dance of the Song of Vajra (first part). October 27th - November 3rd, 2001
Bedarieux near Montpellier with Stoffelina Verdonk
Cost: 1500 FF with a discount for members.

For further information please contact:

Pascale Dhavé
Tel: +33 (0)4 67 23 02 16
Email: pascale.dhave@wanadoo.fr

LATVIA

Riga (Latvia) Dzogchen community is planning to organize a Vajra Dance retreat with Adriana del Borgo on November 8th - 11th, 2001. Venue: Riga, the capital of Latvia, pearl of the Baltics, has celebrated its 800 year anniversary this year! Program:
November 8th: questions about Dance of the Song of Vajra
November 9th - 11th: Purification of 6 Lokas for beginners
Cost (approximate): \$50US
Accommodation: Plenty of possibilities for any budget
Transport: Direct flights from Stockholm, Copenhagen, Frankfurt, Vilnius, Budapest, Helsinki, Tallinn, Kiev, Tel Aviv, Moscow, Warsaw, Vienna, London and plenty

Vajra Dance Practice Retreat in Wales

December 28th - December 31st, 2001

The retreat will take place near to 'Kunselling', UK Dzogchen Community's retreat house in South Wales.

Program
3 practice sessions each day 10-6pm.

Price:
36GBP for whole retreat or 10GBP per day with 20% discount for Dzogchen Community members. Contact Cindy to register.

ty of connection flights with SAS, Lufthansa, Finnair, British Airways, LOT, Czech Airlines, Lunda Air. Also Eurolines buses. Visas: Europe, UK, USA citizens do not require a visa.

The retreat will take place only if a sufficient number of people will register. For that reason if you are interested, please do register as soon as possible. Do not hesitate to contact me for any details like the list of the hotels, etc. If you wish to participate it is highly recommended that you transfer 50\$ to RDC bank account the details of which will be sent upon request. We hope to see you! With best regards on behalf of Riga Dzogchen Community

Contact:

Agnes Rudzite
Tel: +371 9614806
Email: agnes@rigathisweek.lv

MARGARITA ISLAND

Vajra Dance Training - Second Level
March 18th - 27th, 2002

Anyone who has done First Level training and who knows the male and female parts of the Dance of the Song of the Vajra can participate.

Cost:
This will depend partly on the number of participants. Details of the cost of the training will be published by the Gakyil as soon as possible. Since the course will only be held if there are enough participants, it is necessary to register before the deadline of January 15, 2002.

To register or make inquiries contact:

Carmen Rivas
Calle Bolivar, Casa Numero 32,
Pedro Gonzalez, Margarita,
Venezuela
Tel: 0058 164703078
Email: carmenrivas@yahoo.com

CALIFORNIA

Dzogchen Community West Coast is very happy to offer a course in the Vajra Dance of the Liberation of the Six Lokas. The course will be taught by our local instructor for North America, Anastasia McGhee.

DATES: Starting on the evening of Thursday February 7th, 2002 continuing until Sunday February 10th, 2002.

Location, times & cost to be announced.

Write expressing your interest to: cariokey@hotmail.com or lauriecpb@aol.com

Watch announcements on Norbunet and Tsegylgarnet.

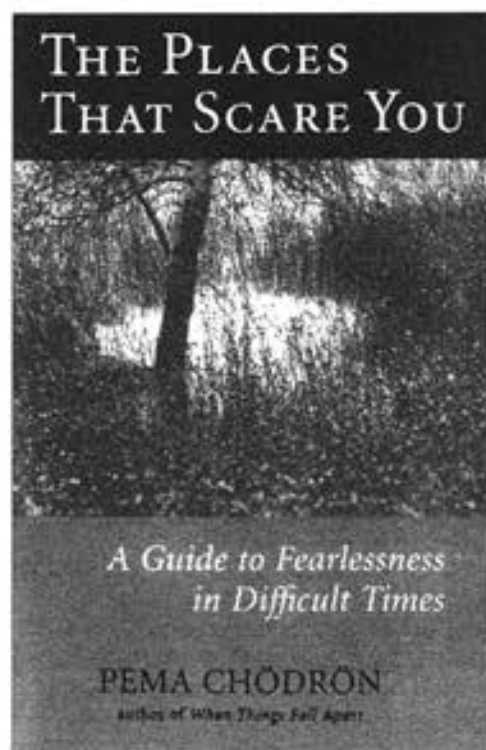
Accommodation at Kunselling or nearby Trericket bunkhouse.

Contact:
Julia Lawless:
[lawless@kunsellu-net.com]
Alistair and Nicky:
mail@trericket.co.uk

We warmly welcome people coming from Dzogchen Communities outside of the UK to come and join with us in this short retreat!

BOOK REVIEWS

The Places That Scare You: A Guide to Fearlessness in Difficult Times by Pema Chodron
Shambhala Publications ISBN: 1570624097 (2001), 144 pages \$21.95



Pema Chodron is a disciple of the late Chögyam Trungpa. Trungpa was known for his uncompromising Vajrayana style. Though Pema emphasizes a gentler, Sutric approach, underlying it is her teacher's Vajrayana outlook. This is reflected in the book's title, which refers to the Chod practitioner, Machig Labdron, whose guru told her: "Go to the places that scare you." Pema Chodron gives similar advice, but presents the more gradual method of Tonglen mind training, in place of the fierce Tantric energy of Chöd.

The Tonglen practice of "exchanging oneself for others" aspires to the total generosity of self-giving which seems to be a central feature of Chod. Pema writes, - oneself for others, using the breath as a meditation support. One breathes in the suffering and misfortunes of others, visualized as thick black smoke. Exhaling one sends out all one's happiness and peace. A number of books on Tibetan Buddhism make reference to

this practice, which often sounds frightening to people. Pema's contribution has been to make the practice accessible to those who don't feel so heroic.

Pema humanizes the practice by describing her own experiences, many of them painful or humbling, and far from "ideal." There is an intimacy to the personal stories Pema relates of her own struggles with the practice. She illuminates the various pitfalls and traps, and she expounds on the inner yoga of the practice, explaining how it acts as a mirror, allowing us to observe ourselves. When a person feels they simply are not capable of generating compassion for others, the simple observation of that can enable them to feel compassion for their own "blockage," and to recognize that this "failure" connects them with all other human beings, who also suffer from the same sense of failure at times.

This approach was summed up in the title of one of Pema's earlier books, *Start Where You Are*. By starting with what is at hand, rather than rejecting it, seeming obstacles to the practice can be dissolved. This, she reveals, is the true essence of the practice. Her approach is perfumed by the Vajrayana view of seeing whatever arises as wisdom, in the moment of its arising.

I was particularly touched by the sections of the book where Pema describes the fruit of Tonglen, where one notices compassionate thoughts arising spontaneously in the everyday situations of one's life. Pema writes, "As we pass people we simply notice whether we open up or shut down," (p. 71) and "In the elevator with a stranger, I notice her shoes, her hands, the expression on her face....just like me she has worries. Through our hopes and fears we are deeply interconnected." (p. 53)

The final chapters of the book deal with topics vital to the Vajrayana: "Heightened Neurosis", and "The Spiritual Friend".

While emphasizing the unconditional nature of the relationship to the spiritual master, she adds in down-to-earth fashion: "The teacher is a full-fledged human being, not some spiritual ideal. In this relationship, as in any other, we will experience likes and dislikes." (p. 114). Opening to these feelings is part of the unconditional relationship.

by Paul Bail

SHANG SHUNG EDIZIONI

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu
The Precious Vase - Instructions on the Base of Santi Maha Sangha
New edition 2001

Translated from Tibetan and edited by Adriano Clemente. Translated from Italian into English by Andy Lukianowicz.

L. 35.000 US\$25

This book is the new Base text of the Santi Maha Sangha. Expanded on notes and quotations, it is the essential text for the study and practice of the Base Level of Santi Maha Sangha training. It also contains the updated list of practices required for the Base Level examination.

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu
Longsal Teachings - Vol. 1
L. 25.000 US\$17

Translated from Tibetan by Adriano Clemente

The Longsal Cycle is the collection of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu's rediscovered teachings. This Volume 1 contains three Upadeshas



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.

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu
Longsal Teachings - Vol. 2
L. 25.000 US\$17

Translated from Tibetan by Adriano Clemente. The Longsal Cycle is the collection of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu's rediscovered teachings. This Volume 2 contains three Upadeshas 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
L. 25.000 US\$17

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.

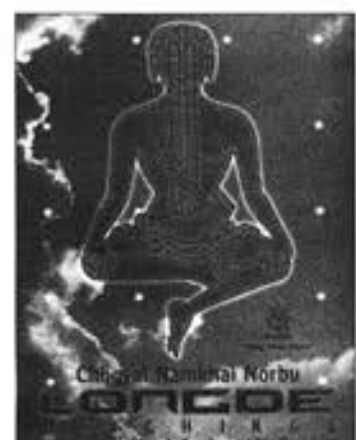
Chögyal Namkhai Norbu
Commentary to Narag Tongtrug Practice
L. 15.000 US\$10

"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.

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu
Longde Teachings Based on the Original Texts by Vairocana and Dzin Dharmabodhi
L. 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 Vairocana and Dzin Dharmabodhi. Several drawings illustrate precisely the positions for the practice.



Chögyal Namkhai Norbu
The Yoga of Arya Tara
L. 10.000 US\$6.50

This booklet contains a new short text on the Green Tara Practice, recently written by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, which includes the 21 action mantras of Tara. The original text is followed by an explanation on the meaning of the text and the way of doing the practice.

These books can be ordered only by practitioners who have already received the transmission directly from Chögyal Namkhai Norbu.

All the prices are in Italian Lire and US Dollars. Postage and packaging: in Europe add Lire 4.000 per order; outside Europe US\$3 every three books. To order please send the list of books you require by letter or email (specifying where and when you have received the transmission directly from Chögyal Namkhai Norbu).

Send an International Postal Money Order, Eurocheque in Italian Lire (from Europe) or a check (not less than US\$30 or equivalent) to Comunità Dzogchen (Shang Shung Edizioni)
58031 Arcidosso, GR, Italy.
Tel: 0564 966039
Email: shangshunged@tiscalinet.it

New Items & Books from Tsegialgar Bookstore



LUNGTA (Prayer Flags)
Beautiful Lungta of "Song of Vajra" handwritten by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu in Tibetan and English.

Lungta means "Wind horse" and refers to the protective force of the individual.

Authenticating with mantra and putting up the flags can strengthen our fundamental vital force. Each set contains five 13 x 13 flags in the 5 primary colors. 1 set sells for \$9 and 3 sets for \$25, 5 sets for \$40, plus shipping. Instructions on Lungta will be included.

Also available:

Book

The Practice of Lungta by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu
Shang Shung Edizioni
Teaching about Lungta from Merigar in 1991
\$4.00 plus shipping

NEW BOOKS by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

Important- these books are for practitioners who have transmission from

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu:
PRECIOUS VASE

Instructions on the Base of Santi Maha Sangha

Edited and annotated by Adriano Clemente - Shang Shung Edizioni

Newly revised, a must-have book for practitioners who would like to participate in Santi Maha Sangha.

\$26.25 plus shipping.

LONGSAL TEACHINGS- Volume One

Translated from the Tibetan and edited by Adriano Clemente - Shang Shung Edizioni

This publication of teachings from the Longsal Cycle contains three Upadeshas received through dreams, including the history of their discoveries over a period of time ranging from 1959 to 1983. Extraordinary dreams - highly recommended!

\$21 plus shipping.

12 PRIMORDIAL MASTERS POSTER by Glen Eddy

A beautiful reproduction of the original painting by Glen Eddy of the 12 Primordial Masters. This unique representation includes the image of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu and is exquisite in its detail.

Cost: \$12 plus shipping and handling

To order:

Tsegialgar Bookstore

Tel: 413-369-4473

Fax: 413-369-4165

Email: tsegialgarbookstore@yahoo.com



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Lama Wangdor Comes to Tsegylgar

November 17th & 18th
(Saturday & Sunday)

(A schedule will be posted soon).

For more information:

Tsegylgar Office
P.O.Box 277 Conway MA 01341
Tel: 413-369-4153
Fax: 413-369-4165
Email: 74404.1141@compuserve.com

Tibetan Conversion Software for Macintosh

Nitartha International is pleased to announce the release of the Nitartha-Sambhota V 2.0 Fonts and a Converter for the Mac

On the Mac we are now releasing our new Tibetan fonts along with a conversion program. This conversion program will convert text files containing Wylie or Asian Classics transliteration to Rich Text Files containing Tibetan script. These Rich Text files can be read by Microsoft Word and can then be formatted and printed. By using tools such as Adobe Acrobat Writer, documents containing Tibetan text can be produced for emailing or posting on the web. Documents containing the new Tibetan fonts are easily transportable between the Mac and PC. No additional conversion or special procedures are necessary. Also, documents produced using Nitartha-Sambhota 2.0 on the PC can be transported to the Mac and printed there.

Please note that the Tibetan conversion software on the Mac requires Mac OS 9 and Microsoft Word 98 or better. We are not releasing a new Tibetan keyboard for Microsoft Word on the Mac at this time but are working on such keyboard software for Mac OS X.

At this time we are delivering the program by e-mail attachments and not by disk or CD. The email attachments can be copied to disk to maintain a backup copy of the program. The email files include a user guide which can be printed for reference. The program is delivered with instructions and two attachments. One attachment is 1.9MB, so the receiving email system must be able to receive attachments that size (this means hotmail will not accept it). The second attachment is .5MB.

Price \$50 payable to Nitartha International. As in the past, we will send the program to monastic users at no cost.

Further information and methods of payment (how to use our secure credit card payment system) are available on the Nitartha International web site at <http://www.nitartha.org/>

Follow the links to Tibetan Software.

For additional information, email Robert Fors: rfors@nitartha.org

Nitartha Sambhota
5501 17th Ave. NE
Seattle, WA 98105
206-529-8259
Email: rfors@nitartha.org





Italian Shang-Shung Institute News

Translation Department

In the course of our latest meeting with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, Rinpoche suggested that it would be a good idea if a group of "new" translators from Tibetan could be formed and trained under the guidance and supervision of expert translators already full-time working for our Community. The aim is to prepare qualified translators able in the future to work side by side with existing translators. The texts to translate should cover different aspects of Tibetan culture: art, astrology, history, poetry and so forth in order to activate the Translation Department of our Institute the purpose of which is to diffuse and promote such knowledge. The perspective candidates should have a connection with the teaching, a good knowledge of Tibetan and capability of translating into English or any other western language. People who are interested in this project, are kindly requested to submit their CVs to the secretary of the Shang-Shung Institute in Merigar.

Istituto Shang-Shung
Podere Nuovissimo
58031 Arcidoso (GR), Italy
Tel: 39 0564 966941
Fax: 39 0564 968110
Email: ssinst@amiata.net
Web: www.istitutoshangshung.org

Medicine Department

Calendar of medical courses September 2001 - July 2002

Courses held by Doctor Nida Chenagtsang

AUSTRALIA (in collaboration with Namgyalgar):
14th of September- October 31st.
Intensive course of Ku Nye (first level)- several courses on "Dreams and Medicine". Information and registrations: Please contact Namgyalgar.

MERIGAR: November 3rd-4th
Ku Nye first level examination mainly directed to students who attended the first level intensive course held in Merigar last March.
Registration fees: 100.000 Lire
Registration and information: Shang-Shung Institute secretary at Merigar:
Rita Renzi
Tel: 39 0564 966941
Fax: 39 0564 968110
Email: ssinst@amiata.net

MILAN: 10th - 11th of November
Ku Nye second level examination
Registration fees: 120.000 Lire
Registration and information: Elisa Copello, Tel: 02-33607505, Email: ecop@ats.it

ROME: 17th - 18th November
Fourth seminar of first level of Ku Nye
Registration fees: 220.000 Lire
Registrations and information:

Annamarie Delaclos, Tel:
065885142
Email: anamar@katamail.com

BOLOGNA: 1st-2nd December
First level of Sa Che (Analysis of the outer and inner energies present in the environment and in one own's place in order to balance and harmonize negative energies)
Registration fees: 220.000 Lire
Registrations and information: Marisa Giorgini,
Email: shrincenro@libero.it

MILANO: 15th-16th of December
First seminar of third level of Ku Nye
Registration fees: 220.000 Lire
Registration and information: Elisa Copello

Year 2002

IN COLLABORATION WITH KUNSANGAR IN RUSSIA
2nd-24th of January
Intensive course of second level of Ku Nye and possibly seminars of Sa Che, Mantra healing or Dreams and Medicine.
KUNSANGAR secretary office
Tel/Fax: (007-096-43) 21156
Email: kunsang@gar.legko.ru

IN COLLABORATION WITH THE AUSTRIAN BRANCH OF THE SHANG-SHUNG INSTITUTE

6th - 27th of January & 2nd - 3rd of February
Third and fourth seminars of first level of Ku Nye
Information and registration: Oliver Leick, Gratz,
Email: oliver.leicht@utanet.at

ROME: 9th-10th February
Second level examination and first seminar of third level of Ku Nye
Registration fees: 220.000 Lire
Registration and Information: Annamarie Delaclos, Tel: 065885142, Email: anamar@katamail.com

MILANO: 23rd - 24th of February
Second seminar of third level of Ku Nye
Registration fees: 220.000 Lire
Registration and information: Elisa Copello, Tel: 02-33607505, Email: ecop@ats.it

ROME: 2nd - 3rd of March
Second seminar of third level of Ku Nye
Registration fees: 220.000 Lire
Registration and information: Annamarie Delaclos, Tel: 065885142, Email: anamar@katamail.com

MERIGAR: 8th - 16th of March
Intensive course of second level of Ku Nye
Registration fee: 720.000 Lire, all didactic materials included (sticks, hand-book, stones and shells, moxarolls)
Registration and information: Shang-Shung Institute Secretary Rita Renzi
Tel: 39 0564 966941
Fax: 39 0564 968110
Email: ssinst@amiata.net

MILANO: 23rd - 24th of March
Third seminar of third level of Ku Nye
Registration fee: 220.000 Lire

Registration and information: Elisa Copello, Tel: 02-33607505, Email: ecop@ats.it

ROME: 6th - 7th of APRIL
Third seminar of third level of Ku Nye
Registration fees: 220.000 Lire
Registration and information: Annamarie Delaclos, Tel: 065885142, Email: anamar@katamail.com

MERIGAR: 20th - 21st of APRIL
Seminar of second level of Sa Che
Registration fees: 160.000 Lire
Registration and information: Shang-Shung Institute Secretary Rita Renzi
Tel: 39 0564 966941
Fax: 39 0564 968110
Email: ssinst@amiata.net

MILANO: 27th-28th of APRIL
Fourth seminar of third level of Ku Nye
Registration fees: 220.000 Lire
Registration and information: Elisa Copello, Tel: 02-33607505, Email: ecop@ats.it

ROME: 4th - 5th of May
Fourth Seminar of third level of Ku Nye
Registration fees: 220.000 Lire
Registration and information: Annamarie Delaclos, Tel: 065885142, Email: anamar@katamail.com

COMO: 25th - 26th of May
Second level of Sa Che. The course will be residential and will be organized in a beautiful spot suitable to the observation and analysis of natural environment: the fees will include food and lodging as well. Supplementary information will be provided as soon as all the details are worked out.
Information: Elisa Copello, Tel: 02-33607505, Email: ecop@ats.it

IN COLLABORATION WITH THE AMERICAN SHANG-SHUNG INSTITUTE

8th - 30th of June
Intensive course of Ku nye and other possible workshops still to be defined.
Registration and information: Email: jgens@sover.net

MERIGAR: 6th - 9th of July
MANTRA HEALING (First and Second levels)

MERIGAR: 20th - 23rd of July
Dreams and medicine (First and Second Levels)
Registration fee for both courses: 320.000 Lire
Registration and information: Shang-Shung Institute Secretary Rita Renzi
Tel: 39 0564 966941
Fax: 39 0564 968110
Email: ssinst@amiata.net

A possible intensive course of first level of Ku Nye might be organized in Merigar in between July and August. Dates will be confirmed soon

Fourth year of the General Medicine Course with Jamyang Lhundrup

DATES:
10th - 15th of May
31st of May - 5th of June

Subjects dealt with during the course:

Symptoms, diagnosis and treatment of solid and hollow organs main pathologies, study of herbal medicines: posology and simple preparations.

Registration fees: 1.300.000 Lire for both seminars

The two seminars are directed to all the students of the first three years course and to all Ku Nye students who have at least attended and passed the first two levels. Doctors, therapists and nurses interested in joining the course, can attend it, provided they buy the cassettes of the three years' foundation course.

Information and registration: Shang-Shung Institute Secretary Rita Renzi
Tel: 39 0564 966941
Fax: 39 0564 968110
Email: ssinst@amiata.net

All prices will be soon converted into Euros and we will provide updated information.

USA Shang-Shung Institute News

New Email Address Shang-Shung Institute, USA

The Shang-Shung Institute in America has a NEW email address. Please note that the new address is:
shangshungus@cs.com

Please refer all communications regarding the Institute to this address. If you would like to receive the newsletter digest please send a request.

from Jacqueline Gens

Tibetan Language Class Tsegylgar, Conway, Massachusetts

Dr. Phuntsog Wangmo will be teaching Tibetan Language Class every Tuesday and Thursday night 6PM at Tsegylgar, Conway MA.

Please join us whether you would like to learn conversational or written Tibetan; she will teach the class according to students' needs.
Donations will be accepted.

Would you be interested learning Tibetan Astrology ?
If enough people sign up we will have a bi-weekly or monthly class.
Please let us know if you are interested.
For more information: Tsegylgar Office
Tel: 413-369-4153, Fax: 413-369-4165
Email: DzogchenUSA@compuserve.com

Shang-Shung Institute in
America
2001-2002
Tibetan Medicine Program

October 20-25, 2001
Foundation Course in Tibetan Medicine
Level 1/Part 2 on Conditions of Disease
W/Drs. Phuntsog Wangmo & Yangdron Kelzang
Rochambeau Lodge
\$450/\$675 RESIDENTIAL
Contact: Jacqueline Gens
Tel: 802 254 9114
Email: jgens@sover.net

October 26-28, 2001
Advanced Seminar: Liver Disorders and Treatment through Diet, Herbal Preparations and External Therapies w/ Dr. Phuntsog Wangmo Dr. Yangdron Kelzang
Tsegylgar in Conway, MA
\$275/no fee for Foundation program participants. Optional dormitory at \$20/night
Contact: Jacqueline Gens
Tel: 802 254 9114
Email: jgens@sover.net

November 13-14, 2001
Smith College, Northampton, MA
Public Talks
Tuesday, November 13, 2001 "Dr. Phuntsog Wangmo: A Tibetan woman doctor's narratives on life and work in rural north east Tibet"

Wednesday, November 14, 2001
"The relationship between Tibetan Medicine and Tibetan Astrology."

Neilson Browsing Room. Free and open to the public.
7:00-9:00 PM
Contact: Amber Watt
Tel: 413 586 4969

November 17-22, 2001
New York City Consultations
Contact: Eliane Diallo
Tel: 718 832 3091
Email: eliane71@earthlink.net

December 1-5, 2001
*Foundation Course in Tibetan Medicine
Level 1/Part 3 on Diet and External Therapies
W/Drs. Phuntsog Wangmo & Yangdron Kelzang
Tsegylgar, Conway, MA
\$450/dormitory option at \$20/night
Contact: Jacqueline Gens
Tel: 802 254 9114
Email: jgens@sover.net

December 7-9, 2001
Tibetan Medicine Seminar on Nervous Disorders and Treatment through Diet, Herbal Preparations and External Therapies w/ Dr. Phuntsog Wangmo
Tsegylgar at Conway, MA
\$225/dormitory option at \$20/night
Contact: Jacqueline Gens
Tel: 413 369 4153 to register
Email: DzogchenUSA@compuserve.com
Email: jgens@sover.net

December 12-15, 2001
New York City Consultations
Contact: Contact: Eliane Diallo
Tel: 718 832 3091
Email: eliane71@earthlink.net

January 3-16, 2002 Year/Level 2

Curriculum**Therapeutic Principles**

Foundation Course in Tibetan Medicine Year/Level 2 (2 weeks) with Drs. Phuntsog Wangmo and Yangdron Kelzang (translating) at Tsegylgar \$800 for entire session with a dormitory option of \$20/night

Jacqueline Gens
Tel: 802 254 9114
Email: jgens@sover.net

March 15-April 2, 2002

In residence: Private consultations & teaching

West Coast Dzogchen Community San Francisco/Oakland area

March 29-31, 2002: Nervous Disorders and Treatment through Diet, Herbal Preparations and External Therapies with Drs. Phuntsog Wangmo and Yangdron Kelzang (translating) Venue in the Bay area TBA

Contact: Margherita Pagni
Tel: 831 458 2995

May, 2002-

Diagnostic Procedures

Foundation Course in Tibetan Medicine, Year/Level 3 (2 weeks) Tsegylgar ONLY with Drs. Phuntsog Wangmo and Elio Guarisco translating \$800 entire session with a dormitory option of \$20/night

June 14-21, 2002

Ku Nye Tibetan Massage, Level 1 with Dr. Nida Chenagtsang, location TBA

(this program is not part of the Foundation Course but may be taken separately or in combination with the level 4/Year 4 curriculum) \$800 with lodging for non-Foundation Course students.

Limited enrollment. Advanced registration recommended. Contact for non-program students: Andrea Nasca
Tel: 413 369 4153
Email: DzogchenUSA@compuserve.com

June 14- July 4, 2002 Level/Year 4 Curriculum* tentative

Level 4 Advanced Tibetan Medicine Course with distinguished visiting professors, Choegyal Namkhai Norbu, Dr. Jamyang Lhundrup, Dr. Konjo Wangdu, Dr. Phuntsog Wangmo, Dr. Nida Chenagtsang, Elio Guarisco. General topics: Medicinal Substances and the treatment of disease, clinical training in diagnostic techniques.

Location and curriculum to be announced. Prerequisite: completion of the Three Year Foundation Course and examination or previous training in Tibetan Medicine and permission of the instructors. \$1200 for entire program. Housing extra.

For further information about the Foundation Course in Tibetan Medicine, please contact the acting program director, Jacqueline Gens at 802 254 9114 or Email: jgens@sover.net

For private consultations with Dr. Phuntsog Wangmo in Amherst, MA, please contact Naomi Zeitz at 413 369 4208 or Jacqueline Gens at 802 254 9114 (after December 1, 2001)

SHANG-SHUNG INSTITUTE
PO Box 277 Conway, MA 01341 USA
Tel: 413 369 4926 or
Web site: <http://www.shangshungus@csi.com>

Seminar on Tibetan Medicine for Health Practitioners The Shang-Shung Institute in America Conway, Massachusetts



Dr. Phuntsog Wangmo

The Shang-Shung Institute in America is pleased to announce that it will hold a seminar in Tibetan Medicine for health practitioners and the general public on Liver Disorders and their Treatment through Diet, Herbal Preparations and External Therapies (massage) taught by the Institute's resident faculty, Dr. Phuntsog Wangmo of Lhasa, Tibet, October 26th -28th, 2001 at Tsegylgar, 18 Schoolhouse Rd. in Conway, MA.

The course fee is \$275 which includes lunch each day. To register, please contact the Shang - Shung office at 413-369-4928.

Dr. Yangdron Kelzang of Santa Cruz, California will act as translator for the seminar. This program is especially designed to offer both health providers and health conscious individuals with practical applications drawn from the Tibetan Medical tradition.

The Shang-Shung Institutes in America and Italy are leading educators in the field of Tibetan Medicine for Westerners offering year-round residential programs including its Three Year Foundation Course in Tibetan Medicine which is also available as a distance learning course. Students in the program come from every continent.

Dr. Phuntsog Wangmo will be in residence at the Institute in Conway, MA, through July 2002 teaching the Foundation Course which began in September. The next foundation course is scheduled for October 20th - 25th, 2001. Participants may still enter the course which is the only in depth systematic survey of Tibetan medicine taught in English provided they supplement previous levels not attended with the audio course now available on MP3 format.

Dr. Phuntsog Wangmo received her advanced degree from the Lhasa University School of Traditional Medicine in 1988 where she also served a two-year residency after completing her five year training program (1983-1990). During that time she studied with the Khenpos Troru Tsenam and Gyaltsen, two of Tibet's foremost doctors who are credited with the revival of Tibetan Medicine within Tibet under the Chinese. Dr. Phuntsog Wangmo had the exceptional opportunity of extensive clinical training under Khenpo Troru Tsenam for four years. Thereafter, she dedicated many years of work as a doctor in Eastern Tibet where she collaborated and directed the implementation of A.S.I.A., the non-profit organization founded by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu. Since that time, she has worked on behalf of A.S.I.A. setting up hospitals and

training centers in the remote regions of Sichuan Province and Chamdo Prefecture. From 1996 to the present, she has been the A.S.I.A. project coordinator in Tibet for the development of Gamthog Hospital in collaboration with expatriate personnel as well as the overall health coordinator and practitioner of traditional Tibetan medicine supervising health activities through out the surrounding region of Chamdo Prefecture.

Prior to 1996, she was on the faculty of Shang-Shung Institute in Italy where she gave numerous seminars and conference presentations on Tibetan medicine. Dr. Wangmo will be in residence at the Shang - Shung Institute in America through July, 2002, where she is the core faculty in the Institute's Foundation Course in Tibetan Medicine, a three year/level training program for Westerners. For some years, she has been coordinating the fundraising and implementation of an A.S.I.A. project inside Tibet to provide mobile medical access to the vastly underserved nomadic populations of Tibetan who are without local medical care.

DR. YANGDRON KELZANG studied at the University of Lhasa school of traditional Tibetan Medicine before coming to the US where she is currently enrolled in a program in Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine at Five Branches College of Oriental Medicine. Fluent in English, Dr. Kelzang acts as the translator for Dr. Phuntsog Wangmo.

Shang Shung Institute in America
PO Box 277
Conway, MA 01341
Tel: 413-369-4928
Email: shangshungus@csi.com
Web site: www.shangshung-usa.org

SHANG-SHUNG INSTITUTE IN AMERICA

The Shang -Shung Institute is pleased to announce that it now has its entire Foundation Course in Tibetan Medicine available in MP3 format at the affordable price of \$500. The course covers approximately eighty hours of teaching material for audio listening by Dr. Thubten Phuntsog who presented the course at the Institute from 1998-2001. Translation into English is conducted by Elio Guarisco, a prominent Tibetan translator.

The Foundation Course in Tibetan Medicine is the only systematic survey course in Tibetan Medicine available in English. Based on the Four Medical Tantras of Tibetan Medicine (rGyud Zhi), the foundation for all study of Tibetan Medicine, as well as other important commentaries, the course covers key topics as a basis for further study in the field. Each year, the Shang - Shung Institute supports a rigorous residential program with senior Tibetan Doctors from Tibet as well as an international translation team.

Thanks to the dedicated service of the Institute's intern, Dan Pederson of the University of Massachusetts, the course is now available as an MP3 digital audio compression file designed specifically for use with computers and MP3 software. Most PC's with an operating system of Windows 98 or higher come with Windows Media Player (MP3 software) already installed. Anyone who cannot find this software on their computer can acquire this download for free off of the Internet. Simply type in "Windows Media Player", or "MP3 player" into any search engine and follow the directions for downloading.

Although an MP3 disk looks like an ordinary CD it can only be played on a computer in one's CD/Rom. The advantage of using this technology is that it compresses the data so that each disk can contain many hours of listening in contrast to the ninety minutes on an ordinary CD. As many recent model computers come with CD/RW drives, it is possible to create your own normal CD, if you wish to listen in an ordinary CD player.

The entire course is available on six disks with each talk designated by its own track and title. Along with the MP3 files, the course includes a bound edition of Dr. Thubten Phuntsog's teaching text, *Elements for the Study of Tibetan Medicine* commissioned by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, the founder of the Shang-Shung Institute, to accompany the Foundation Course in Tibetan Medicine, as well as color reproductions of the medicine trees referred to in the first level and a full outline of the curriculum. Cost for the entire course is \$500 including shipping.

For further information about our year-round residential programs, please contact the Institute or program director:

Jacqueline Gens
Tel: 802-254-9114
Email: jgens@sover.net

AUDIO DISTANCE LEARNING COURSE REGISTRATION

Yes, I would like to order the Foundation Course in Tibetan Medicine in MP3 format ____ for \$500

____ I would like to order the Foundation Course in Tibetan Medicine in ordinary audiocassette format ____ or CD ____ (approximately 80 (90 minute) tapes/CDs for \$1,800.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Country _____

Zipcode _____

Telephone _____ Email _____

I would like to pay by check or credit card:

Visa ____ MasterCard ____ AMEx ____

Credit card Number _____ Expiration _____

Optional:

Please include a personal statement about your interest in Tibetan Medicine.

Your current Occupation _____

Are you interested in the residential Foundation Course currently offered by the Institute 2001-2002 ____ Yes ____ No

Are you interested in entering the 4th Level/Year curriculum scheduled for the summer 2002 on Medicinal Substances which requires an entrance exam based on the Foundation Course ____ Yes ____ No

Contract:

I, _____, promise not to distribute or copy the audio recordings or texts/tables/graphs of the Foundation Course in Tibetan Medicine without written permission of the Shang-Shung Institute in America which owns all copyrights to the written and audio material. I understand that the use of this material is made available to me as an educational resource and is restricted to my own personal study.



INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY NEWS

merigar

Five Gar Meeting at Merigar

During the August retreat at Merigar, a meeting of the Five Gars was planned for August 12th. The afternoon before the meeting a serious fire broke out close to Merigar and spread rapidly in the direction of the wood and the Gonpa requiring a rapid evacuation of the area and the immediate intervention of the fire brigade and helicopters to put out the blaze. Consequently, many of the afternoon activities were canceled or postponed. Later in the evening an impromptu meeting of the five Gars took place to recap on some of the issues that had been discussed at an earlier meeting in July.

The outcome of the discussion focused on two main points. First of all the video of each Gar showing the actual Gar itself, how it works and the area it is situated in should be 10 to 20 minutes in length. This should be a kind of presentation of the Gar for all the practitioners who do not travel which they can see by themselves. This should be submitted within six months to:

Maurizio Mingotti

Video Archive

Istituto Shang Shung

58031 Arcidosso GR, Italy.

Maurizio will prepare a compilation of the video footage to represent the Gars of the Community.

Secondly, a live interactive linkup between the Gars is scheduled to be held on January 5th, 2002, as a type of video-chat room where the representatives of the five Gars can communicate among themselves. The aim of this is to experiment with closer and more lively communication between the Gars.

Further information and time can be had from Fabio Andrico at 76544.2307@compuserve.com.

Santi Maha Sangha Practice Retreat

November 2nd - 4th, 2001

with Jim Valby

The four daily sessions are:

8:30am - 10am

10:30am - 12 noon

4:30pm - 6pm

6:30pm - 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 Santi Maha Sangha First Level training.

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

Retreat fee: 100,000 lire (52 euro). For booking and information contact:

Merigar Secretary,

Tel: 39-0564-966837

Fax: 39-0564-968110

Email: merigaroffice@tiscalinet.it

MERIGAR - NEW EMAIL ADDRESS

Please note that the office at Merigar no longer receives email at merigar@amiata.net

The new address is merigaroffice@tiscalinet.it



Risposte with new Merigar in the Gonpa

Meeting of Members at Merigar

Election of the New Gakyil

On August 20th, in the presence of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, the annual members' meeting was held in the Gonpa at Merigar to approve the budget for 2000 and elect a new Gakyil and Gekos.

The outgoing Gakyil spoke about the main activities they had undertaken during the year and emphasized the importance of improving and developing communication and exchanging information particularly among the European practitioners of the Community. At the moment a Gakyilnet (an Email network) is being set up which will create a web of communication among the European Gakyils. The Merigar Letter (Il Bollettino) will be sent via Email to all the European Gakyils in order that they may include information in their local news bulletins. Membership this year has improved over last year although the final count of members will not be known until after the summer retreats.

In November of this year work on extending the roof of the Gonpa will begin. A special fund was set up for those who wish to contribute to this work and during the Assembly several practitioners as well as the Master himself made generous contributions to the fund. A heartfelt thanks to all! The budget for 2000 was presented by Franco Marinelli, director of the Gakyil in 1999-2000, and approved.

The Gakyil also communicated that this autumn Pia Bramezza will officially become the Community's full time accountant, an activity which she has continuously and successfully carried out as Karma Yoga for many years. Clara Juliano, the current secretary at Merigar, will leave her post in November. The Merigar Gakyil was renewed: Pierangelo Bonacina and Fabiana Mela left after three years of work. Cristina Leonardo and Anna Dessole were unable to renew their commitment as Gakyil members. Patricia Monti, the Gekö, returned home after a year's hard work at Merigar. Thank you everyone for your great dedication to working for the Community.

The new Gakyil and Gekos consist of:

Blue: Sicilia D' Arista (Director)

Anna Pucci (Vice-Director)

Flavia Tomassini

Yellow: Silvana Pisani

Massimiliano Leupin

Davide Gregorin

Red: Rosamaria Lo Schiavo

Luc Clarebots

Bepi Goia

Gekos: Luciano Limonta

Merigar Calendar of Events & Courses

Autumn/Winter 2001/2002

October 6-7, 2001

Karma Yoga Festa

October 20-21, 2001

Course on the Preliminaries for the Practice of Contemplation with Costantino Albini

October 27-28, 2001

Course on the Base of Santi Maha Sangha

The First Six Lojongas with Costantino Albini

November 1, 2001

Karma Yoga Festa

November 2-4, 2001

Course on the First Level of Santi Maha Sangha with Jim Valby [only for those who have passed the Base Level exam]

November 16-18, 2001

Course on deepening the practice of the Dance of the Song of the Vajra with Adriana Dal Borgo

November 24-25, 2002

Yantra Yoga for Beginners (preliminary) with Laura Evangelisti

December 8-9, 2001

Course on the Base of Santi Maha Sangha

The Nine Vehicles with Adriano Clemente

December 15-16, 2001

Kumar Kumari Yantra (for children)

for Parents and Teachers of Yantra Yoga

with Laura Evangelisti

December 27, 2001 - January 2, 2002

Christmas Retreat Explanations and Practice with Adriano Clemente

January 4-6, 2002

Course on the First Level of Santi Maha Sangha

with Igor Legati

[only for those who have passed the Base Level exam]

February 2-3, 2002

Course on the Base of Santi Maha Sangha

The Fundamental Principle of Atiyoga

with Costantino Albini

February 8-10, 2002

Course of the Dance of the Liberation of the Six Lokas

February 13, 2002

Losar Celebration

Water-Horse Year

February 16-17, 2002

To Live Death and Aging

with Barrie Simmons

March 2-3, 2002

Course on the First Level of Santi Maha Sangha

with Igor Legati

[only for those who have passed the Base Level exam]

March 9-10, 2002

Yantra Yoga Intermediate Course (preliminary and first series of Yantra)

with Laura Evangelisti

March 15-17, 2002

Course of the Dance of the Three Vajras

(with particular focus on the irregular method)

March 23-24, 2002

Karma Yoga Festa

March 28-April 1, 2002

Easter Retreat

Explanation and Practice

April 13-14, 2002

Course - Lucid Dreams with Michael Katz

Registration

To register for courses of Yantra Yoga and Dance of the Vajra it is necessary to telephone the office and send a deposit at least ten days before the beginning of the course, specifying the course you are registering for and giving your name clearly.

To participate in the activities of Merigar, you must be a member of the Cultural Association of the Dzogchen Community.

Continued on next page



Bakchen Tournament

For three days in August nine fearless combatants met together under the tutelage of Adriana dal Borgo, Rita Bisotto, Fabio Andrico and Michel Bricaire, to train in the game of Bakchen, a popular and widespread game in Tibet. Consisting of sixty-four pieces similar to dominoes, the game requires clever strategy and great mental alertness. The Bakchen "fever" spread during the following two days of the course culminating in a lively two day tournament in late September.



Merigar schedule cont'd. from previous page

Associazione Culturale Comunità
Dzogchen
Merigar - 58031 Arcidosso, GR,
Italy
Tel: 39-0564-966837
Fax: 39-0564-968110
Email: merigaroffice@tiscalinet.it
Web page
http://web.tiscalinet.it/merigar

Thorns and Dust and Falling Trees

by Tibor Blaga

As a fairly new Dzogchen practitioner from Hungary, I had a wish to be close to Rinpoche and his teachings this summer. One of the possibilities to do this was to spend the summer working at Merigar where Rinpoche would be. The following lines are a brief story of my two months karma yoga in Merigar.

June 16th: My arrival in Merigar right at the very moment a lot of projects were being organized. I fell somewhere in the middle of all this activity. Beside other works to prepare for the big retreat in July, under the guidance of work chief Piero Bonacino, I participated in the execution of the following projects:

assembling a three-car wooden garage at Gadeling; putting up an ornamental wooden roof over the patio at Serkhang (the Golden House) where everybody eats outside in the summertime; building two small tool cabins behind the library. We were quite satisfied because the materials were good quality and we could work with precision. The weather was hot and we worked

sometimes ten hours a day to get the projects finished. Even though it was the last minute, everything was ready on time!

June 30th: Rinpoche's late night arrival. After a big Ganapuja, people gathered at Serkhang around a roaring fire and celebrated the event with a joyous party.

July 6th: The four day retreat with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu started with 500 participants. It was a good retreat and people left contented on the final day after a cool rain had refreshed everyone.

July 10th: After a short break, my karma yoga continued. The next project was to prepare a new 'gompino' (small meditation room) for Rinpoche at his home, Gadeling. Every morning we worked on the Gompino with Migmar, the resident Tibetan artist in charge of many works at Merigar, while in the afternoons from July 21st to August 5th, we participated in Karma Yoga in the woods with Rinpoche: the great clean up in the 'boschetto' below the Gonpa. During the winter a huge boulder had split and fallen off the cliff, making a big mess in the area around Rinpoche's retreat house. Besides this a lot of thorny plants and bushes such as dog roses and broom had grown in the last two years and needed cleaning.

Many happy shining faces participated in this sometimes really

Merigar Letter by Email

The office at Merigar asks that subscribers to the Merigar Letter (Il Bollettino) who would like to receive their publication by Email rather than by post should contact the office with their Email address. Sending it by electronic post will guarantee that information arrives quickly and will allow Merigar to save on postal expenses.

Tel: 39-0564-966837
Email: merigaroffice@tiscalinet.it

heavy and dangerous work. The bushes were thorny, the slopes steep and slippery, the sun was hot and the dry ready-to-cut trees many. Sometimes I had a feeling that this fight with the thorns didn't have much sense, but when I added a deeper meaning, I realized that these thorny plants we cut and cleaned up represented the old, prickly and disliked side of human nature that we were getting rid of. And the huge boulders we were



Rinpoche working in the 'boscho'

breaking into small stones represented heavy and stiff petrified ideas about reality, which we now had broken, and out of which we were building nice protective stone walls.



Fire near Merigar

Rinpoche was always joking, inspiring everyone, and his many and unforgettable, "Che bella visione!" (what beautiful vision), "Che forte!" (what strength), etc., made people eager to work even when huge trees were cut and felled. Everybody worked in harmony, kindness and with care, sharing thousands of smiles.

August 5th: Construction of a new yoga tent began. To make the lives of the yantra yogins and instructors easier, we separated the beginners' course from the advanced one, and for this purpose for the advanced yogins we built a sombrero-shaped open summer tent, covered with cane in the meadow just past the library.

August 10th-19th: The long summer retreat.

August 12th: The Very Day. The Tibetan calendar for this day showed two elements - wind and fire. And so it was. At one o'clock at night a series of strong gusts of wind ripped ASIA's big Tibetan tent in two pieces, and flung it across the field. The Shang Shung's tent was blown away as was the Mirror's, with some of the metal

poles twisted by the force of the wind.

The people sleeping in these tents as night watchmen fought with the wind for two hours during the night trying to put the tents back together. This was just the start of the day.

In the morning during the teaching Rinpoche gave a direct introduction. Just after lunch a wild fire broke out on the opposite hill and spread quickly towards Merigar's lower borders.

The sometimes ten meter high flames threatened the Gonpa and the campsite, and people, tents and precious objects were evacuated from the area. Though Gadeling (Rinpoche's house) was seriously threatened, it was protected by a team of firemen with an enormous fire engine along with twenty Commu-

nity people armed with shovels. Rinpoche appeared to be unconcerned. All the tents and belongings from the camp site were hastily piled along the road. If we consider life as a dream and so everything has a symbolic meaning, in this vision the campers' tents and belongings were a part of their subconsciousness which was now turned upside down, deeply moved and purified by the active elements of fire, wind and water. After a three hour struggle, the flames were extinguished by local firefighters and an emergency helicopter which made about 23 trips carrying an enormous hanging container of water to douse the flames. For fear that the wind might ignite the embers of the fire, the campers spent the night in the Gonpa while our own people and the fire brigade patrolled the area the entire night. After that, the retreat continued. And that is how part of the summer passed in Merigar.

Thank you Rinpoche, thank you Merigar for this possibility of learning and simply being here. I am very grateful for the time I spent here and hope to see you again soon.

There is a New Message Posting Email List for the European Dzogchen Community:

There is a new message posting email list for the members of European Gakyils. It is called Gakyilnet. All members of Gakyils from the Merigar Family are invited to join. For further information contact: Barry Patterson of the UK Gakyil at barry@redsandstonehill.net

NEW GAKYILS

Styria, Austria

Yellow: Oliver F. Leick
Red: Monica Wittib
Blue: Gabriele Leick

Czech Republic

Blue:
Alan Jarkovsky
Email: dzogchen@centrum.cz, alan.jarkovsky@usa.net
Tel: 00420-602 892 590 (mobile) or 00420-2-2481 4734
Red:
Jiri Mravec
Email: maddread@atlas.cz
Tel: 00420-606 577 367 (mobile)
Yellow:
Milan Polasek
Email: milanpolasek@hotmail.com
Tel: 00420-604 878 100 (mobile) or 00420-2-5731 3450

Important Message to European Gakyils

During the meeting of European Gakyils at Merigar on August 20, 2001, one of the dominant topics discussed was the importance of a constant flow and exchange of information between Gars and Gakyils, Gars and Gars and among all the Gakyils in general. As a result, the Merigar Letter (Il Bollettino) will be regularly sent by Email to all European Gakyils in order for them to receive the most up-to-date information about activities at Merigar. This will enable them to include the most recent news in their own newsletters, if they wish. At the same time the editors of the Merigar Letter ask all the European Gakyils to send articles and their own up-dated news bulletins for publication.

Many thanks for your collaboration.

The Editors of the Merigar Letter
Tel: 39 0564 966837
Email: merigaroffice@tiscalinet.it

Santi Maha Sangha Base Level Course

with Irmgard Pemwieser
Austria

The Dzogchen Community of Vienna, Austria, would like to announce a SMS Base Level Course with Irmgard Pemwieser in Vienna, Austria.

October 13 - 14, 2001; November 3 - 4, 2001; December 1 - 2, 2001; December 22 - 23, 2001; January 12 - 13, 2002

The daily sessions are: 10:00am-1:00pm, 3:00-6:00pm (8:00-9:30pm if necessary).

The course is planned to be continued next year and will be announced as soon as the dates are fixed.

The Course will take place at Buddhist Center, Drigung Kagyud Gumpa, Fleischmarkt 16/1/1, 1010 Vienna, Austria.

For further information please contact:
Christian Wessely:
Tel: +43 (0)699 11031647,
Email: ch_wessely@hotmail.com

Yantra Yoga in Slovakia November 2001

There will be a basic course of Yantra Yoga with Oliver Leick from Austria on November 23rd to 25th, 2001.

For venue and further information please contact:
issa@post.sk or
chmelikl@centrum.cz

Both retreats are also open for completely new people.



kunsangar

Teachings of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu on MP3CDs.

Available for immediate order
from Kunsangar

1. MP3CD: Dzogchen retreat in Kunsangar, 15-21 June 2001, containing high quality digital audio recording of the complete retreat with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu. Suitable for playing on personal computer or portable MP3CD players. Contains Chögyal Namkhai Norbu's explanations on Longsal Teachings vol. 1, recently published by Shang-Shung Edizioni.

Price: \$20.

2. MP3CD: Dzogchen Longde retreat in Kunsangar, July 1999. Contains Chögyal Namkhai Norbu's specific explanations on Dzogchen Longde Terma included into Longsal Teachings vol. 1.

Price: \$20.

3. CD with more than 600 high-resolution digital photos of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu and his disciples in Kunsangar, June 2001.
Price: \$15

Reserved only for those who participated in the respective level of Santi Maha Sangha:

1. MP3CD: SMS 2nd Level Training, Moscow, 1998.

2. MP3CD: SMS 1st Level Training. Including practices and explanations by Adriano Clemente and Jim Valby, Kunsangar 2001.

3. MP3CD: SMS 2nd Level Training. Including practices and explanations by Adriano Clemente and Jim Valby, Kunsangar 2001. Also included is Ganapuja with longer Serkyem practice lead by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu.

4. MP3CD: SMS 3rd Level Training. Including practices and explanations by Adriano Clemente, Kunsangar 2001.

Price of each CD: \$20.

Orders can be sent to (please note in subject: mp3cd):
mokhin@bog.msu.ru.

Chokyi Nyima Rinpoche Teaches at Tsegvalgar

by John LaFrance

The fall season at Tsegvalgar began with a flourish of positive activity in September. One week after filling the phumba of the stupa dedicated to the long life of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu on the land in Buckland, a weekend of empowerments and teachings by Chokyi Nyima Rinpoche was held in Northampton and at the school in Conway.

In his teaching, Chokyi Nyima Rinpoche focused on the Ground, Path and Fruition on Dzogchen. Rinpoche carefully built a logical framework for understanding the context for the teachings. In his formulation, the Ground is the Great Middle Way, the Path is Mahamudra and the Fruition is Dzogchen. He also pointed out that, as with each of the teachings, the Dzogchen teachings have their own ground, path and fruition.

With playful humor he described how, in the traditional approach of teaching in Tibet, students worked up to the possibility for Dzogchen practice by doing all the preliminary practices. However, in the west many people want to go directly into the quick path of liberation, which is Dzogchen.

With that, he proceeded to devote most of his teaching to the value and importance of creating a strong base for practice through such things as the Four Mind Trainings and the Six Paramitas. Shifting from Tibetan to English, depending on the points he was making, Rinpoche used an interactive style, which kept the students alert. When making a point he would frequently ask "do you agree or not?" Based on the response from the students, he provided additional explanations in an attempt to cut through any confusion. On one occasion

when he asked for a response and got none he laughed and said "it seems westerners are becoming more like Asians".

Rinpoche repeated certain points several times. He emphasized that general Buddhist teaching allows and encourages students to question and to be skeptical and to examine everything. By doing so the individual can determine whether the teachings are logical and make sense. And, while it is useful to question, it is also very, very important to practice. Not to wait for some perfect time to practice, but to practice immediately. This is key.

At the end of his teaching, he did an introduction to Dzogchen. He emphasized the importance of not falling into the two mistaken views of eternalism and nihilism and described how to use the teachings to avoid these impediments. He spoke of the need for a qualified teacher and the importance of diligence and perseverance in practice. He also spoke of the natural, unconstructed state, the essence of which is emptiness, the nature of which is consciousness and the capacity of which is unconfined. And, he addressed how the three statements of Garab Dorje provide the entire framework for moving from introduction through familiarity to stability of the natural state. With deep gratitude the students thanked Rinpoche and asked that he return soon.



Rinpoche and new Kunsangar Gakyil

NZ0172

New Gakyils

Russia

St. Petersburg Gakyil?

Red:

1) Maria Zhestynnikova (coordinator)

Email: mazhest@newmail.ru

2) Dmitriy Enilin

Yellow:

1) Ilya Bykovskih

2) Marianna

Blue:

1) Pavel Ignatyev

2) Olga Solovyova

Email: trond@crosswinds.net (St. Petersburg)

OS_gar@hotmail.ru (Kunsangar)

Email of St. Petersburg Community is: sangyeling@mail.ru

Kunsangar:

Red:

1. Larisa Rozhnova

2. Sergey Vshtun

3. Gleb Blinov

Yellow:

1. Kristina Maikova - maikov@df.ru

2. Misha Kislichenko - Director

3. Gosha Kalmikov - gven@ccs.ru

Blue:

1. Olga Solovyova (email indicated before - St.Pb.)

2. Lyudmila Kislichenko - lalita@rain.bog.msu.ru

3. Gosha Kalmikov - gven@ccs.ru

Gekö: Dmitriy Miusskiy

tsegvalgar

Tsegvalgar Schedule Fall/Winter 2001

November 10-11
Six Loka Practice Weekend with
Jim Valby
7am Video Transmission -
Anniversary of Adzam Drugpa

November 17-18
Lama Wangdor teaching

December 7 (Friday night)
7:30 pm Lucid Dream (Dream
Yoga) by Michael Katz

December 8 (Saturday)
9:30 am Lucid Dream workshop all
day
6 pm Green Tara Practice
Rinpoche's Birthday Party!

December 9 (Sunday)
Green Tara Practice

For more information:

Tsegvalgar
P.O.Box 277, Conway MA, 01341
Tel: 413-369-4153
Fax: 413-369-4165
Email: DzogchenUSA@compuserve.com

NEW WEB SITE FOR TSEGYALGAR, NORTH AMERICA!!!!

The Dzogchen Community in North America invites you to visit Tsegvalgar's new website.

Tsegvalgar.org
<http://www.tsegvalgar.org>

Gakyil News

Ed Goldberg has replaced Paula Barry as Director of the Tsegvalgar Gakyil. There is now one vacancy on the Tsegvalgar Gakyil. Please contact Tsegvalgar if you are interested to participate. Thank you, Paula, for all your dedicated work!

The New York Vajra Dance fall schedule is:

Every Friday night from 6:30 PM to 8 PM at Alvin Ailey Dance School, Studio #9, located at 211 West 61st Street between Amsterdam Avenue and West End Avenue.

If you have any questions please contact:

Eliane at 718-832 3091, Email: tatili5@hotmail.com

Ed at 718-398 0584, Email: edw_goldberg@hotmail.com

Distant and Near Close Encounters in Respectful Organization

A report on the groundbreaking North American Community to Community Meetings held in January and July, 2001.

The Challenge

The challenge of organization within the special context of a Dzogchen Master's lineage, or indeed within any Buddhist lineage, is itself a profound practice. One needs only look at the Sanghas of Suzuki Roshi, Chögyam Trungpa, Lama Thubten Yeshe, and Thich Nhat Hanh to realize that much thought, many meetings, and serious introspection accompany an ambitious practice. Expressing Guru Devotion through organization and collective work is an offering to the Guru, the Teachings, and all the Lineage Holders.

The catch is that in the Dzogchen Community, our authentic organization is both similar to and different from other organizations. We are the ones who have to test the ice, evolve new forms that work for us while utilizing the best and most applicable tools of other organizations, including Dharma organizations.

A primary aspect of organization is communication, and much communication falls to Gakyil members. Gakyil members are volunteers who seek to preserve and make available Chögyal Namkhai Norbu's teachings; as such they must work closely with their fellow Gakyil members. This presents an immediate challenge. As we attempt to preserve some awareness of the Dzogchen view, we interact with one another, agree, and disagree on how to proceed, and try to accomplish a variety of tasks related to the teachings. Sites such as Gars also serve as the focal point for Gakyils and other Community sites where practitioners are clustered. They then need to communicate and coordinate extensive activities with numerous locations and individuals - an assignment made easier by technology, but still extremely challenging.

What happens if we do not communicate and coordinate our efforts? Our precious practice, the Teachings, and even the connection to our Teacher are in jeopardy. Our spiritual potency as a collective is threatened. Whereas most of us have insurance policies, savings accounts, wills, investments, and every sort of protection for our worldly assets, we often give minimal attention to the survival of that which is most valuable: the Teachings, the Master's transmission, and the circumstances which develop realization and nourish new students. We are frequently good about nourishing our own Dharma practice; but we must learn to do so in ways that also benefit others and remain true to the perspective of Dzogchen. This is the task of mindful collaboration and skillful organization.

Knowing our unique organizational situation and the potential that dialogue and collaboration has in strengthening our Community and furthering the Teachings, some specific questions have arisen: How do we share responsibility throughout the Community? How do we nurture a harmonious vision of what needs to be done and of the preferred way to accomplish it? How do we get to know practitioners from far away and in so doing, support the Community? While following our Teacher's lead scrupulously, it remains a challenge to find a single working model for the type of dialogue that is necessary to initiate and sustain a way of life characterized by communication, sharing, and collaboration within our extended national and international Community. We are called upon to forge new methods, and of course, patience and perseverance are required.

Community-to-Community

In North America, a new experiment has begun to explore how we as Dzogchen Community members can work together over large geographical distances in order to address our various needs. An awareness has dawned that only by trusting one another and developing better communications can we more easily solve our dilemmas and accomplish our tasks, and even have a better time while doing so. To be honest, we did not enter into this new path of communication out of enormous wisdom and insight, rather, we were forced into it as we noticed that things were working very unevenly throughout North America. Crises were not being dealt with properly, and people were blaming and disrespecting each other. Poor morale and heavier work loads were on the rise within the Community, while membership, volunteers, and core members have been on the downswing. Some sites almost never communicated with others. During gatherings and retreats, individuals (usually old friends) from different sites of the Community would sometimes get together to talk or plan on an ad hoc basis. In theory we knew that collaboration was part of our path as taught by our Teacher, a method used to lessen dualistic thinking, and in accord with a deeper understanding of reality. We paid lip service to the idea of collaboration; but we didn't bother to spell out operationally what it meant or note whether it was actually happening or not. We've been forced to discover that we must be more proactive than in the past.

Once the need for a change in our approach became so evident, we took the plunge and organized the first North America Community-to-Community (C2C) meeting in January of 2001 between the Massachusetts - based Tsegylgar Gakyil and the California West Coast Gakyil, including representatives from Washington State, New Mexico, Southern California, and Chicago. It took place in the San Francisco Bay Area at the Alpine Club on Mt. Tamalpais. Considerable courage was required to plan, attend, and participate in this meeting resulting from the burden of past difficulties and poor interactions. There was a sense of urgency in tackling various items of business, a need to say everything and try to accomplish something tangible by the end of the meeting. Happily, we relaxed a bit and the first meeting was a success. The effort to bring people together was sustained to the degree that a second meeting was planned and held at the Gar in Conway, Massachusetts this past July. The third meeting will be held in Santa Fe, New Mexico in January 2002, at the beautiful Upaya Center. All who are interested are invited and encouraged to attend (details to follow).

The Results

What have we accomplished so far? For one thing, our Mission and Vision team drew up a draft Mission Statement expressing our overall purpose. The Statement proposes to function as a reference tool for envisioning activity within the Community and those times we find ourselves going off on a tangent. The North America draft Mission Statement reads:

"Inspired and guided by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, the members of the North American Dzogchen Community are committed to maximizing opportunities for individuals to receive transmission from Chögyal Namkhai Norbu and other teachers he has appointed to know how to develop and integrate this transmission through practice. We are also committed to preserving and making available authentic Dzogchen teachings while encouraging and supporting respectful collaboration and Community building among those interested in realizing the Dzogchen teachings for the benefit of all."

Accompanying the Mission statement are related "Vision" statements, i.e. more specific statements about current and future goals. In some cases, we even proposed action steps. Visioning together engendered creative communication and sparked a desire for further collaborative action.

Parallel to creating the Mission and Vision document, our discussions in medium to large Blue, Yellow, and Red groups produced proposals for a number of North America working teams that will address the needs of the Community and transform visions into collaborative fruitful action. Each team is led by a Community member and addresses a specific activity, such as Library and Archiving, Membership, and Land and Infrastructure. Practitioners are thus provided a direct method for plugging into necessary Community activity. Teams will determine specific projects and recruit participation from throughout North America, that is, Tsegylgar.

The following teams were created:

Blue
Practice Planning; Archiving & Library; Advertising and Outreach; Publications

Yellow
Membership; Bookstore; Online & Retail; Financial Planning, Long-Term Planning & Endowments

Red
Karma Yoga; Electronic Media Communications; Tsegylgar Land & Infrastructure (Lands of North America); History of the Gar in North America

Other
Mission/Vision/Strategic Plan; Steering Committee (Coaching Teams); Retreat 2002; The Mirror; Aging and Dying in the Community

Adjunct Teams
ASIA; Shang Shung Institute

Several teams conducted their first meeting in July. Between now and the January 2002 C2C meeting, we will be in the process of recruiting team members, holding conference-calls, and posting team deliberations on the Tsegylgar web site. Gakyils and Community sites throughout North America have been notified of these activities and C2C efforts in general. North American practitioners are invited to contact and join the team of your choice.

In Conclusion

The North American meetings benefited greatly from the presence of individuals with psychological training and/or meeting and organizational facilitation training. They assisted in setting and maintaining the communicative tone of the meetings, helped plan the scope of the meetings, and encouraged the group to apply methods that make for higher quality and more substantial meetings. Ideas for improved meeting facilitation used by Namgyalgar and encouraged by Rinpoche were put into practice. Methods such as assigning a moderator, a time-keeper, a note-taker, and someone who recognizes and keeps track of those wishing to speak were particularly important. We were more or less successful in making sure that everyone participated and was heard, each viewpoint was respected, and all ideas were recorded.

Everyone considered it most important to discuss with Rinpoche the concepts and goals resulting from the North American collaboration effort. A Steering Committee assigned to guide the activity of the teams sent a representative to meet with Rinpoche during the August retreat in Merigar. Rinpoche was encouraging, and urged us to move ahead. He said that only by testing our ideas do we know what is possible. Otherwise, it remains only a concept. Rinpoche felt that with experience we have the opportunity to learn what needs to change and how to correct our activities.

We wish to emphasize that these are not meetings for meetings sake, although the social aspects of meeting are highly important to the purpose, conduct and outcome. In fact, these meetings engender respectful communication, and validate creative problem solving and teamwork, all of which can significantly strengthen our community and our

practice. Our intention is to find a way to become more organized in ways that benefit our participation in the lineage of our Master Chögyal Namkhai Norbu.

Team Contacts

Please join in this promising new venture of building Dzogchen community. If you are a practitioner in North America and are interested in participating in a particular team, please contact the following Team Coordinators:

Practice Planning:
Kyu
kyukhandro@csi.com

Library & Archive:
Marit Kramer
mariter@cs.com

Advertising & Outreach:
Andrea Nasca
74404.1141@compuserve.com

Publications:
Anastasia McGhee
anastasiacghee@hotmail.com

Membership:
Gerry Steinberg
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Will Shea
will_s@hotmail.com

Bookstore, Online & Retail:
Diane Sievers
dsievers@crocker.com

Financial Planning, Long-term Planning & Endowments:
Diane Sievers
dsievers@crocker.com

Karma Yoga:
Savannah Haske
savannahy@earthlink.net

Electronic Media Communications:
Ed Goldberg
edw_goldberg@hotmail.com

Tsegylgar Land & Infrastructure (Lands of North America):
Paula Barry
paulades@javanet.com

History of the Gar in North America:
Ed Goldberg
edw_goldberg@hotmail.com

Retreat 2002:
Andrea Nasca
74404.1141@compuserve.com

Paula Barry
paulades@javanet.com

The Mirror:
Paul Bail
Pbail9972@aol.com

Aging & Dying:
Paula Barry
paulades@javanet.com

Anne Clarkson
aclarkson@mindspring.com

ASIA & Shang Shung Institute:
We are currently looking for Dzogchen Community in America members to act as coordinators for the ASIA and Shang-Shung teams.



A. OZeki

Filling the Phumba at the Stupa at Tsegylgar

by Andrea Nasca

The Stupa dedicated to the long life of our precious master, Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, is almost completed. On Labor Day weekend, about forty people were able to come together, including Lama Ngawang Tsaltrim, to participate in filling the *phumba*, or vase of the Stupa, with a variety of precious and auspicious items.

The weather couldn't have been more pleasant during the days, and about a dozen brave or crazy people camped out on those chilly nights to do the long life practice of Mandarava, dance and the Chöd.

On Saturday, we wrapped all the practice and teaching texts by Rinpoche and images of deities and protectors around the central pole, or *sho-shring*, with a fabric of the five colors of the elements. A group of us did Sang practice continually. Huge offering clouds swirled in all directions as we imagined infinite offerings to all the different kinds of beings we'd invited there. We then did the Long Tun with *serkyem* offering. People were also busy tying together bundles of mantras to be put into the *phumba*, including the mantras of all the guardians, and all mantras related to the Dzogchen teachings.

The full moon fell on Sunday. On this day, we took turns climbing up the scaffold around the Stupa, to go up and place the various blessing objects in the *phumba*, some of which came from Rinpoche himself, some of which were offered by his students. About a week earlier, a few of us got together to take these twenty-one or so "treasures" from Rinpoche, which he himself gathered from around the world, and placed them inside glass jars with incense from Dugu Chögyal Rinpoche, grains that had been blessed on our shrine, saffron, cedar and crystals. These were all placed in the *phumba* along with the *tsa tsas*, Dzogchen texts, crystals, statues, water from Maratika cave, millions of mantras, grains, sacred images from people's personal shrines and ritual objects and both traditional/herbal and "Western" medicines and all the offerings sent to us for this auspicious occasion. As it turned out, we had just a few *tsa tsas* and bags of grain left afterward, so we had just the right amount of each.

When this was completed, we did Ganapuja together in front of the Stupa. It was a joyful and beautiful occasion. There had also been a lot of key tasks that were completed just prior to that weekend, that made this all possible. Piero Bona

cino had come to Tsegylgar last winter to carve the central pole, or *sho-shring*, which was made from a cedar tree that came from a grove on the retreat land. A few people were able to help Piero with the carving and then painting the pole red and yellow. Jim Smith, Paula Barry and several others went up to the land to work on the Stupa almost every other weekend, mixing and pouring cement for the steps and into the various molds that Jim had fashioned into the lotus petals and the *gau*, as well as painting the Stupa itself.

The final tasks include making and placing the gold sun-moon-thigle at the top of the Stupa and just a few finishing touches. We are looking forward to the final blessing and consecration by Rinpoche himself, when he is here at Tsegylgar next year. Thank you very much to Jim Smith and everyone who has contributed to the building of this Stupa, both via your hard work and creativity and your financial contributions, as well! It will cost about \$10,000 to gold plate the sun and moon, so if you are interested, you can still make some donation for this purpose. (Contact Tsegylgar at DzogchenUSA @compuserve.com)

See you next year at the retreats!
May all be auspicious!



Santi Maha Sangha First Level Practice Retreat with Jim Valby
Tsegylgar
July 14th to 29th, 2001

by Paul Bail

From July 14th to 29th, 2001, Jim Valby led first a Santi Maha Sangha Base Retreat and then a First Level Retreat at Tsegylgar. I attended the First Level Retreat with many questions about the practices and the view, which I hoped would be answered. Approximately thirty-five people attended the Base Retreat and fifteen attended the First Level Retreat. There were four sessions of practice daily, led by Jim Valby, and Yantra Yoga in the afternoon, led by Lynne Sutherland. Also, several people did the Vajra Dance in the evening. Meals were provided on site by Joey Solorio, a visiting friend of the Gekö.

I wondered what it would be like, doing a long retreat without the Master present. However, I discovered that the Master, indeed, was present. That is to say, the energy of the Master was present, in the words of the Teachings, the perfume of the practices, the assembly of Vajra brothers and sisters, and the flavor of Jim's recollections and personal anecdotes concerning the Master.

Jim kept stressing the importance of the base practices; particularly the Lojong practices which develop the prana, and the Rushen practices which are designed to give us a clear experience of Rigpa. "Whenever you feel your practice is getting stale, the way to refresh it is to do a weekend retreat of Rushen, in order to re-familiarize yourself with Rigpa. You are bound to have at least a momentary taste of Rigpa if you are doing the Rushen." Another point Jim stressed was that practices which are conventionally referred to as 'preliminary' are actually main practices, since they are all forms of Guruyoga. From the very beginning of a session of practice, if one is present, one can be in a state of Rigpa. It is not a matter of rushing through the base and preliminaries in order to receive the 'real' goodies, some 'new' teaching. It is all the real teaching. It is all the main practice. Going further in SMS simply means getting more and more serious about doing the practices, deepening one's familiarity with them, and one's intuitive understanding of one's bond with the Master and his Mandala of students.

Since Jim's primary vocation and avocation is the translation of the Dzogchen Semde Tantras, the evening sessions involved reviewing some of the teachings of these Tantras. When I listen to the oral explanations of Dzogchen, sometimes I 'get it', but other times the logic just seems to turn back in upon itself, and contradict itself, leaving me frustrated. Everything that we experience is always an expression of Rigpa, but we don't experience that, which is also an expression of Rigpa, but nevertheless we need to try to experience Rigpa, although we shouldn't hang onto any experience.....round and round in circles. My poor head gets dizzy. However, as Jim pointed out, we can't 'figure it out' by constructing conceptual systems, because that just becomes part of our 'Dharma ego', which then acts as an obstacle.

The heat was pretty overwhelming the first few days of the retreat. Several people abandoned the dorm room on the top floor, and slept in the cellar, which was cooler. On Thursday everyone was looking forward to going to the Sacred Land to at Buckland dance and to swim in the pond. But it rained. Friday a group of people went to the Land, although it was still rather cool for swimming. A smaller group of us stayed behind to hear Jacqueline Gens make a presentation about Shang-Shung Institute. It was very interesting and encouraging to hear about the many successful and significant projects being sponsored by Shang-Shung, but disturbing to hear that these projects are endangered by a shortage of funds for basic administrative costs.

Saturday Efram Marder and Marit Cramer, longtime Community members, hosted a barbecue for the retreatants, and provided ample food and drink. They have a swimming pool on their property, and finally the weather was once again warm enough for comfortable swimming. Sunday was the last day of the retreat, with a Ganapuja and videotaped transmission by Rinpoche.

The Dzogchen Community in North America at Tsegylgar Needs a Bookstore Manager

The Dzogchen Community of North America is seeking a bookstore manager for its operations in Conway, Massachusetts. The person sought will be responsible, in collaboration with the Gakyil, for all aspects of managing and developing sales, which we hope to expand through on-line retail and other initiatives. The manager works with a high degree of independence in scheduling and implementing tasks.

The ideal candidate will have had experience in the bookstore business, including inventory, on-line sales, and software such as Quick books.

This is a part time position which currently requires approximately 16 hrs/wk. Must be available to operate bookstore during retreats and other teachings.

The base compensation is \$800 per month, with the possibility for incentive payment for increased sales. The compensation rate is admittedly understanding that the employee, as a student of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu and a member of the DCA, may contribute voluntary service over and above normal market compensation. Volunteer

assistance from other Community members will be available.

More details about the job:

SALES

Handles all sales-related matters including taking orders through web site, email, mail, telephone and fulfillment of orders taking payments in cash, check or

credit card. Processing membership credit card installment payments, collects balances on outstanding invoices, track & maintain back orders.

ADVERTISING & PROMOTION

Prepares and places advertisements in appropriate media (Newsletter, The Mirror, Web site) with the consultation of the Gakyil and the Community's secretary.

BOOKKEEPING

Keeps records of purchases, sales, income & expenses, consignment sales, customers and suppliers. Prepares bank deposits.

REPORTS

Compiles summary reports approximately three times per month. Periodically prepares summary reports for the Gakyil.

PURCHASING

Periodically orders books and supplies from vendors and arranges payments through secretary. Negotiates appropriate discounts and trade arrangements with vendors.

INVENTORY & MAINTENANCE

Maintains bookstore, bookstore's web site and computer in an orderly and professional manner and performs a full inventory once a year.

Interested persons should respond to:
Diane Sievers, Treasurer,
Tsegylgar,
Email: dsievers@crocket.com



M. Katz, J. Clark & J. La France

LYALBY

The First Tsegylgar Open

by John Foster

The first Tsegylgar Open golf tournament was held on July 22nd at the Edge Hill Golf Course in Ashfield. The event raised approx. \$1,800.00 for the Dzogchen Community and the completion of the Stupa, dedicated to the long life of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, being built on the Buckland land. Seventeen "world class" golfers participated in the event and many more supporters cheered the drama unfolding before them from the verandah of the club house. Although many of the participants claimed to be playing just to have an excuse to donate money to the Community, the real reason they were playing was to have the possibility of having their names forever etched on the "coveted Vajra Trophy" (see picture). Because of this possibility, the competition was fierce and riveting. No mercy was shown to any tree, water hazard or rocky out crop that seemed to gobble golf balls at will. Skilled golfers each, the hot and sweaty participants demonstrated again and again the form and concentration that was necessary to best this demanding course. Luckily, no one was hurt.

Alas, at day's end, only one foursome could be crowned "Champions" and true champions they were; gloating to excess, high fiving each other and thumbing their noses at the rest of us vanquished players. Their names will forever be found on the "coveted Vajra Trophy" as winners of the first Tsegylgar Open. They are: Diane Sievers, Gerry Steinberg, Bill (a friend of Gerry's) and Damien Schwartz. For each participant's generosity, they received a "Holy Golf Relic" (see picture) and were treated to a gourmet meal. Because of the success of the first Tsegylgar Open, plans are already in the works for the next Tsegylgar Open to be held in June or July of 2002 when Rinpoche is here. So, hone your golf skills and you too may find your name on the "coveted Vajra Trophy". My personal thanks to all the generous participants and supporters.

MOVEMENT News from Tashigar

by Griselda Galmes

Organizing the Gar:

More or less from June we have new Gekö, Delia dos Santos, and a new secretary, Sara Hanono. They are working with the strict collaboration of Gakyil because they need our assistance in the beginning and because we are defining all the basic rules in Tashigar. Both of them, Delia and Sara, are very energetic people, active and with good dispositions. Tashigar shows the effects of their actions: The houses are clean, there is always food for people who arrive or remain in the Gar, everybody is well received, and the garden and fruit trees are receiving attention and cares. The secretary is beginning to work with the communications (after one month without Internet because of a virus in the server) and the new bookstore is ready to offer many books and beautiful objects of Dharma.

Improving the communications:

It is a priority for us because appropriate communication enables us to maintain our samaya purely between Vajra brothers and sisters. We are working to improve the Gakyil meetings and create others spaces for an interchange of ideas between practitioners. It's not easy because we must change some old habits, but there are still some advances in this field that we will try to share through the next Mirror.

Increasing publications:

There are in Tashigar many titles of our Master translated into Spanish. We recently published "The Song of Vajra" ("El Canto del Vajra") in a Spanish version with a format very similar to the English one. We are also producing "The Newsletter of Tashigar" (Boletín de Tashigar) where, if any person wishes, they can find the list of books in Spanish and audio and video tapes of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu's Retreats. Also, the newsletter topics are related to each of Rinpoche's transmissions.

Reorganizing Tashigar Mandala: The red Gakyil is very busy studying the lands to design the necessary infrastructure for Tashigar Mandala's light, water, phone installations, and roads. In a short time we will have a meeting with all the people interested in this project.

Doing retreats: In the first week of each month there are different retreats in Tashigar coordinated by the blue Gakyil. The last one was a retreat for newcomers, but was really an important experience for everybody, new and old practitioners.

Community Schedules for the Greater Seattle Area

Friday Oct. 26th - Ganapuja

Time: 7.30 pm

Location: Heidi & Daniel's in Kirkland

Directions & RSVP:

Email: dzogchenseattle@cs.com

Tel: 425-822 5080

Tuesday Oct.30th - Shitro

49th Day Shitro for all who died September 11th

Time: 7pm

Location: Erica's on Whidbey Island

Directions & RSVP:

Email: emaho@whidbey.com (email much preferred)

Tel: 360-579-8255

Saturday Nov. 10th - Global Transmission - Adzom

Drukpa Anniversary

Time: 4 am

Location: Erica's on Whidbey Island

Directions & RSVP:

Email: emaho@whidbey.com

(email much preferred)

Tel: 360-579-8255

Thursday Nov. 15th - Tun

Time: 7.30 pm

Location: Judith's in Seattle

Directions & RSVP:

Email: jmarcus@seattlehealingarts.com

Tel: 206-547 7002

Nov. 30th, Friday at 7.30 at Heidi & Daniel's in Kirk-

land

Time: 7.30 pm

Location: Heidi & Daniel's in Kirkland

Directions & RSVP:

Email: dzogchenseattle@cs.com

Tel: 425-822 5080

Sunday 9th December - Ganapuja - Dakini Day

Time: 5pm

Location: Erica's on Whidbey Island

Directions & RSVP:

Email: emaho@whidbey.com

(email much preferred)

Tel: 360-579-8255

Every Wednesday on Whidbey Island - Chod

Time: 5.30 pm

Location: Langley - Whidbey Island

Directions

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Tel: 360-579-8255

Lynn:

Email: tenaly@whidbey.com

Tel: 360-221-2350

tashigar & south america

New Schedule for Santi Maha Sangha Practice Retreats

with Jim Valby

January, 2002

Tashigar, Argentina

Jan 25th - 30th, 2002

Tashigar

SMS Base Level Practice Retreat

The four daily sessions are:

8:30am - 10am

10:30am - 12noon

4:30pm - 6pm (Yantra Yoga)

6:30pm - 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 Training where we will focus on the essential theory and practice of Sutra, Tantra and Dzogchen as transmitted by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu in his book called "The Precious Vase - Instructions on the Base of Santi Maha Sangha". Jim Valby, a student of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu since 1982, will lead this training.

Feb 1-5, 2002

Tashigar

SMS First Level Practice Retreat

The four daily sessions are:

8:30am - 10am

10:30am - 12noon

4:30pm - 6pm

6:30pm - 8pm

Anybody who has taken the SMS First Level training with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu may participate in the 8:30am, 10:30am and 4:30pm thuns of 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.

Feb 6th - 9th, 2002

Tashigar SMS Second Level Practice Retreat

The four daily sessions are:

8:30am - 10am

10:30am - 12noon

4:30pm - 6pm

6:30pm - 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.

The 6:30-8pm session during each retreat will begin with Guruyoga and end with an abbreviated Chöd practice. In the middle we will study ancient Dzogchen Semde texts. Anybody who has attended a retreat with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu or participated in one of the three Universal Transmission practice days, may participate in the 6:30-8pm session of any retreat.



Vajra Dance in Northern Australia

by Jean Mackintosh

In June, the cold season in Namgyalgar, I was asked to teach three dance courses in the north east of Australia. First in Mt. Tambourine, one hour southwest of Brisbane and the following weekends in Cairns, Far North Queensland, close to the top of Australia. I left Central Tilba in the 5am darkness, by bus to Sydney airport. Bus, plane, bus and finally the warm scented air of Mullumbimby on the north coast of New South Wales.

Waking to the birds and flowers of a different realm with coffee in the backyard sun under the custard apples hanging off the trees. With old friends spending time, and a visit to long time Dzogchen practitioner Amare Pearl in his mountain cave, rushing stream, rock swimming hole, personal retreat center with organic avocados and exotic bamboo groves. Favorable circumstances and Satori arrived by car to complete the journey to Mt. Tambourine and the home of Harry and Samadhi, their two delightful daughters, donkeys, dog Oscar and the chooks. Ten people for the course, from Brisbane, the Sunshine Coast, and Marie from New Caledonia. Four men and six women for perfecting the Dance of the Liberation of the Six Lokas into the Six Spaces of Samantabhadra. Six sessions for the Six Lokas and the Six Liberations. And then we danced freely together, AAH HA SHA SA MA, finally stepping out into the mountain village overlooking the skyscrapers of the Gold Coast like lego blocks in the distance. And the plains and mountains of Western Queensland on the other side.

We were dancing in space. Dancing, talking, sleeping, laughing together at the home of Harry and Samadhi with a Ganapuja and Mad Fish wine. AAH HA SHA SA MA, the sounds and steps came together in our last practice by moonlight with the evening dew fast forming on our feet, as we left the Mandala to dance our separate ways.

By plane to Cairns. The arms rise and the arms fall. The feet glide from one place and move to the next space. The moment gone, moving, changing. The geko clicks out his tropical call beyond

the darkness and is silent again. The soft darkness of the warm night breaks into gray that rises up over the mirror like sea and tropical beaches of Cairns. The smell of incense whispers on the air as early morning meditation accompanies the new day, the changing time. AAH HA SHA SA MA, the gentle cleansing rain melts softly over us, then changes to a pelting pour and is gone, it's moment spent. The warm air folds around us on the three day weekend in June as thirteen people join the Cairns course. Two men and eleven women including one practitioner from Melbourne and a new practitioner from Bowen, down the coast.

The course is organized by Lawrence and Dammika and supporters of the Bodhi Citta Buddhist Center whose home is high in the hills of Cairns looking over the Coral Sea and Green Island in the distance. Kindness and caring and gentle loving sustain the center and organization of the course of the Liberation of the Six Lokas dance in Cairns. As we perfect the steps together the energy rises and the last evening is filled with wild laughter long into the evening. AAH HA SHA SA MA our last practice on the front lawn integrating the expanse of sea and sky brings back the joyous mood altogether laughing.

The following weekend in Cairns the Dance of the Three Vajras begins, with sadness and worry in our hearts as Steve our vajra brother entered hospital that day with a serious heart condition, awaiting transfer to Townsville and open heart surgery. Consequently our numbers were small but we decide to continue the course, to continue to dance, putting our feet carefully on the mandala, moving from space to space through time and place, moving with Steve and each other, as we try to remain in the state of the Master, ever present in body, voice and mind. Each of us moves separately on the mandala. Men and women move in opposite directions and then meet together again as in the beginning.

Life continues on, time seems to stand still and then rush headlong. We continue to dance in time and place and beyond time and space. We are dreamlike dancers in a dreamlike dance, and we pay homage to our Master who gave us this special gift.

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Alice Springs Rushen Retreat

by Jean Mackintosh

Blue trees on silver rocks. Blue green trees with pure white trunks leaning over the water hole, protectively. The black and white willy wag tail flies from one end to the other, over the water, onto the sand, up to the trees, over our heads. The little brown Euro rock wallaby hops fleetingly high up in the gorge and is gone in a second. He is the owner of this dreaming site, Fish Hole, in the West McDonnell ranges, Arrende country. The deep water lies in the narrow gorge with ancient red rocks rising to the endless blue sky. The pool opens through the gorge to sandy edges and the soft haze blue and white of the trees. It is a magically beautiful place which manifested itself to us after a two hour walk on the fourth day of our Rushen retreat at Hamilton Downs, a camping place near Alice Springs in the center heart of Australia.

There were few of us, eight people who were very strong in our resolve to practice Rushen in the expansive age old, desert land. Steve, Michelle, Stella and Georgia arrived from Adelaide, Bob from Brisbane, Jean from Central Tilba, Sue and Veda from Alice. Sue and Veda supported our small group in many ways, most importantly in getting us to and from Hamilton Downs.

Arriving at Hamilton Downs on the Saturday morning, the strength of the desert light seemed to bleach the colors from the adjacent ranges. In the heat of the day everything seemed washed out, the straw colored grass, the brown sandy dry river bed, the red river gums with their smooth white trunks and gray blue leaves. In the early morning sunlight as we practiced the Universal Primordial Essences the color came back and we watched it change dramatically over the ancient rock faces before us. The West MacDonnell range, Yeperente, Caterpillar dreaming, turning red, brown, purple in the early light.

With the strength of our practice we connected with the still silent space of the Western Desert. Mid morning, inner Rushen, the liberation of the Six Lokas practice helped purify our karmic vision. At the end the sun had warmed up our practice place in the river bed. After eating together in the shady outdoor dining room, each practitioner walked out into the bush to find their private place on a rocky hillside, in a dry river bed or amongst the grassy mulga plains. There we practiced outer Rushen in our own way, trying to liberate our body from habitual tendencies and past karma, and also the secret Rushen of the mind. In the heat of the late afternoon practitioners returned walking back along the track to the camp.

The moon rose and bathed the whole landscape in intense light. Fires were lit and dinner eaten in the warm interior as the outside temperature dropped to zero. Sitting by the fire we practiced Ganapuja, singing, cooking and laughing, while outside the dingos howled mournfully coming very close on our last night to sing a very special song to us.

The whole retreat was intense and tiring; the desert elements were strong. As with our practice we edged into the desert slowly, accepting the isolation, allowing its secret beauty to emerge. The precious wisdom dreaming of the expansive desert seeped into our being, trance like, out of time, the soft sensuous energy of this timeless land revealed its presence.

The Flight of the Crow Rushen Retreat in Central Australia

Winter in the desert,
and practice burns through frost
in the dry river bed,
it cuts through bright thin air,
the cloudless sky
and the dullness of habit and fear

We are eight,
vajra kin,
with karma and good humor
we practice hard Rushen,
the great separation,
together and in secret places
where sound and movement manifest in space
without much ado
(make sure you offer well to the local guardians)

7.30 in the river bed,
it hasn't flowed for a year
but the morning sun warms our backs
as it rises above the hill behind the homestead
and the Universal Primordial Essence
runs like electricity through water

10.30 and now the sun is high enough
for hats and sunscreen,
even the flies come out to hear us sing,
so we purify our Six Lokas
and karmic vision
with the melody of the realized ones.

2.00 we walk away from each other
to secret places of practice
and offer to the guardians
our request and apology in advance
for looking so strange and making weird noises.
River beds are a good place for this!

7.30 is Ganapuja
offer request thanks
eat sing talk
Goodnight.

Are we wild enough for this place,
I think we are,
although not always sure,
to trust in our resources
and bring great good heart
to our vajra practice.

Thank you to the desert,
vajra kin,
and to the Master
whose ever present blessing
of wisdom and energy
gives life,
and reason for life,
to the great way of self liberation.

May all beings instantly achieve self liberation!

by Sue Fielding

Melbourne News Australia

by Prue Forbes
June 2001

In the southern part of Australia where we live, many of us are suffering from winter blues, sore throats and coughs. Rinpoche is on the other side of the world and in a different hemisphere. Still, the Dzogchen community is flourishing. The human energy emanating from twenty-five members is overwhelming, in fact almost magical in its power and far-reaching effects.

The recent highlight for me was a group retreat in the country town of Daylesford. Fifteen of us drove for one and a half hours to the beautiful home belonging to Peter Phipps and his sisters. No-one lives in the house. Peter's mother, Helen Mary, died last year and left this cozy retreat place to her four children.

On arriving, I was greeted at the door by a big 'meow', as Kitten, a fluffy ginger cat with huge paws, affectionately gazed upwards. Even after a busy working day in the city, the kitchen was already full of activity. Food was being prepared casually by Susanna and other students of Rinpoche, with laughter and warmth in the air. Unlike Namgyalgar, there was no need to set up camp; comfortable beds were in each of the six bedrooms. The meals seemed to happen easily. Everything flowed. Fellow practitioners immediately felt like close friends. At night we opened our bedroom window and breathed in the fresh country air.

Sitting for two hour sessions around the thick blue dragon rug we practiced Guruyoga of the white A over and over, each time following it with a Semdzin practice.

Such serious group practice inspires me. At home, I find it hard to wake up early each morning in the dark and cold to practice by myself. The retreat helped me to focus on the value of being disciplined. The social side made taking 'Refuge in the Sangha' a reality; I now feel part of a strong core of people.

Since the retreat, many of us continue meeting in pairs for practices and some have traveled eight hours to Namgyalgar for individual retreats. The energy of the retreat radiates out. Only four of us dance the Vajra Dance regularly, and Yantra Yoga practice is only just starting again, but the energy remains. No matter how many people turn up to our weekly Ganapuja in Melbourne, the practice continues to be a strong connection. Rinpoche's television transmissions and explanations are well attended by new and old practitioners. As a newer member of two years, it is inspiring to see practitioners humbly checking details during these explanation sessions. We have also just started an Santi Maha Sangha study group. Twenty-one of us meet weekly, either in the north or the south of our sprawling city.

Behind the scenes, energy is put into arrangements and activities. Meetings abound so that all can run smoothly, both here and at Namgyalgar. Effort goes into everything.

The end of the Daylesford retreat came all too soon, and it was time for our last practice; typically, a Ganapuja, which completed the twelve hour sittings.

Dear members and supporters of the Dzogchen Community of Namgyalgar,

It has been eight years since our Community purchased the land which has become the center of our Gar. A huge amount has been achieved in that short time, through the collaboration and dedication of many students of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu. Among many accomplishments we have built a beautiful and comfortable house for our Master, and nearly completed a beautiful jewel of a Gonpa, but through all this, one big task remains outstanding.

For the last eight years we have continued to pay the mortgage on the land, with a large sum being paid to the banks for interest on the loan. This loan has been carried almost solely by a small group of generous practitioners. We have decided to bring this chapter to a close so we can move on to much more important tasks in the development of the Gar, such as building retreat cabins, a gekos house and so on.

Therefore, we have declared 2001 the year of the campaign to pay out the remaining mortgage! We are asking everybody in the community to contribute something, no matter how small, to finally dispose of this debt! If we do this as a group, it will take remarkably little energy from us to accomplish this.

Namgyalgar is offering individuals and groups from the whole Oceania region Dzogchen Community of Namgyalgar the opportunity to buy out units of debt for \$700 (Australian) each. A total of 100 units of the Land Fund are available (the remaining mortgage is \$70,000). Some individuals or groups may be able to buy a number of units. Others will maybe make a small contribution towards a group effort for one unit. When we've sold only 100 of these, Namgyalgar will be free of debt and wholly owned by the Dzogchen Community.

Practitioners with limited financial resources do not need to feel powerless to help, in fact for this to work we need everybody to take a little responsibility. Get together with other practitioners in your area, and find a way to raise the money to buy some units. This may mean holding a small (or large) fundraising event, selling some old things at a second hand market, making a bet at the races, holding a weekend retreat in your area and charging people money to attend... making money can be pretty easy when lots of people come together and collaborate. Rinpoche constantly reminds us, it is collaboration between practitioners that makes a Gar; it's a very powerful model he has given us, let's use it! So come on Adelaide, Auckland, Bangkok, Brisbane, Dunedin, Cairns, Melbourne, Singapore, Sydney, Tilba, Tokyo, and all the

rest. Working together we can reach this goal before the end of the year!

Contact Ely to pledge as a group or individual for a unit or more - Eleanor.c.loudon@uts.edu.au, Tel: 61. 3. 9484 8189.

I will need names, contact details, including email, and payment plan. Instant Credit Card payments are recommended.

Stop Press!

We're on our way! Thanks to the generosity of practitioners worldwide, we are well on our way towards attaining the goal of our "Units" campaign.

So far we've received pledges and purchases of over \$14,000 representing 20 units of debt. The total has now been reduced from \$70,000 to \$56,500, representing a reduction of debt units from 100 to 80 in a matter of 10 short weeks. Only 80 more units to go!

As if in confirmation of this appeal, after a year of negotiating, we have just received word that donations made within Australia to the "Units of Land" fund are tax-deductible.

Contact me with your pledge today. Spread the word. What a few individuals cannot do, we can all do by collaborating.

Together we will have made Namgyalgar a place we can retreat to for practice and to study, for many years to come.

Passages

Married:

Jacek Machowski and Tatiana Zimmer were married on July 7, 2001 in Knurów, Poland.

Born:

Ramoyus Lapinskas, a boy, was born to Ernestas and Ausra Lapinskas of Vilnius, Lithuania on August 14th, 2001. Their first child, Gaya, a girl, was born on October 10th, 1999.



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The ASIA site is available at:
<http://www.melong.com/asia>

The Mirror

Back Issues Available! 10 issues for \$10US!

A packet of 10 back issues of The Mirror from its first year in 1990, as well as issues from 1997, 1998, and 1999 is now available. The information and articles contained in the past issues includes:

Teachings by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu:

"Relaxation and Collaboration, Keys to Communication within the Community"

"The Importance of the Dzogchen Community"

"Ancient Wisdom, the History of Bön, Buddhism and Dzogchen in Tibet"

"Our Real Nature is Beyond Explanation"

"Traveling Across the Ocean of Samsara"

Other articles and talks by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu:

"Buddhism and Psychology"

"The Origin of Tibetan Language and Culture"

"The Principle of Collaboration in the Dzogchen Community"

"Working with Samaya"

Biographies of Great Masters:

Srisimha; Yeshecho or Jnanasutra; The Story of Vimalamitra; Thang-stong rGyal-po, Father of the Tibetan Drama Tradition and Garab Dorje, Sukha the Zombie

Articles about the activities in Tibet of A.S.I.A.:

The Tibetan Elementary School in Dang-che; The Program of the Development of the Health and Educational Conditions of the Village of Dzam Thog.; Major Developments in A.S.I.A. Projects in 1999

Other articles of interest:

The Dzogchen Community Welcomes His Holiness the Dalai Lama (Merigar, 1990); The Vajra Dance; Interview with His Holiness Sakya Trizin; Teaching on the Three Points by Chokyi Nyima Rinpoche; The Nature and Meaning of Santi Maha Sangha; Environmental Projects in Riwoche, Tibet; Archaeological Survey of the Lost City of Zhang Zhung; articles on Tibetan Medicine, Astrology and Art; Book Reviews; International Gakyil News and the International Publications Committee; Projects and activities of Shang Shung Institute; historical Community News and Retreat reports, personal Reflections; and more.

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Shang-Shung Institute from page 11

Inauguration of the Shang-Shung Institute Austria

First courses on Ku Nye with Dr. Nida Chenagtsang

A report by Oliver F. Leick, chairman of the SSI Austria

The Shang-Shung Institute Austria, founded in 2000, is a branch of the Istituto Shang-Shung in Italy and follows the same aims and principles as the main Institute. After one and a half years of preparation - in order to find the right moment, the right place and the right people for a course - finally our activities manifested and we inaugurated our Institute with the first courses on Ku Nye, Tibetan massage. Dr. Nida Chenagtsang kindly accepted our invitation and held two weekend courses in June, 2001 in Graz, Austria.

Dr. Nida introduced us in a brilliant way into the basic understanding of Tibetan Medicine, its historical background and its connection to Tibetan Massage, and also showed us the first steps of Ku Nye, this special form of massage, so that we all were able to practice very diligently many hours a day.

Twenty lucky people from different places in Austria - most of the people are not part of the Dzogchen Community - took that unique opportunity in the German speaking countries to start this extraordinary training in order to become a Ku Nye Khan, a professional masseur of Tibetan Massage.

The whole training of Ku Nye is divided into three levels, each level lasting for four weekends. In order to reach the next level the participants must practice individually and pass an exam. The courses in June were the first part of the First Level. The First Level will finish with two more weekends in 2002. The precise dates for these weekends are: January 26th/27th and February 2nd/3rd, 2002.

During this period Dr. Nida will again give some public talks on Tibetan Medicine. Dr. Nida already gave one very interesting talk on "Introduction to Tibetan Medicine" in Graz during his last visit. He will probably also speak on Sa Che, the old, original Tibetan form of Feng Shui.

Everybody who has already finished at least the first part of the First Level of Ku Nye is welcome to participate and come to Graz. Dr. Nida teaches in English and the courses will be translated into German.

The Shang-Shung Institute Austria is working on the transcripts of Dr. Nida's public talks and on a German "Ku - Nye Manual", which will be available at the end of the each Level.

Featured Ling Kunselling

Kunselling
Place of Constant Clarity
Home of the Dzogchen Community, UK



Kunselling was purchased by the Dzogchen Community UK in 1997. It is an old stone farmhouse perched several hundred meters above an idyllic secret Welsh valley in the area rapidly becoming known as the Welsh Tibet. Kunselling is comprised of a main house, a barn, and some out buildings, as well as about two hectares of land.

Kunselling has become a central focus for the UK Community and is now starting to receive increasing interest from other Dzogchen Communities in Europe. Chögyal Namkhai Norbu consecrated the Ling in 1998 and changed the name from Welsh Llwydallt - which means "Grey Hill" - to Kunselling which means the Place of Constant Clarity.

Kunselling is a perfect center for individual and small group retreats and has been used intensively now for over three years. The secluded location is excellent for meditation with both solitude and wild open moor land.

The UK Community uses Kunselling for regular group practice weekends. We have found that having this space has enabled us to increase our opportunities to focus on practice away from the distractions of everyday life and also provides ample occasion to practice karma yoga. We are happy to invite our Vajra brothers and sisters to join us in collective practice or to book Kunselling for personal retreat.

The UK Community has plans to develop Kunselling which includes a place in the center of the courtyard for the Vajra Dance Mandala. The main house stands to the South of the courtyard. To the West is a large barn which will become a collective practice space. It will also house a library and small office. The collection of small outbuildings will be converted into individual retreat cells for up to four people, and have been designed to double up for eight people. There will also be toilets, showers and a small kitchen. Possible

future plans include a conservatory addition to the house which could be used as a dining room or crèche for children.

The UK Community hopes to develop a dark retreat facility in the future, but for the time being have decided to design one of the four retreat cells as an adaptable dark retreat space.

How you can help us develop Kunselling:

Whether you make a one off donation, no matter how small, or arrange to make regular contributions, as many people in the UK do, we will be very grateful.

We are currently initiating a sponsorship scheme for specific parts of this development, such as individual retreat cabins, where sponsors will enjoy certain benefits.

Payment details:

The bank international transfers code is:

MIDLGB2240020301077384

People can also write checks in Euros and send them to us.

For further information:

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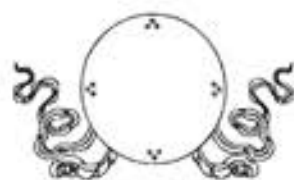
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welcome

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REFLECTIONS

White

The colors shift up to full volume,
and the wild flowers started turning
their heads.

I caught a bucket full of joyous
tears,
while walking home on white dirt
roads;
singing thanks for the best day of
my life,
just like yesterday and the one
tomorrow.

This core begins to awaken, stretch
and observe.

Strands of incense smoke, while
waves engulf,
and the thoughts flush away.
Uncovered serenity as familiar as a
mothers scent.

The strength that we find,
as we weave through the grass
Brings peace on a platter
and tears to the eyes.

In thanks for this place, this space,
the infinite stars in the brightest
whites.

Sophia Hoadley

Merigar

Summer 2001

The Stone Age Buddha

lived in a hell of ice
The lake, his favorite fishing place
was full of sky
raw prevenient blue encased
in pure water caught his attention
Raising his gaze he relaxed further
first steaming breath from open
mouth

then thoughts

then his very eyes

melted into deep blue

endless, empty, glowing

Suddenly an elk grunted

a fish broke the surface

chill wind rattled the holly

and all were filigrees of deep blue

framed in deep blue

words of deep blue

faithful, wakeful, true

Mark Zengerle

May 15th, 2001

BUDDHA'S VOW

Until
this
wood
is
RADIANTLY
green.
will I remain/
ILLUSORY
in this
light.

I sing to trees. It
has been a long time & the wind
is
moaning,
almost
inaudibly.
Here,
bird-song
weep/
center,
Center,
I reclaim my heritage/
peacock,
guardian
CROWN.

Louise Landes Levi
Castel del Piano, 1998

Michela's Story

September 11th, 2001

New York City

by Michela Martello

I am on my way to work,
two blocks away from
the World Trade Center. I
am painting a mural in an
apartment in one of those
beautiful downtown build-
ings on the shores of the
Hudson River. It's not yet
nine o'clock, and I am not
aware of the tragedy that is
unfolding around me.

Like everyone else
surrounding me, I look
toward downtown and wit-
ness what has been show-
ing incessantly on TV's all
around the world. All the
same, I continue to ride my bike;
there are lots of people moving in
different directions. I am aware,
nothing escapes me; not a com-
ment, not an expression and not a
single motion. I, too, cannot stand
still and continue moving toward
downtown. I must get off my bike,
the crowd is swelling, we all walk.
It is an unbelievable event which
has already taken place.

Last year I was working inside
the lower level of one the Towers. I
know a few people that work there,
I am thinking about them I hope
they are safe. Perhaps I can be of
help, I am not sure. Various
thoughts race through my mind.
Now I am very close. A policeman
tells me that it can be very danger-
ous and fortunately he doesn't
allow me to go near it. I walk a few
yards, it's hard and my legs begin to
tremble. I think about the disaster
that has just happened, I think
about it over and over again and so
does everyone else. I move slowly
and mechanically, by this time what
I see completely paralyzes me; peo-
ple jumping from the towers as an
alternative to being burned alive. I
am below, not too far, my eyes
endure these images but I am sud-
denly filled with an indescribable
pain. I don't know what to do. I feel
totally crushed by sadness!

I am looking at the South
Tower and I witness the collapse,
which transforms into an explo-
sion, all the while I think the worst
is over! The violence of the explo-
sion had not yet caused a reaction
within me, time expands and I feel
the emptiness. For a moment or two
I am not sure and then back to reali-
ty. I realize I am not that far from
the site. I drop the bike and my



purse, I turn and run, I run really
fast and I am not sure I will make it.
I run toward the water, we all run
toward the water, behind I can
sense a horrendous mountain of
rubble, smoke and glass. I reach the
river's edge and I consider jump-
ing, but the dense smoke like a
thick cloud prevents us from seeing
and breathing. People cry and
scream. We are more or less at a
stand still. I am scared and I know
that something else is bound to hap-
pen. I do Guruyoga, I immediately
calm down but it lasts for only a
brief moment, because the thick,
brown cloud transforms itself in
only seconds into a silent and
impenetrable blackness. It's the
eerie, most spine-chilling dark-
ness I have ever experienced. Now
there are no sounds, no cries, I will
never forget that silence. I want to
move, I grab someone's arm and I
follow him unaware of my sur-
roundings, almost blindly. I am
lucky this gentleman has a flash-
light; he is a Ranger, a "Battery
Park Ranger", he tries to guide the
way. I find my bearings and I run
towards the building where I work.
I cannot breath, my lungs burn and
a man tells me to cover my mouth
with my shirt. He helps me. I reach
the building and once inside I can
finally breath. I let myself go, I cry,
I shiver, again feel scared. I cannot
stop shivering.

At this point I cannot believe
that everything has happened, but
rather that it must still happen.
There are lots of people in the lob-
by, we are all covered with white
dust and soot, the people whom I
work for recognize me and bring
me to their apartment. They make
me change clothing and despite the
fear I am very lucid. I am informed

that it was an terrorist attack. I
am shocked, my knees
quiver, I cannot believe what
I am hearing, but I know it's
true because, you see, these
are the conditions in which
we live in.

A few moments later, the
second Tower collapses, the
soot and dust settles. We
regain visibility and rush to
the streets. It's completely
white, the police push us on
the boats and we are ferried to
New Jersey. I was able to
return to Manhattan after
three long days.

The first night I had a ter-
rible nightmare, everything
was black, I was on a pier close to a
pitch black and rough sea, and there
were lots of forms similar to death.
The second night the dream was
better, the sea was calm and the sur-
face flat, alive and clear blue. I
spent those three days glued to the
television set. I was in a beautiful
hotel in Atlantic City, the rooms
were lovely and comfortable. It
was so surreal to find oneself sud-
denly there with someone else's
clothes, no money and no docu-
ments and in a way adopted by
these people who brought me along
with them during the evacuation.

I abandoned myself to the
events of the moment; the nature of
my state of mind was rather calm
and lucid apart from the moments
when I trembled and could not
practice, but during the time I spent
watching TV I experienced some-
thing particular and suddenly
recalled the feeling of emptiness I
felt when the Tower collapsed.

The strange thing is that after
having lived through such a violent
and powerful experience and hav-
ing felt the eerie emptiness, instead
of falling into a bottomless void, I
felt lightened from a burden, and it
gave me and continues to give me
strength and clarity.

When the emptiness becomes
the domain of your thoughts it can
be a terrifying place. If, instead,
you can live through it as an experi-
ence, it frees you from your fears.
Back in New York I was taken
aback by sorrow, the air is sad and
heavy! The other day a very special
person told me:

"If we human beings are able
to breath it is because in this world
there are more people who Love." I
believe in what she said. I know it's
true!



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INTERNATIONAL GAKYIL NEWS

Blue:
Karin Esenmeyer
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Fabio Andriaco
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It still could be you!

ERRATA

There were two omissions pertaining to the article on the "Complete Works of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu Project" on page 20 of the previous issue of The Mirror, issue #57.

The first omission is that of Namgyalgar as the donor of 7.5% and the second is the list appearing below.

Our apologies!

The Mirror

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In the name of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu and the Dzogchen Community as a whole we would like to thank wholeheartedly all the following donors for their great generosity:

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NEW BOOK AVAILABLE FROM SHANG-SHUNG EDITIONS, ITALY

The Dzogchen Community, Principles and Guidelines for Practitioners

The idea for this booklet arose during an International Gakyil Meeting at Merigar in the Summer of 2000. There were a variety of groups formed at the meeting to discuss and focus on different aspects of work within the Community.

In the group concerning Gakyil relations it became clear that there were problems common to all Gakyil members due to the lack of knowledge of the fundamental principles of the Dzogchen Community, uncertainty about the basic requirements of being a Gakyil member, and other problems related to misunderstandings in communication and group dynamics.

In order to help overcome this problem we decided to publish a Gakyil Manual. The guidelines outlined in this manual are intended to be useful as a general aid, but the particular way each Dzogchen Community functions in their own country is unique and they will have to adapt the manual accordingly.

This manual will require periodic updates. Please send all information to: Saadet.A@gmx.de

Hopefully this manual will function as a helpful resource for all Dzogchen Community members.

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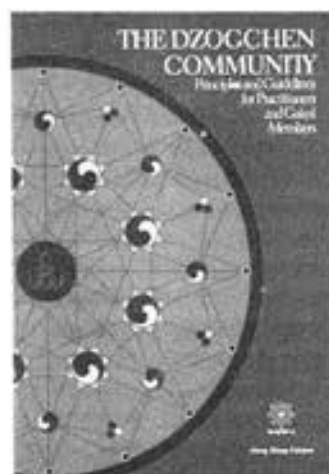
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We apologize in advance for any omission.
May the pure Dzogchen teachings transmitted by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu spread everywhere in the world!

The International Gakyil
Igor Legati, Supervisor of the Project



His Holiness the Dalai Lama in Croatia

His Holiness Dalai Lama will visit to Zagreb, Croatia, on October 22nd, 2001. His Holiness has been invited by the Seminary of the Jesuits, where he will give teachings and talks, but only for the Roman Catholic Church clergy.

There will be a public lecture will be held in a sports hall ("Dom Sportova") at 18h, tickets are 20kn (2.5 euro) or 200kn (25 euro) in 1st row seats for supporters.

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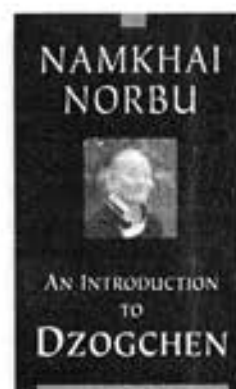
INTRODUCTION TO DZOGCHEN

by Chogyal Namkhai Norbu

In this two-hour video, Namkhai Norbu answers the question: What is Dzogchen?

Dzogchen is a path of self-liberation. It is not a path of renunciation or transformation, but rather one of seeing directly the nature of mind—as pointed to by a teacher who has realized this freedom for him or herself. This video gives the student the opportunity to receive these teachings directly from an accomplished guide.

Chogyal Namkhai Norbu is one of the primary living masters of Dzogchen. He is author of *The Supreme Source, Dzogchen: The Self-Perfected State*, and *The Crystal and the Way of Light*.



120 min. video, \$29.95



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