

THE MIRROR

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Upcoming Retreats with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu



Photo: M. Ferrada Guitierrez

2012

Hong Kong
May 16–20
The Song of Vajra

Taiwan
Taipei
May 24–28
Longsal Longde Practice Retreat

Japan
Tokyo
June 1–5
Longsal “Jyodba Ronyom” Retreat

USA
June 13–17
Hawaii Retreat

Los Angeles
June 22–24
“Kunzang Monlam”
(Invocation of Samantabhadra)

New York City
June 29–July 1
“Dzogchen Nallug” Retreat

Tsogyalgar East
July 4–10
Yeshes Khandroí Thugthig
(Inanadhakini)

July 11–12
Santi Maha Sangha Base Exam
July 13–17
Santi Maha Sangha First Level Training

Russia
July 22
Public Teaching in Moscow

Kunsangar North
July 25–29
Terma teaching of Rigdzin Jangchub Dorje, the Circle of Lama Zabdon’s “Khyung-nag”, the Dark-Blue Garuda

Ukraine
Kunsangar South
August 2–9
Terma teaching of Rigdzin Jangchub Dorje, “Man-ngag Tag-drol Gyud”

Romania
Merigar East
August 17–23
“Longsal Atif Nadzer” Retreat

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Photo: G. Horner

Namgyalgar North Retreat

March 2012

Sally Price

Excitement was running high as we all prepared for our first retreat with Rinpoche at Namgyalgar North Gar. There was so much work to do. A team of willing workers had to convert three large machinery sheds into a Gonpa, a mandala for Vajra Dance and a cafeteria come eating space. It was decided to invest in the Gonpa and make it a fully functioning space by insulating the roof and lining it with gyprock.

Then the decorative experts moved in and made a stunning space, full of colour, thankas and ritual objects. Rinpoche’s seat was constructed in front of a White “A” with lights behind that sometimes flickered and seemed to turn different colours.

Ten days before the start of the retreat, Rinpoche’s first public talk on the Sunshine Coast had been scheduled. Thanks to a couple of articles in the local press, many new people were introduced to Rinpoche and Dzogchen. At this talk Rinpoche gave

a succinct explanation of the Four Noble Truths covering the reality of suffering (1), the cause of suffering or karma (2), the possibility of the cessation of suffering (3), and the path to accomplish this (4). He then followed this with an explanation of the various paths of Tibetan Buddhism beginning with the Mahayana, the Tantric paths and finally Dzogchen.

After Rinpoche left there remained a small, interested crowd of people wanting more information on Dzogchen. Here we were able to spread the message about the retreat if anyone was interested in following up on what they had heard Rinpoche speak about.

With a marquee joined onto our new Gonpa, we were able to accommodate a capacity crowd of up to 150 people per day at the retreat. Rinpoche seemed in fine form, joking with us all as well as delivering his teachings with consummate clarity. As he

entered each day he would greet us, “Good morning to everyone and everywhere”.

Rinpoche decided to teach from the *sheldem* or advice of the great teacher Khyenrab Chokyi Ozer, who was one of the most important students of the great Dzogchen Master Zhenga Rinpoche. There are four verses, each verse containing three very important principles of Dzogchen teachings. Importantly, this *sheldem* is basically connected to the Three Statements of Garab Dorje.

Each day Rinpoche would give us an explanation of these four verses and then reveal how to integrate this knowledge with our understanding of Dzogchen as we begin to have the capacity to discover our real nature. He taught that, “nature of mind is like the potentiality of the mirror. Reflections are like our mind. Just being in our real nature self liberates everything. The mirror doesn’t judge. We pay too much at-

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Teaching



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The Advice of the Great Teacher Khyenrab Chokyi Ozer

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Focus



The Gars

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“The sun is shining in the sky, there are no clouds and we can see the full manifestation of the sunshine.”

This teaching is the advice of my teacher Khyenrab Chokyi Ozer, who was a student of Zhenga Rinpoche. Khyenrab Chokyi Ozer was a very important student of Zhenga Rinpoche and also a Dzogchen practitioner. He was very learned and most scholars from the different traditions in Tibet are in his lineage as students. So you can see that Khyenrab Chokyi Ozer was a very important teacher. Khyenrab Chokyi Ozer gave us these teachings and instructions, particularly *tsigsum neddeg*, the text written down by Patrul Rinpoche, and when he finished the teaching he gave us this advice. It was only a few words of advice of what you should do for the future on your path, but even though there were only a few words the indications are very precise.

The Three Transmissions

First it says that with three transmissions, and you know what the three transmissions are, you receive these transmissions and in that way you can receive direct introduction in the Dzogchen way. Through this you discover your real nature. When you discover your real nature you receive a real piece of the teaching and the enlightened beings and you discover what your real nature is.

We have body, speech and mind, the three gates, and we know how to deal with this and first we receive transmission and discover our real nature. We need to work with experiences and when we experience direct introduction we discover our real nature through that experience. So it is not only introducing us to our real nature, but when we are on the path we are living in circumstance and circumstance is related to our body, speech and mind. Everything is connected to these different experiences. So with these experiences, day after day, we are integrating more and more, and we can have total realization. So that is why the second part explains how we develop of our visions, how we develop our experiences, and then in the third part, which I explained yesterday, we discover the three kayas, the dharmakaya, sambogakaya and nirmanakaya, and it explains the qualifications of the enlightened beings; everyone has that potentiality in their real nature.

Once we discover that and we are in that state, everything slowly matures and we manifest all the qualifications of the three kayas. So there is no need that to construct anything based on something known before. We have already recognized and are recognizing and we are in the state and manifesting; the sun is shining in the sky, there are no clouds and we can see the full manifestation of the sunshine. In the same way, when we have overcome all our obstacles, then all manifestations become something real, not only imagination. So this is how we mature our practice.

Three Statements of Garab Dorje – Tsigsum

Part four, which we have today, is related to the three statements of Garab Dorje; *tsigsum* means the three statements of Garab Dorje. Garab Dorje taught Dzogchen teachings to various students all his life. That means he taught many different kinds of tantras; original tantras like *dra thalgyur* tantras, seventeen related tantras, the infinite tantras of Dzogchen *semde* and the many tantras of Dzogchen *longde*. All these tantras were taught in ancient times by different kinds of teachers. These tantras no longer existed in the time of Garab Dorje, Everything on the earth had disappeared and we did not have these tantras. Then the enlightened beings manifested Garab Dorje to give this teaching, so every day Garab Dorje taught students and communicated this teaching and then one by one all these tantras that we now have appeared. Now we have many, many Dzogchen tantras and they were all taught by Garab Dorje. These tantras are the teachings of Buddha and Garab Dorje and how Garab Dorje taught in his life.

Lungs and Tantras

There are many incomplete tantras, but the essence of a tantra, the most important point, is given in the *lung*. There are so many dimensions in the universe and so many tantras and teachings, particularly explanations of the Dzogchen teaching. For example, there are thirteen more developed dimensions called the thirteen *thalwas*. *Thalwa* means dimension where there are Dzogchen masters and teachings, so many Dzogchen teachings developed in these thirteen *thalwas*. Garab Dorje introduced all these kinds of teachings to the human condition but some kinds of tantras are very large and have many words, so he



Photo: G. Horner

The Advice of the Great Teacher Khyenrab Chokyi Ozer

Day 3, March 20, 2102
Namgyalgar North, Australia

did not succeed to completely introduce them – and then there is the essence. For example, the *kunjed gyalpo* is a very long tantra; it is one of the Dzogchen *semde* tantras considered the root tantra, and in the *kunjed gyalpo* there are many chapters. There are more than eighty chapters, for example, and one of these is the *rigpai khujug*. Vairocana translated it first, the number one Dzogchen teaching, but what is the *rigpai khujug*? It is one chapter of the *kunjed gyalpo*; a very short chapter and only six verses. In these six verses it makes us understand the base, path and fruit of the Dzogchen teachings. Each two verses explain base, path and fruit.

The *rigpai khujug* is an example and we have many of these. We call them *lungs* in the Dzogchen teachings; it is not called tantra because tantra is complete. What we call tantra in the Vajrayana tradition generally needs ten qualifications. There are, for example, initiations, actions to receive transmission, instructions on how to do practice, *samaya*, all ten arguments. When there are ten complete arguments it is called a tantra, a root tantra. When there are not all ten arguments it is called a secondary tantra and when there are none and just explaining one or two aspects, it is more like an explanation. Some are called *she-gyud*, for example, which means a tantra for explaining; explaining many arguments in this and that tantra, what the tantra presents and the main points. For this kind of tantra it is not necessary to have the ten qualifications but it is sufficient to have some arguments. When it explains more generally, this is called *she-gyud*.

So these are the characteristics of tantra. *Lung* means coming from Tantra, the main point. For example, *rigpai khujug* is a *lung* and there is also a very important teach-

ing tantra that Garab Dorje is always chanting called *dorje sempa namkha che*. When Garab Dorje was a very small baby he was always chanting that tantra. There are three or four larger tantras associated with it. These are really tantras, but what Garab Dorje chanted is a *lung*, not a complete tantra. The *lung* is the most important parts from a tantra put together and it becomes a teaching. Garab Dorje had this in his memory and chanted it when he was very small. So this is a very concentrated, essential teaching of Dzogchen.

Togden Dzubtsug – People showing knowledge who have real knowledge

The *dorje sempa namkha che* is explained with six *thigles*. You know what a *thigle* is; a *thigle* means something like potentiality, beyond limitations, and explanations. The first, second and third *thigle*, all six *thigles*, explain the essence of the *dorje sempa namkha che*. There are many big volumes of the *dorje sempa namkha che* tantras. For example, the *lung* of *dorje sempa namkha che* is considered the most important essence in the Dzogchen teaching. When most Dzogchen masters give teachings, most quotations come from *dorje sempa namkha che* to help students understand. In the Dzogchen teachings it is very important, with a Dzogchen master who has perfect knowledge of Dzogchen, that the Dzogchen master gives introduction. If the Dzogchen master only gives teachings with a book, this is an intellectual way and so the student has no precise knowledge.

Using a book is not the most important way of the transmission. The most important of the three transmissions is called *togden dzubtsug*, *togden* means that people who have real knowledge of Dzogchen, *dzubtsug* means show-

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Keeping the Mind Close By

Merigar West
April 7, 2012

Today we start with Guru-yoga with the Song of the Vajra. This is for those people who are completely new and have not received transmission. Related to the principle of transmission and understanding what the principal aspects are, I wanted to quote the words of Rinpoche from the transcription from 1981 from the Samsö retreat in Denmark on the Longde.

The first aspect we try to understand or analyse, looking at the words of the Master, is that we have to understand the aspect connected to our own state, our own natural condition. For example, we say that this is our condition, our state, our present situation. This means that somehow in our minds we have an idea of how we are, of which condition we are in. So first of all, we distinguish between that which is an idea, a projection like an image or sound that appears in our mind, from what the transmission or our condition actually is. This understanding of the difference between the projection of our mind and what we actually are is indispensable. The projection in our mind has no value.

We start from this understanding that everything that is projected in our mind has no value. First of all we understand the aspect which is related to our five sense organs plus the sixth one, the mind, which allow us to have communication or simply perception of reality through the senses, etc. The first five organs are necessary in order for us to have a connection, like a device for this perception. Then the mind elaborates them with a projection. This projection has the same value that the perceptions have that derive from the five sense organs.

Going back to a basic principle of all of our science and knowledge, if the starting point or the matter that we are operating with does not change in its nature, only God can change it, and so it remains the same matter, the same nature. This is the basis of western science. It means that what man creates remains within the sphere of what has been created by man so it is human. Human creation is not divine creation so we cannot expect that what we perceive through our organs and is elaborated by the mind becomes divine. It has no added value or superior state with respect to the perception of what it actually is. In Buddhism this kind of approach is called direct perception. In this case the elaboration of the mind is nothing other than a projection.

For example, if we look at this object [a crystal sphere] from a two dimensional point of view, it is a circle. If we look at it from any

side, it appears as a circle. Then I start to say that it's heavy, I can touch it, contain it, so you start to develop a concept – the elaboration of the sixth sense – that it is something more than a circle, for example, a sphere, a crystal ball. It means that what appeared as a circle is now a concept. Also this information about its weight makes you understand that even though it is transparent, it is actually very hard, like crystal or glass. So we understand that this is an elaboration of the mind. This is called projection, but it has no added value with respect to the immediate perception of the eyes.

This kind of approach or understanding of reality in its essence has a very strong base in the system of Buddhist teaching or transmission because understanding that the mind does not have a specific or particular value is not easy for Western people to accept. Usually in Western culture there is the idea that the elaboration and re-elaboration of the mind produces a new result, so much so that science is divided into Christian science and non-Christian science. Christian science places a very clear limitation between that which is divine and that which is human. By Christian science we mean Catholic, Orthodox and a few others in which there is this limitation and all scientists have this foundation which is respect for that which is divine. In this case the understanding of the limitation of the mind is clear.

When we go beyond this limitation, that which man creates exists. But in reality nothing exists. It is an illusion, an appearance, nothing other than a projection. But we see that in our contemporary society this projection starts to become something concrete because even though our bank account appears as something very virtual, sooner or later it becomes something very concrete. So when society moves towards those things that are totally immaterial, it becomes indispensable to create a limit between that which is coherent with reality and that which is not, that which, once upon a time, used to be called ethic or moral but today no longer exists.

Going back to the principle of transmission, the fundamental aspect regarding transmission is the state. In the direct introduction or transmission, we have the principle of being in the same state, so the Master and the student or disciple share the same condition. In this case, this sharing is not a communication. Today we will look in more detail at what communication means so that we can easily distinguish be-

tween what is transmission and what is communication.

Many years ago a theory developed within the Community. Seeing as the word 'transmission' in Italian is also used for TV transmissions, which in English is called 'TV or radio broadcasting', because in Italian it has the same root, outside Italy this idea developed that the transmission could be broadcast through radio or TV or internet, so it meant that the means for the transmission were important. For example, if you don't have a TV you cannot receive TV broadcasts. And so this idea developed that the technology of the transmission of the teaching was similar to the technology for TV. The first question or problem that came up was whether the transmission should be in real time because a TV program can be recorded. And so the first question that Rinpoche received was to ask if transmission was valid if it was recorded on a video tape. And I think people continued to ask this question for about 10 years.

It means that we are used to thinking in terms of what we already know. But in reality, transmission in the sense of the teaching and in the sense of the principle of the teaching itself is not a communication and so it doesn't need a tool for communication. First of all, as you know very well, what we need is the opportunity. Opportunity means the cause, and the cause means being human and being in contact with a Master. This is in our case because we are in the human condition. If we were in a different condition, it would be something different. In the case of the understanding of the value of this transmission of the teaching, we also need the capacity of being interested. And this is not something obvious or simple because normally we are interested in other things. For example the things that we are normally interested in, that we are drawn to or against – remember we can be attracted to or refuse something, it is the same so something we love or we hate, it has the same value, it means that we are interested, that we have this capacity – understanding the principle of things of our relative condition means that we are interested, that we have this capacity. So in this case, when there is the opportunity, the cause, and there is also interest, direct introduction or transmission means being in the same state, in the same condition as the Master. This is the essential part.

Sharing the same state is not an act of communication because an act of communication, as we will see, has typical characteristics of time and space and it takes place. Communication is not beyond time and space, this is why we speak of the three aspects, the three Vajras of Body, Speech and Mind. When we communicate and we are in the aspect of ener-



gy, speaking and using our voice, or when we communicate indirectly with other forms through images, sounds, etc., more on the intellectual level, in any case this takes place in a specific time, with a specific direction and so on.

In the principle of transmission we don't have this connection to time and space, we only have this principle of opportunity and capacity. So this connection between the event and time and space is related, for example, to participating in a retreat, which means that there isn't a particular intention, whereas in communication, there is direction, a specific intention, many things that we will be looking at. There are signals and channels. In the case of transmission, we don't need a channel. We don't need to prefer one form or another.

In the case of communication, one chooses the form of communication. Communication in its nature is something limited because I could ask myself, why do I need to communicate. Why do I open my mouth ever since I was born? Why do I need to say something? Why don't I remain silent? And even if I remain silent why after a while do thoughts arise and I start to speak to myself? And so if you start to observe the value of all the thoughts and all the stupid things that go through your mind, you start to understand why we say in Buddhism that the mind has no value.

In this case we understand how transmission is different from this. In which way is it differ-

ent? Transmission has a function. Mind has one single function called existence. Within existence the best function that one can find is happiness. If we are not capable of being happy then we could suggest love as always happens according to the principle of suffering, sacrifice and love like in religion. So if we are not capable of being in a condition of happiness we should at least be able to be in a condition of alternating between sacrifice and love. In the context of all these opposites such as virtue and evil, we have to understand according to this point of view, otherwise the final result or the alternative is something like nihilism or the negation of existence itself. Negation of existence means not being alive, dying, so having a doubt about existence means that we doubt our own mind.

In this case it becomes very interesting to observe and analyse how important Westerners consider the mind. Westerners think that doubting the mind means giving value to the mind itself and that there is a form of evolution of the consciousness, of the mind, through doubt. But unfortunately, doubting the mind means doubting existence. The only result or point of arrival is suffering. Because if you doubt the faculties that you have or the projections you create – unfortunately all projections are the same, all the mind is the same, it means that what comes out of this projection will always be a human creation without the capacity to distinguish which is really better – sooner or later we

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>> *The Advice* continued from page 2

ing, how it is, like how I received Dzogchen knowledge from my teacher Changchub Dorje. I already told you, my teacher Changchub Dorje spoke in an ordinary way, not reading a book, there was no ceremony or ritual, etc., only explaining and then giving direct introduction. Direct introduction is not related at all to ritual activities. So this is called *togden dzubtsug* and it is most important. Even if a teacher has that knowledge and is doing *togden dzubtsug*, the teacher always uses some quotations, explains and introduces. The reason the teacher does that is because in this Dzogchen text, for example the *dorje sempa namkha che*, it says something like this. It is not necessary to be intellectual but the teacher knows some words from the original text because he/she has that knowledge. Surely when teachers use quotes, most Dzogchen masters quote from the *dorje sempa namkha che* and many tantras.

In that way we have knowledge of Dzogchen. Guru Garab Dorje taught that way all his life. But when Guru Garab Dorje manifested the rainbow body, the students could no longer ask him for teachings. In that moment the most important student was Manjushrimitra, and Manjushrimitra received the three statements from Guru Garab Dorje. The three statements are simple; they are the essence of the entire teaching of Garab Dorje. These three statements are for people who are following this teaching and they explain how to follow that teaching, how teachers should communicate to the students and in which way the student can have the possibility to discover their real nature. The three statements also state how you apply for having total realization once you have discovered the real nature how. Everything is in these three statements. It is only a few words but is the essence of the Dzogchen teachings. So it is something like a key that Guru Garab Dorje left and gave to Manjushrimitra.

Dzogchen Guruyoga

So these are the three words. The first statement is introducing directly into our real nature. This is how we do direct introduction in the Dzogchen teachings. But, when we say direct introduction or introduction of the real nature, etc., you must think well and know well, that this is mainly the system of Dzogchen. Sometimes it is also used in the Kagyupa tradition. If you are following the Sakayapa or Gelugpa tradition, direct introduction does not exist. No one uses that. So, for example, if you are learning Dzogchen teachings from me, and you think that now you have received direct introduction, if you live in a Gelugpa center, or you have contact with Gelugpa teachers, you don’t tell them that you have received direct, because there is not much sense. They do not accept it; they negate it and for them direct introduction does not exist. In the Sakyapa and Gelugpa tradition it does not exist and the reason is that they are very much connected with the teachings and practices of Madyamika. In sutra Madyamika is considered very important. In Madyamika, Nagarjuna explained in a more intellectual way trying to get in the real sense, the knowledge, of *shunyata* or emptiness. Nagarjuna said, “I do not have any confirmation, for that reason I do not have any defects, or something you can negate because I have no confirmation that there is nothing you can negate. This is emptiness.”

What Nagarjuna presented is something like saying I have nothing concrete and I am innocent; innocent means no one can negate. So this is in the sutra style. If you are introducing there must be something to introduce. If there is nothing to introduce what do you introduce? For that reason, the Sakayapas and Gelugpas do not accept. In the Kagyupa, in the beginning, there was this system a little like Sakyapa, for example, and then it developed slowly, particularly in Gampopa’s teachings and Mahamudra, and was presented in a little different way. They are always

saying *sem ngotred*, which means introducing the nature of mind. Mind is relative so how can you introduce its nature; it is emptiness. There is not something concrete, mind is something relative in time, in space, you can see and understand but when you go beyond that, it is called *sem ngotred* in the Kagyupa tradition. In Sakyapa that does not exist.

I am more familiar with the Sakyapa tradition than Nyingmapa or Kagyupa, because I studied for many years in the Sakyapa tradition. I know it very well. So this is the reason if you have contact with Sakyapas and Gelugpas, it is best you say you received teachings and instructions from the teacher. Then there is no problem. Do not say, “Oh I received direct introduction”, otherwise they ask you what direct introduction is and then what do you say? You will need to discuss with them and there is no reason, you need to pay respect to their tradition and their way for them is also perfect, it is their way. You do not have any responsibility to convince the Sakayapas or Gelugpas. This is impossible, so it is much better you do not discuss with them. If you do practice with them you do not have to have any problems, you do Guruyoga your way and they do their Guruyoga their way. Also you do not discuss, some people like to have discussions saying, “I am doing Guruyoga in the Dzogchen way by unifying all teachers, all teachers together, all enlightened beings together, and you are only following a lineage in a limited way” and you are doing this kind of discussion and that is very bad. It is not good at all. You are not respecting their attitude or their way of seeing. You do Guruyoga in your way. ☸

Transcribed and edited by Naomi Zeitz

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu
Schedule 2012

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Italy
Merigar West
August 31–Sept. 6
“Longsal Atii Gongpa Gojyed”
Retreat

Sept. 7–9
Santi Maha Sangha
Level I Examinations
Sept. 10–16
Santi Maha Sangha
Level II Training

Sept. 21–27
Terma Teaching of Ridzin
Jyangchub Dorje, “Zhitro
Khordas Rangdrol”

Greece
October 3–7
“Longsal Atii Lam-gyi Ngondro”
Retreat

Spain
October 12–16
Barcelona Retreat
Terma Teaching of
Adzom Drugpa, “Avalokite
Shvara Khorva Dongtruk”

Canary Islands
Tenerife
October 26–30
“Longsal Atii Gongpa Ngotrod”
Retreat

November 9–13
Santi Maha Sangha, Vajra
Dance and Yantra Yoga Teachers
Meeting

November 23–29
Longsal Longde Teaching
Retreat

November 23–29
Longsal Longde Teaching
Retreat

December 7–13
Chöd Teaching and Practice
Retreat

December 26–January 1
Guru Dragphur Teaching and
Practice Retreat

2013

January 6–16
Tibetan Cultural Event

February 11–13
Tibetan Losar Ceremony

February 15–25
Mandarava Chudlen Retreat

Venezuela
March 8–15
Tashigar Norte Retreat

Argentina
March 22–28
Tashigar Sur Retreat

April 1–8
Santi Maha Sangha Training

Peru
April 19–21
Lima Retreat

Mexico
April 26–28
Mexico Retreat

May 8–12
Tsegyalgar West Retreat

USA
May 17–19
Los Angeles Retreat

May 24–26
New York City Retreat

May 31–June 7
Tsegyalgar East Retreat

June 14–21
Santi Maha Sangha

Russia
June 28–July 5
Kunsangar North Retreat

July 19–26
Kunsangar South Retreat

August 2–9
Santi Maha Sangha Training

Romania
August 16–23
Merigar East Retreat

Germany
August 30–September 1
Berlin Retreat

Italy
September 6–13
Merigar West Retreat

September 28–30
Zhitro practice and Jyangchog

Spain
October 9–13
Barcelona Retreat

October 14 leave for Tenerife

>> *Keeping the Mind* continued from page 3

lose virtue. Even those beliefs that we had from the beginning, we doubt everything. Perhaps before starting this analysis we had some fixed ideas about, for example, the existence of an entity, like in a religion. In the end we doubt this entity, our existence, our parents, our children, everything.

In this case, what can we do? Negating our existence makes no sense – it is not correct to negate our existence. In this case it is better to understand what our source, our condition, our natural state is. In the principle of transmis-

sion we share this state, our primordial state, and this state is the source of all of our existence, existence as humans and existence in general as a concept. When we share this understanding, the aspect of existence becomes clear as potentiality, as the capacity to create, the capacity to understand, the capacity to destroy etc., and it appears clear how the mind projects everything.

So the goal is not to find some special or particular state called natural state or real condition or primordial state, but managing to be relaxed with our own

existence, at peace and satisfied with our existence. How does this come about? First by coordinating the condition of the body and the energy. For example, with Guruyoga, or the Semdzin related to the Song of the Vajra, we coordinate the flow of energy. This coordination and the effect of this coordination are not always projected in the mind. The fact of singing the Song of the Vajra and being relaxed and satisfied will not always be projected in the mind as it should be. In the instructions of this Semdzin of this upadesa, there will be some explanations of how it can mani-

fest, but this will not manifest for everyone. This means that the relationship between the syllables of the Song of the Vajra and the way in which our energy is coordinated internally won’t be clear for everyone. This means that perhaps one day this will happen but perhaps it never will.

It’s not important that something extraordinary takes place at the visual or audible level or at the level of inner perception as a projection. But it is important to understand that the final goal is to keep the mind close by. The mind should not go far

away. It shouldn’t be wandering around. When we are in this condition, this state, the mind should be with us. So remember, we have six sense organs and all six of them should be doing Guruyoga, all six should be singing. It shouldn’t be only five of them and the sixth one elsewhere doing something else. This is absolutely the most important concept. ☸

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A Letter from the Manasarovar Educational Foundation

Kathmandu, Nepal

Dear friends,

Thank you for your generous
support for the Manasarovar
Academy!

The Manasarovar Academy
is a school built on dreams
and ambition. Since its
creation in 1999, our members of
staff have made many sacrifices
to ensure that we could maintain
our goal of providing a strong
educational foundation to lo-
cal children and, therefore, the
means to a better future.

However, in the last few years,
the future of our school has been
threatened. The landlord decided
to sell the school building, but
despite offering us the opportu-
nity to purchase it at well below
the market price, it was still far
more than we could afford. There
were no other suitable local prop-
erties and we were mindful that
our students' families would not
be able to cope with additional
transport fees. Since 2011, we had
been attempting to continue our
work under the dark cloud of im-
minent closure.

But thanks to the kind participa-
tion of many friends and interna-
tional organizations, the risk of
losing the school seems to have
been avoided and we can start
this new school year with the
confidence that there is a long,
prosperous future for the Mana-
sarovar Academy.

In fact the fund-raising campaign
is giving good results and now we
have to make the last effort: **there
are 60,000 Euro missing in order
to completely save the school!**



**Not only will our program be
saved but new doors of oppor-
tunity will be opened.** With the
ownership of the building, we
will have more control over its
upkeep and can finally make
much-needed repairs and im-
provements to our kitchen and
toilet facilities. By opening up
more storage space downstairs,
we can convert current storage
rooms into classrooms and re-
duce class sizes to below thirty
students. This will help to im-
prove the quality of education we
can provide.

We cannot possibly thank our
donors enough for their kind and
continued support. **In our stu-
dents' eyes, Manasarovar Acad-
emy is not just a school, but a**

**source of shelter, of communi-
ty, and of opportunity.** It brings
great pleasure to us to watch our
pupils grow up and achieve the
dreams that their parents would
never have thought possible be-
fore they came to us. And we are
so happy that this will now con-
tinue for generations to come.

The journey is by no means over.
The recent self immolations of
monks and lay people show the
desperation and hurt of our peo-
ple.

But knowing that we have your
continued support is a source
of strength to us and reminds
us that people around the world
share our vision for a better fu-
ture. On behalf of the 350 stu-

dents and 28 staff that make up
the Manasarovar Academy: thank
you.

Yours faithfully,

Ms Tsultrim Sangmo &
Ms Bijaya Khanal
Headmistresses and Founders
of the Manasarovar Academy

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>> *Namgyalgar North continued from page 1*
tention to mind and not enough
to the nature of mind. Everything
is relative... nothing is impor-
tant. The only important thing is
to be in the nature of mind."

Another strong message during
the retreat was the importance of
working with circumstance and
being aware. Upon waking, we
need to do Guruyoga. We need
to go beyond mind to nature of
mind, which is not in time and
space. It is very important for
us to relax in clarity. Dzogchen
practice is to relax in our real na-
ture, not accepting or rejecting
things or experiences. We need

to co-operate with circumstance,
not necessarily to feel we have to
change everything. Instead we
need to integrate our experiences
with our real nature.

Rinpoche also gave detailed ex-
planations of the paths of Bud-
dhism at the retreat, comparing
the Mahayana with the Vajrayana
and also the Hinayana and Vina-
ya. Furthermore, we learned that
we need to recognise that Bud-
dha is dharmakaya and doesn't
recognise good or bad – it is for
us and our attachment that we of-
fer flowers or incense to Buddha.
Buddha doesn't differentiate be-

tween good and bad smells – it is
all the same.

Vajrayana practice works with
our energy. You can't hang onto
the concept of emptiness – then
it's no longer emptiness, it's lim-
itation. We tend to think of sam-
sara as something negative and
get trapped in our conceptual-
isations. This becomes a mental
problem. However, the reality is
that there is no separation be-
tween samsara and nirvana.

We need to go beyond our dual-
istic thinking and acting. Then
we will have the realisation of our
true condition. When you have

this clarity, there is no longer a
need for great effort.

To achieve realisation we must
exist in our real nature. Dzogchen
is like air travel – a fast way to
achieving realisation. If we can
experience our mind in this
way, we can experience empti-
ness. If we discover that, we can
have fewer problems in our lives.
However, we can still develop at-
tachment to the experience of
body or mind which leads to us
become trapped in our senses,
rather than realisation or bliss.

When we discover our real na-
ture, it is like the essence of gold.

The student's experience can
combine with the teacher's expe-
rience and in this way we discov-
er our real nature. This is rigpa.
When we have the capacity to in-
tegrate totally, then we no longer
need to depend on explanation,
but we experience rigpa. We are
able to integrate the three expe-
riences: sensation or body, clar-
ity or energy and emptiness or
mind. You then discover that you
can have all three of these experi-
ences together. Then you are no
longer in any doubt.

So, in conclusion, we need to re-
verse our direction from dualism,
>> continued on the following page



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DzogchenTV

As many of you may already know, a new official Web channel of our Community is online at the following address: www.youtube.com/user/DzogchenTV

In three months of activity, practically without publicity, the new channel has had more than 30,000 views and over 500 subscribers.

DzogchenTV is not restricted to subscribers from the Dzogchen Community, but it is open to all; accordingly, its contents are suited to a general audience and access is completely free. It is open to contributions from all Gars and Lings.

You are welcome to send feedback, suggestions and video clips to: dzogchentv@gmail.com

Shang Shung Institute Australia

Shang Shung Institute Australia was inaugurated by our beloved Master at Namgyalgar North on Sunday 29th April 2012!

In collaboration with the Shang Shung Institute based at Merigar and its branches around the world, the new branch will

- work in conjunction with the Australian Tibetan Medicine Association (ATMA), which would continue to provide its current courses in Tibetan Medicine. New courses will also be organised in collaboration with Shang Shung US
- provide courses in Tibetan language, Thangka painting, and other aspects of Tibetan culture
- organise Tibetan Cultural events

The organisation is being registered as a Not-for-profit incorpo-

rated body and its office will be at Namgyalgar North, in the Glasshouse Mountains, Queensland, Australia.

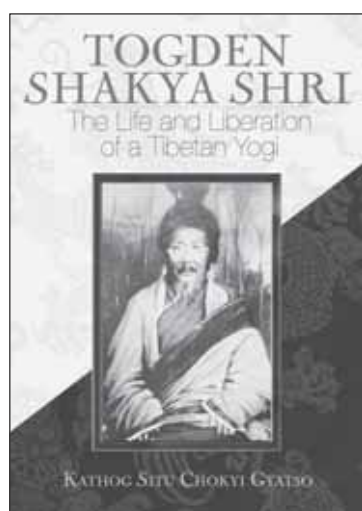
May our efforts help towards the preservation of the Tibetan Culture into the future!

Many thanks to our precious teacher, Chögyal Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche!

Shang Shung Institute Australia Founding Committee ©

Togden Shakya Shri: The Life and Liberation of a Tibetan Yogin

This namthar, or traditional Tibetan biography, welcomes the reader to the extraordinary dimension of a realized yogin. Its pages recount the inspiring milestones in the life of the revered Togden of Drugu (1853–1919), a portrayal which is also precious as the mirroring of a vanished world. The chronicle glows with inspiring facts and miraculous happenings, as well as insights provided by numerous letters between the Togden and some of the greatest masters of that era. The book begins with penetrating and easily understood instructions by Shakya Shri called Opening the Door to Liberation, and a selection of his Songs of Realization, illuminating verses which are in themselves teachings. In the appendixes, the translator puts the life work and accomplishments of the master in several useful con-



texts. The volume includes a preface by Chogyal Namkhai Norbu and a foreword by Sey Rinpoche, lineage holder and great grandson of Shakya Shri. In an informed and graceful translation, the book provides the reader with a rich reward, the sense of having actually encountered the master and received a direct benefit.

Now available for the Kindle platform

(Kindle devices, iPads/iPhones, Android tablets...) from Amazon.com: www.amazon.com/dp/Boo6SMAVVC

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

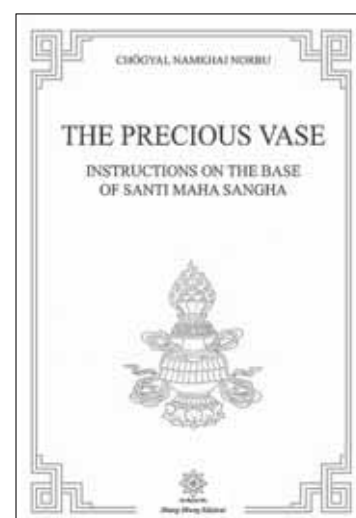
The Precious Vase

Instructions on the Base of Santi Maha Sangha

New eBook in Series of Teachings
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This book is the 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.

The Precious Vase is now available for download from our website www.shangshungstore.org. Since it is in PDF format, the ebook is compatible with most popular readers (the ones able



to open password-protected PDF files) like Kindle and can also be read on PCs, Macs, and iPads. For details, see the page <http://goo.gl/8JuaX>.

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>> **Namgyalgar North** continued from previous page

which causes negative karma and continuation in samsara, to pure nature, which is non-dual, like the lotus flower which grows from the impure mud to produce a perfect flower.

Rinpoche has previously taught on this topic. A transcription of these oral teachings given in New York in 1999 has been published by Shang Shung Editions as *The Essence of the Three Statements of Garab Dorje*, based on the oral advice given by Khyenrab Chökyi Özer (2002).

For anyone interested, you can find some brief biographical information on Khyenrab Chökyi Özer on pp. 143–144 in *Healing With Fire – A Practical Manual of Tibetan Moxibustion* translated by Elio Guarisco (SSI Publications).

Many new people were able to receive transmission from Rinpoche and hopefully will be able to join us for practice at the Gar. One person new to Dzogchen was Alan Parsons, a local indigenous “Uncle” who presented Rinpoche with a hand woven cord. Alan cut the cord and gave the long end to Rinpoche to take with him. The shorter end of the cord was to stay at the gar. As it happened this end of the cord was buried along with sacred objects in a vase beneath the ground where the new Gonpa will be constructed.

A firm connection was made between Alan and Rinpoche, as Alan acknowledged him as “Grandfather”. As we are located in an area of particular significance to the aboriginal people of the area, it is important that we honour the local ancestors and



Chögyal Namkhai Norbu & Alan Parsons laughing at Namgyalgar North 20 March 2012

Photo: G. Horner

pay respects to the traditional owners of the land.

On a lighter note, Rinpoche introduced us to Tibetan singing and dancing – a little like Tibetan karaoke! Using a large screen we were able to follow the songs

and improve our pronunciation of Tibetan, having a lot of fun in the process. We are now practicing our singing on a regular basis.

Looking to the future, we are hoping to develop the north gar by cre-

ating additional accommodation, putting in another access road and of course, building the new Gonpa – a spectacular octagonal structure with commanding views of the Glasshouse Mountains. ©

Turning the Wheel of Tibetan Songs

Adriana Dal Borgo

November 2011, Punta Hidalgo, Tenerife, Canary Island.

Anyone who was out walking near the Ocean Hotel in the afternoon or evening, would have been able to hear the notes of modern Tibetan songs and, peering through the large low windows, would have seen a group of people jumping and moving, some more some less gracefully, to the rhythm of the music. In a comfortable armchair, without ever showing signs of fatigue, Master Chögyal Namkhai Norbu was watching videos of young Tibetan singers, pop music, rap, folk, that Migmar had downloaded from youtube.

Sometimes he transcribed some of the texts that he considered particularly significant in Tibetan. The lucky students who were with the Master at the time listening to the songs over and over, after a while began to accompany him with a cheerful chorus of “la la la ...” until one day the Master announced: “That’s enough of singing “la la la”. I’m going to write the words for you so that you can sing them!”, and he started to write out the songs phonetically using the *dralgyor* system, the same that we use in the Dzogchen Community for the practices.

From that moment on, every morning the Master tirelessly transcribed, corrected, and perfected both the texts in Tibetan and those in the phonetic transcription while in the afternoon he presented the songs to us so that we could sing them together at last.

The ‘tun’ of singing along with the Master lasted all afternoon and when we also started to dance, we even did 12 hours of practice!

We practised the steps of a circle dance, “*So yi re lo*” (3.9) and Kham-pa dances (2.9), dancing around the long dining room table.



Adriana Battisti and Luis Olivera model the Tibetan Dance costumes in Tashigar South, Argentina.

In the following months, until February 2012, the Master devoted most of his time to this work. At Tashigar North and Tashigar South he continued to sing these special songs with us and at Losar 2012 he completed his work by presenting 6 groups of 10 songs each.

Singing and dancing together in front of the Master, as well as being an offering of the body and voice, is a training in presence. Your attention has to be continuous in order to sound the notes and the melodies correctly and to follow the steps of the different dances in a precise way. We often found ourselves repeating the same song over and over until we got it right.

It was not always easy to follow the text at first reading, and at times it seemed we were reading the wrong song! After the first few times, however, everything became clearer: the texts ‘opened up’ to our ears and, thanks to the explanations of the Master, to our understanding.

Singing for hours and hours is like practising Rushen, the mind stops following thoughts, you relax and a joyful state arises natu-

rally. It is also a light and pleasant way to become familiar with Tibetan and to study the method of phonetic transcription, which we need in order to sing the practices more correctly.

The Master explained that the songs are divided into three types.

There are *Lu (glu)*, which generally talk about nature or have a deeper meaning but you can’t dance to (e.g. 4.1, 4.2, 4.5, 4.7, 4.9, 4.10). Then there are *Zhe (gzhas)*, (4.6, 4.8), songs that have a defined rhythm. The third group are the songs that you can dance to, *Dro (bro)* (4.3, 3.2, 3.5).

The repertoire of singers and songs is very varied, but all the songs chosen by the Master have a particular value: they are all the expression of a strong sense of affirmation of the spiritual and cultural heritage of Tibet, an expression that uses modern musical means and genres to state ancient truths. Under present conditions, such a statement requires admirable courage, since some of the singers have been imprisoned for their opinions. Waiting for the Teachings during the web-cast connections, you have all listened to Kunga’s song “*Yid-re gyo*” (2.5):

well, he and Yadoon (who sing together in “*Sem-gyi log ped*”, 1.7) have undergone terms in prison with all that entails.

Some of the most interesting singers and authors are:

The singer Jamyan Gyid, in “*semba sánna*” (5.9), sings “rather than reciting mantras with a bad intention, it is better to sing any kind of song with a good intention”, and, in different words, reminds us of a teaching by Jigmed Lingpa.

The Achag, a group of three beautiful girls with lots of make-up, and wearing beautiful stage clothes, sometimes modern, sometimes based on traditional clothing, go from a song about their homeland “*Payul*” (2.2), to a very sad invocation for the victims of the earthquake in Yushu, “*Sayoi Monlam*” (5.8), to the rap song “*Bodpai Bumo*” (2.4) (We Tibetan girls are beautiful, we are like flowers, we are ornaments of the mind of boys), to the cheerful song/nursery rhyme “*Xarpai Lu*” (2.8).

Tsewang Lhamo, a young Tibetan who sang during the concert in New York on the occasion

of the Conference on Tibetan language, in “*Bod-mi’i Lasog*” (1.4), repeats “I am Tibetan, I speak Tibetan, I love Tibet”, and in “*Rinpoche*” (5.5) extols the richness of her land, her language.

Namgyal Qosco dedicates his songs to the Dalai Lama such as “*Guce dan*” (6.1), an invocation for his long life and others to Tibet and the Tibetans like “*Payul mayul*” (5.7.) and “*Bumo nai Payul*” (4.8).

Lagyd, too, dedicates her songs to the preservation of Tibetan culture. In “*Ema lha gyallo*” (1.5) and at the end of each stanza repeats almost like a mantra “may all the wishes of the Tibetans be realised.”

In “*Tundril*” (2.7) Tsewang Lhamo together with others repeats “Tibetans, unite!”.

Over the months our Master has been very busy to complete this incredible job, and thanks to Him, by learning and spreading knowledge of these songs, we can contribute in a peaceful and joyful way with our energy to strengthen the identity and the culture that we see so heavily threatened today. ©



Dancing for Rinpoche in Tenerife.

Photo: P. Fassoli

*** Note:** The numbers in brackets refer to the songs divided into 6 groups of 10 songs each. E.g. 3.1 refers to the first song of group 3 and so on.

YOU can hear all the songs by clicking on the following links:
<http://canzoni-tibetane.s3.amazonaws.com/Tibetan-Songs-1-group.zip>
<http://canzoni-tibetane.s3.amazonaws.com/Tibetan-Songs-2-group.zip>
<http://canzoni-tibetane.s3.amazonaws.com/Tibetan-Songs-3-group.zip>
<http://canzoni-tibetane.s3.amazonaws.com/Tibetan-Songs-4-group.zip>
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WE are preparing a booklet with all the words of the songs in Tibetan, their phonetic transcription and their translation into different languages.

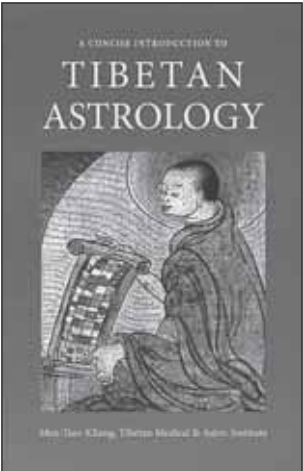
A Concise Introduction to Tibetan Astrology

With a Foreword by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

Compiled by Tenzin Sherab and Tenzin Tsewang Jamling, of the Men-Tsee-Khang, Tibetan Medical & Astro. Institute

Alfredo Colitto

Movement of constellations in the firmament predicts events
The law of interdependence makes things revolve on the earth
Belief in the principle of cause and effect defines good and bad
When these three are in tune there is happiness in the world.



These few lines inscribed by the seventeenth Gyalwang Karmapa during his visit to the Men-Tsee-Khang College, explain perfectly the essence and purpose of Tibetan astrology. However, the corpus of texts devoted to interpreting the relationship between the movement of the constellations and

human events, a relationship so intimate and interdependent that it allows you to predict events and life situations of a single person or even of a whole nation, is immense.

It is enough to think that astrology was already a systematic science in the second century BC, during the reign of Nyatri Tsenpo at a time when Buddhism was yet to come to the land of the snows. Then, when indigenous astrology merged on the one hand with that derived from the Buddhist Kālacakra Tantra (which explains the formation of the universe and the human body), and on the other with the Astrology of the Elements imported from China, this science became even more multifaceted and interconnected with other disciplines, most notably medicine, reaching an enormous degree of complexity.

The great merit of this book, compiled by astrologers Tenzin Sherab and Tenzin Tsewang Jamling on behalf of the Men-Tsee-Khang, Tibetan Medical & Astro. Institute, is to have extracted the pith from the vast literature on the subject and to have found a synthesis between the need to outline all the basic aspects of Tibetan astrology and the intention to make this science understandable and applicable in practice for the secular West.

The book comes with very clear illustrations and tables and can be easily read. After a brief but comprehensive historical introduction, it explains the relationship of astrology with other fields of Tibetan knowledge, especially medicine. After this it goes directly into practice. In concise chapters, the uninitiated can learn about the three systems of the day, the astrology of

the birth horoscope, how to deal with the year of obstacles that occurs every twelve years after birth, how to determine the compatibility of couples, and how to predict and avoid diseases, or at least mitigate their harmful effects.

The last part of the book is devoted to the so-called Minor Astrology, which teaches how to calculate favorable dates to begin important projects, to travel, to marry, to move house, in short all those events that have an important role in our daily lives. There is also a chapter that illustrates the various amulets used to enhance the vital energy, fortune, and in general to avert any kind of negative energy.

A Concise Introduction to Tibetan Astrology is an essential book for expert scholars as well as for the beginner who wants to learn about this discipline. ©

Merigar West - Everything Started Here

“...Merigar is the source of all the Gars of the Community, all over the world, Merigar is the first, where the Community was born... After that, new Gars and Lings have arisen, all over the world, but everything started here.”
(Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, July 2011 during a picnic at Gadeling, the Master’s residence at Merigar West)

The search for the first permanent place for the Community started in 1980 in Italy, and after visiting sites all over the country, the following year Rinpoche’s students took him to Mt. Amiata in the south of Tuscany, where Merigar is today. There were several auspicious signs on their arrival, and when underground steam jets were discovered under the earth (from ancient volcanic activity), Rinpoche gave the place the Tibetan name ‘Merigar’, ‘the place of the energy of the fire mountain’. The first Gar was established.

The main house had been abandoned for years, had no electricity, running water, toilets or telephone and conditions there were very tough. With very little

of three colours to serve the Community and be responsible for the continuation of the teaching and the Community, an organisational model which is the basis of the international Community today.

The Gonpa or the Temple of Great Liberation, the first of its kind, was constructed in the winter of 1989/90 based entirely on the vision of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, down to the smallest detail in its form and decoration. The first teaching was given there in May 1990 by H.H. the 14th Dalai Lama, who had been invited by Rinpoche to inaugurate the founding of the Shang Shung International Institute of Tibetan Studies, which would later set up branches worldwide.

And so from these early be-



The Temple of the Great Liberation in the hills of Tuscany. Photo: L. Gräf

tute. Midway between the Gonpa and Zikhang is the Great Stupa, a reliquary monument representing the Buddha’s illumination and intended to promote well-being and prosperity in the sur-

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Photo: E. Ihlicik

The Gars of the International Dzogchen Community

In 1981 the first “Gar” in the international Dzogchen Community was established in the hills of Tuscany, Italy – Merigar. Its name and its principle was based on Nyagla Gar, or Khamdogar as it is known today, the place of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu’s root master, Changchub Dorje. “What is a gar? A nomads’ camp, a temporary place to stay,” explained Norbu Rinpoche at the time Merigar was founded.

Therefore a gar stands for flexible life style, for living based on circumstances and awareness to respond to change. In addition it is a temporary place of teaching – temporary in terms of humans who are mortal although teaching is timeless.

Changchub Dorje was known as a doctor with extraordinary capacities and Khamdogar, where he lived with his family and disciples, was a community based on the collaboration of them all. The gar was not a closed hermit-

age but open to everyone with a well-defined function in the local community. Life there was based on the well-organised, healthy principles of traditional Tibetan society. Even during the years of revolutionary idealism in China, during an inspection, Nyagla Gar was found to be a paragon of socialist infrastructure.

This was the model on which Chögyal Namkhai Norbu chose to lay the foundations and principles of the international Dzogchen Community as we know it today, which over more than 30 years of its existence, has gradually grown from the first gar in Italy, Merigar, to currently include ten gars spread over various continents of our globe – Europe, Asia, the Americas and Australia. Each Gar is the hub of a network of smaller centres called Lings and meeting points in the towns and cities forming a great Mandala that unites the different geographical areas of the world.

There are no hierarchical relationships among the different Gars but more a relationship of

collaboration and cooperation. Since Merigar was the first Gar, it has become a symbol or a model for the other Gars. For example, the Temple of the Great Liberation that was constructed there in 1991 according to the vision and idea of Rinpoche has become a model for other meditation halls at different gars of the Dzogchen Community.

The international Dzogchen Gars include Merigar – Merigar West in Italy and Merigar East in Romania – in Europe; Tsegylgar East in Massachusetts USA and Tsegylgar West on the West Coast USA & Mexico in North America; Tashigar North, Venezuela and Tashigar South, Argentina in South America; Namgyalgar South on the south coast of NSW and Namgyalgar North, mid east coast of Australia; Kunsangar South in Crimea, Ukraine and Kunsangar North in Moscow Russia. Recently Samtenling was established in China and, although it is not a gar, its growing importance in the Chinese speaking world warrants its inclusion among the main centres of the Dzogchen Community.

money available, Rinpoche and his students worked shoulder to shoulder with pickaxes and shovels, in the spirit and to the tune of the Merigar song – “There is no way of being in Merigar without working! It is really not that easy to be here – kali kapore”.

The summer of 1982 the first retreat was held in a field of wild summer flowers and coloured butterflies under a large tent, and the small stupa, the symbol of the Gar, was built. Then at Christmas the first Gakyil and Gekö were nominated. Not wanting the Gar to be run by a hierarchical system Rinpoche set up the first Gakyil

ginnings more than 30 years ago, the abandoned farmhouse and the barren land on the ‘Fire Mountain’ has become a complex of beautiful buildings set in an extensive garden of flowers and tall trees. This rapid growth and change has created a number of buildings such Serkhang, the Golden House, with the office, refectory, shop and accommodation for the Gekö or custodian; Zikhang, the ‘capannone’, which houses the library with an important collection of Tibetan texts, the reading room, the Mandala Hall for the Vajra Dance and the offices of the Shang Shung Insti-

rounding area, officially inaugurated by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu in 1998. The small wood below the Gonpa has become a place for personal retreat with individual cabins, while the fields and hills of Merigar are now green with Tuscan cypresses, tall trees, flowering bushes and roses.

From the first Gar the first Lings (smaller centres) started to spring up in the larger cities both in Italy and in west Europe. These are the city centres with their own Gakyils that organise retreats and courses in the cities but remain linked to their Gar. Merigar coordinates the programs and the

management of the four main instructors of Yantra Yoga and Vajra Dance in collaboration with the SSI. The Gar has also been essential in the management and support of the webcasts of the Master’s teachings that have been freely available around the world both in video and audio for several years. It is also the Gar that houses and preserves together with the Shang Shung Institute the archive of all the teachings and conferences that have been given by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu. Then, from the handful of young students who followed the Master’s teaching in the 70s, the

number has grown enormously over the years and in Italy alone there are more than 2500 people who currently attend his retreats.

Over the years Merigar West has hosted a number of important events during its 30 year history including the First International Conference on Tibetan Medicine in 1983, the Second International Seminar on Tibetan Language in 1992. In 1992 Chögyal Namkhai Norbu taught the Dance of the Vajra at Merigar for the first time. It is the place where many Tibetan masters have visited and taught in-

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Photo: A. Carp

Merigar East: Longsal Mandala under the Blue Sky

After 25 years of Rinpoche’s continuous teaching, the Dzogchen Community had grown rapidly and there was a need for a new place in order to serve the growing interest in his teachings in East Europe and extend Merigar into two Gars – Merigar West and Merigar East.

Looking at the maps, a place was pointed out that could possibly work well for both East Europe and Russia – in Romania. Situated very close to the summer resorts of the Black Sea coast, the land was just outside a little village called 23 August between the towns of Constanta and Mangalia in the south-east corner of Romania, not far from the Bulgarian border. Fabio Andrico came to see the land situated in a vast expanse of sunflower fields and found the place where there was more sky than earth and the decision was made quickly.

The land was bought in November 2006 and hosted the very first retreat the next summer. In the middle of the sunflower fields an object that was unrecognizable to the neighbors sprung up. Like an UFO, the tent for the teaching could be spotted from far away, giving shelter to almost 600 people who came to see Rinpoche and to receive Dzogchen teachings.

The first three years the summer retreats with Rinpoche, the Vajra Dance and Yantra Yoga courses all continued to be held in an enormous white tent in the middle of the bare fields. It took more than three years to get the necessary permits in order to start construction and permit the Gekö and the administrator to finally move out of Rinpoche’s house in the nearby village of 23 August to their new house at the Gar.

The first few winters were pretty tough there because while summers are very hot the winters can be extremely cold and snowy: heating with only one stove, strong winds blowing through un-isolated walls, snow covering everything up to the windows and no electricity, yet. Following Rinpoche’s advice at the time, the Gekö couple, Greg and Mira, did the 24 hour Naggon practice, which really did its work and in less than three weeks the situation was transformed and we were able to obtain the long needed documents and things started moving once again.

In 2010 the first trees were planted and the Gar could welcome a new period in its life with the blossoms. Giovanni Boni became the main architect of all the construction work at the Gar. The construction of Gonpa took

off really quickly and the building was opened to everybody the year after. On the Longsal symbol road three mandala platforms were built and the first solar mandala was painted. Electricity at the Gar made life here much easier. The office was finally transferred to the barn-house on the land and civilization fully took over the Gar.

Since the Community in Romania is very small and new, some support is needed, and every year an international Gakyil is formed from the countries linked to Merigar East and relying on the support of all Dzogchen Community members. Throughout the whole year, short weekend practice retreats are organized and every summer lots of visitors come from the whole of Europe and Russia for the retreats with Rinpoche. Merigar East is definitely the place of the Vajra Dance: people dance in the Gonpa, on the outdoor mandalas under the sun, the big blue sky and even under the bright full moon!

This year there will be a lot happening at Merigar East – the Gonpa will be painted and be decorated internally in Tibetan style, welcoming Rinpoche for the summer retreat in August in its full beauty. The first Stupa of the planned two will be built and consecrated by Rinpoche; the second will be dedicated to Khyentse Yeshe.

This summer will be somewhat special for us since right after the Master’s retreat the press

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Countries linked to Merigar East: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Cyprus, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Israel, Lithuania, Macedonia, Moldavia, Montenegro, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Turkey.

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Estonia	blue@dzogchen.ee	www.dzogchen.ee
Greece	blue@dzogchen.gr	www.dzogchen.gr
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from around the country and local and national officials will be invited to the Gar for the inauguration ceremony for the Gonpa and a big press conference. They will be welcomed by local and Tibetan dances and music and will be able to enjoy the interplay of the two cultures as well as tasty dishes from both cuisines. During the program they will watch the Yantra Yoga and Vajra Dance presentations.

This occasion is a great opportunity for us to present all the activities of Rinpoche and Merigar East, to create a connection with many people in Romania and express our gratefulness for all the support we have received from the local people in all these years of the Gar’s existence.

But this is not the end. Merigar East is looking to the future and continues working on its development. We have already created a project for a multi-purpose building that will serve as a dormitory, office, kitchen, restaurant and, of course, the shop. At the moment we are working on all the necessary permits and collecting the funds for the construction. The fundraising campaign has already started and we invite everybody to visit our website and the Facebook Page to find more information and give us a hand.

May the Longsal Mandala grow and flourish under the wide Romanian sky and may the Dzogchen teachings bring happiness to many sentient beings! ©

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cluding the late Penor Rinpoche, H.H. Sakya Trizin, the 12th Tai Situpa, the 12th Gyalwang Drukpa, Sogyal Rinpoche, Lopon Tenzin Namdak Rinpoche, Tsok Nyi Rinpoche, Dorzong Rinpoche, Doboom Tulku Rinpoche, Ontul Rinpoche, Ven. Ngawang Gelek Namgyal, the late Trogawa Rinpoche, Jetsun Chimed Luding and Ayang Rinpoche.

The Dzogchen Community has spread all over the world with the creation of others Gars on each continent. Merigar, however, remains the centre, the seed from which everything started.

In the summer of 2011 the Gar celebrated its thirtieth anniversary with a great meeting of the worldwide Dzogchen Community as well as the local community of Mount Amiata to celebrate “the joy of being here”. A series of artistic and cultural events called “Friendship Meetings” were organised with the local Municipalities and there were three evenings of concerts by local and international musicians and dancers as well as exhibitions of Tibetan art and public demonstrations of Yantra Yoga and Vajra Dance in each of the three villages. This event really was a

turning point in the integration and acceptance of Merigar within the local environment, which Rinpoche felt to be essential.

Merigar West, first Gar, where Chögyal Namkhai Norbu created everything, is at the heart of the international Dzogchen Community, the perfect Mandala of our Master. ©

The Merigar West Longsal symbol at sunset
June 24, 2011. Photo: S. Zivillica



Focus on The Gars

10

All Fine at Kun Sang Gar

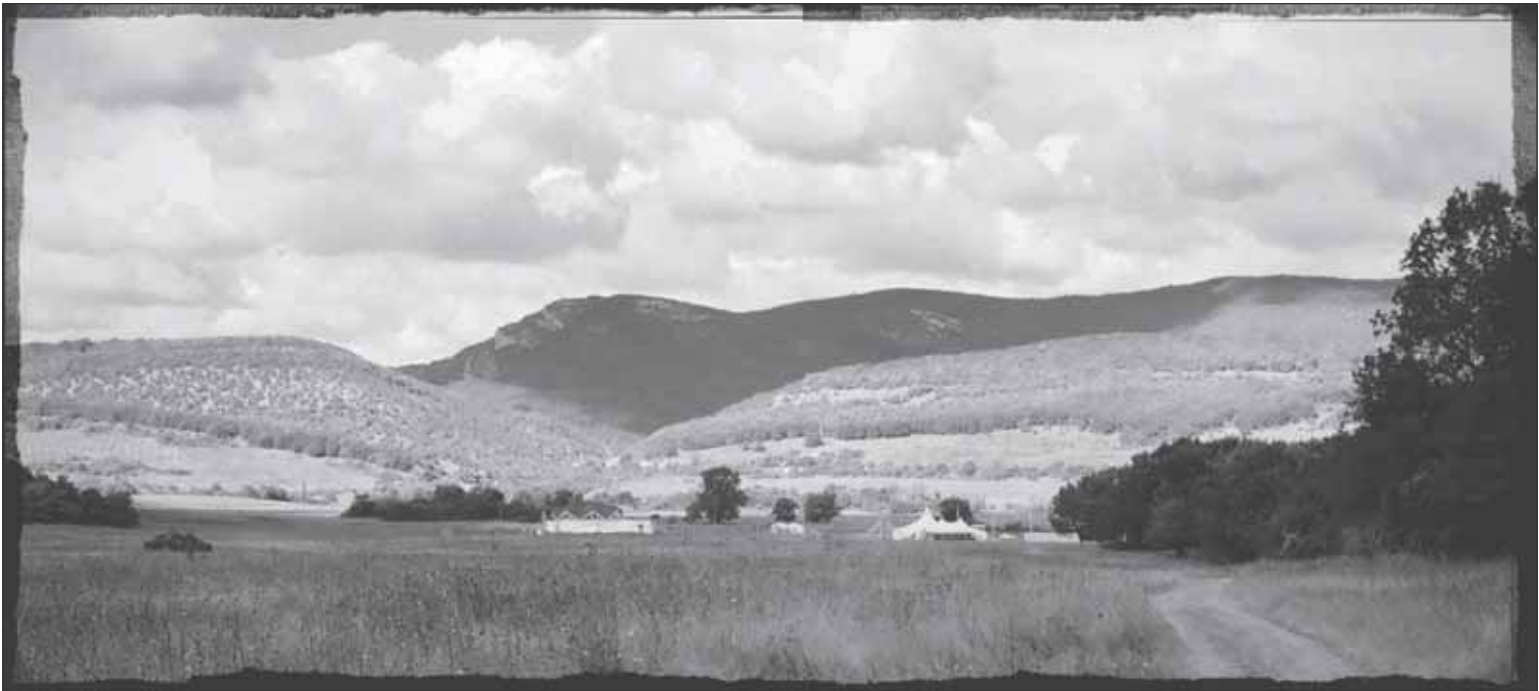
Kunsangar South is one of the youngest Gars in the Dzogchen Community. It is located in the Crimea, Ukraine, and serves as a Gar for the communities of Russia, Ukraine, Belarus and Latvia.

Location

Crimea is a beautiful peninsula on the Black Sea. Its south bank, protected by the mountain range from northern winds, enjoys almost Mediterranean climate, so winters are quite mild there, usually with very little snow, while summers are quite hot. This was a place of Greek and Roman colonies in ancient times, (Chersonesus being the most well-preserved and famous, located an hour’s drive from the Gar), and later had settlements of Genoese, Byzantines, Tatars, Karaites – it has always been a multicultural place, where everybody enjoyed to be. There are palaces of Russian emperors, who used it as a summer residence, and today Crimea is probably the most well-known seaside resort in Russia or Ukraine.

The Gar is located in the south-western part of the peninsula, about 40 minutes drive from Sevastopol or 20 minutes from Laspi bay, which has a lot of seaside hotels.

The Gar is close to a small village called Goncharne. It is located in a mountain valley, surrounded in all directions by peaks. Chögyal Namkhai Norbu compared this valley to a *chakra*, with each peak related to a spoke in the wheel. The Gar, naturally, is located at the center of the *chakra*.



History

This project to found a Gar in Crimea started in 2004 on Chögyal Namkhai Norbu’s second visit to the area when he said that the Dzogchen Community should have a Gar there. The search for the land and funds started, but first a very expensive piece of land was sold before we managed to raise the necessary amount of money, another piece had some legal complications which made its purchase impossible despite long preparations, so it was only 5 years later, at the end of 2009, that these 3.5 hectares of former field in a nice mountain valley were bought – and immediately construction work started.

The Gar’s real birthday can be considered 27th of May 2010, when Khyentse Yeshe and a group of students laid the precious vase, made and empowered by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, in the foundation of the Gonpa. In the following days Khyentse Yeshe gave a retreat on Chod, and life at the Gar began. A few months later, in summer 2010, almost a thousand people came to Kunsangar South

for Rinpoche’s teaching. It took place in a very large white round tent, supported by the concrete pillars of the future Gonpa.

The following year, 2011, we already had a roof and walls. The Gonpa was based on the initial design of Giovanni Boni, and is a “sister” of the Merigar East Gonpa – both built about the same time and with the same initial design, but as each project was adapted to local conditions, they are more like cousins than like twin sisters. In 2012 the Gonpa will be completely finished, decorated, painted, and inaugurated by Rinpoche.

Life

But construction work at the Gar will not stop with that – a Gekö’s house is being built, and a cafeteria and a dormitory will be the next steps.

Besides constructing buildings, there are works going on to make the Gar as comfortable as possible. Trees have been planted that, in some years, will be able to provide welcome shade in summer, the camping site will have a proper canteen and so on. There

are no retreat cabins for now, but there are plans to build them.

Even though the Gar is only in its third year of existence, we have been fortunate enough to host important events like Santi Maha Sangha training by Rinpoche and a two-week long Longde practice retreat with Khyentse Yeshe. Another Santi Maha Sangha training is scheduled for 2013. Besides retreats with Teachers, the Gar also hosts Vajra Dance and Yantra Yoga Teacher Trainings, SMS retreats...

the program is on-going, and very often something is going on.

The Gar welcomes any practitioner who comes to attend the teaching in this beautiful place, with the sun, the sea and mountains.

So if you go down the highway from Sevastopol to Yalta by car and suddenly see the golden light reflecting in the valley – it’s just the Longsal symbol on the roof of the Kunsangar South Gonpa signifying that the Dzogchen Teaching is living in this place. ©

Kunsangar South

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Sevastopol 99811 Ukraine
Secretary: kunsangar.assistant@gmail.com
Gekö: kunsangar.geko@gmail.com
www.kunsangar.org

Biggest lings (with over 70 members):

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Vladivostok	Kunsanling	kunsanling@gmail.com
St. Petersburg	Sangyeling	spb.dzogchen@gmail.com
Buryatia	Kundrolling	baikal-gakyil@googlegroups.com
Ukraine		
Kiev	Tashiling	kiev.dzogchen@gmail.com
Kharkov	Karmaling	gakylkharkov@gmail.com
Donetsk	Phuntsokling	donetsk.dzogchen@gmail.com

Three Seasons of Kunsangar North

Elena Herz

There are many ways to explain what Kunsangar North is. It’s a piece of beautiful pine forest near the river, just 1 hour from Moscow. It’s a welcoming, safe and comfortable venue for personal and collective retreats all year round. It’s the organization that successfully collaborates with different Buddhist sanghas and other spiritual traditions. It’s the only Dzogchen Gar which succeeded in paying its own way. It’s a unique place with an uneasy history full of big merits, big obstacles and big lessons.

Season 1: Kunsangar (1998-2005)

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu started to visit Russia in 1992. The number of people interested in the Dzogchen teaching was so huge there that Rinpoche decided to open a new Gar in Russia. It

took several years and great deal of help from the international Dzogchen community to collect money; meanwhile a group of enthusiasts was looking for suitable land. In autumn 1998 they found a former children’s holiday center 70 km from Moscow, in a very beautiful place, 12 hectares of pine forest with several buildings, a big canteen and all utility systems – and by a strange combination of circumstances the Community purchased it for an extremely low price. The new Gar received the name of Kunsangar from Rinpoche – the Gar of Great Perfection. It was supposed to be the Gar not only for Russia, but for all former USSR countries and for all of Eastern Europe.

The first retreat with Rinpoche took place at Kunsangar in July 1999 – it was first presentation of the Longde teaching, and there were about 1200 people from all over Russia and the ex-USSR. In May-June 2001 there was one more big retreat with Rinpoche and SMS exams and trainings from the Base up to the 3rd level. Over several years there were also



The Kunsangar North Vajra Hall and Sangkhang with one of the dormitories on the left.

Photo: B. Busorgin

many courses with international and local Dzogchen Community instructors of SMS, Yantra Yoga and Vajra Dance, seminars on Tibetan medicine and thangka painting and collective retreats of Dzogchen practices. Due to collaboration with other Dharma-centers, some important Vajrayana teachings and initiations were granted there by such masters as Chökyi Nyima Rinpoche,

Palden Sherab Rinpoche and Tsewang Dongyal Rinpoche, Nyichang Kantrul Rinpoche. All this time Kunsangar was coordinating all the activities of the Russian-speaking Dzogchen Community, and at the Gar itself construction and repairs continued so that facilities were getting more and more comfortable.

However it was very expensive for the Russian Dzogchen Com-

munity to support such a big territory all year round, and there were also problems of a legal nature, which, in 2003, even did not allow for retreats with Rinpoche there. So Chögyal Namkhai Norbu decided to close Kunsangar, and in 2006 it was sold to another owner. The same year at the suggestion of Khyentse Yeshe a Gakyil was elected for the Rus-

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Samtenling - The “Virtual Ling” Becomes Concrete

The Chinese World did not know much about Chögyal Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche until the existence of Samtenling, China. There were 3 books translated and published before Samtenling: ‘The Crystal and the Way of Light’, ‘Dzogchen’ and ‘Yantra Yoga’. But the majority of the Chinese circle of Dzogchen or Buddhist teachings only saw a few chapters from these books.

Wes Guo started to translate Rinpoche’s webcast teachings in 2006. At the beginning only a few people listened to them and then a QQ group (the largest online community software in the world) was established by Wes Guo after which Yeshe Namkhai Rinpoche added him as a translator in the Teamspeak system. Kengleck from Singapore proposed to Chögyal Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche to have a “virtual Ling” in China, and this was approved by Rinpoche.

Samtenling was named by Rinpoche on November 1st, 2008. In the beginning we were only based on Internet, using an online software called QQ (allowing real-time communication, file uploading and downloading – we put all the translated items into electronic form to enable downloading), combined with a video chatroom where we could webcast Rinpoche’s webcast teaching with simultaneous translation.

Samtenling is now over 3 years old and there are more than 600



students (including about 250 members of the Dzogchen Community) all over China. Many students from the whole Chinese-speaking world, including Taiwan, Singapore and other countries, have joined our online community to use our webcast translation platform and all the translated materials of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu. We have a translation team of 4 people including English-Chinese translators Tracy Ni, Wilson Wei, Wes Guo, and Tibetan translator Yungzhun Jalwa. Over 60 items, including books, DVDs and CDs by Rinpoche have been translated from English to Chinese. This is 20 times more than what has been translated into Chinese over the past 30 years!

Samtenling is not “virtual” anymore! There have been regular collective practices since 2009 in cities such as Beijing, Shanghai, Liuzhou, Yinchuan etc. For example, in Beijing there are about 60 students of Rinpoche,

among whom there are over 10 students who do Vajra Dance and Yantra Yoga collective practices almost every week.

Wes Guo has translated over 95 % of all the webcast teaching sessions given by Rinpoche since August 2008, and Wilson Wei has also contributed to this important work. And with the help of many volunteers for the transcriptions, we have transcribed and proofread almost all the webcast sessions by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche and some of Yeshe Namkai Rinpoche. The total amount of transcription has now added up to over 10 million Chinese characters!

Another remarkable thing Samtenling has achieved is that we have had our own Yantra Yoga, Vajra Dance and SMS teachers within a relatively short period – 3 years, of course this happened due to special circumstances in China and the urgent need of the Chinese people. Tracy Ni has become both a Vajra Dance and Yan-

Lings in the Asia-Pacific Region

China	Samtenling	Contact: Wesley Guo thevoidone@hotmail.com
Japan	Munselling	Contact: Keigo Yoneda sorakikorin@yahoo.co.jp munselling@dzogchencommunity.jp http://dzogchencommunity.jp
Singapore	Namdrolling	Contact: KC Ong titad@pacific.net.sg dzogchencommunity@yahoo.com.sg www.atiyoga.org
Taiwan	Gephelling	Contact: Harry Mao hctmao@gmail.com http://tw.streetvoice.com/users/chnn/

tra Yoga teacher, and Wes Guo has become both a Vajra Dance and SMS teacher. They have been doing many courses all over the big cities in China and also outside the mainland, such as Taipei and Hongkong. Over 200 students have participated these courses and obviously it has been a significant tool to spread the Dzogchen teachings of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche, because Dance and Yoga do not seem so religious and the way of the movements related to contemplation attracts a lot of people who are interested in Dzogchen. During most courses, we have explained how to do practices such as Tuns, Ganapujas, especially Guru Yoga, dream yoga and other frequently mentioned practices.

In December 2011, Samtenling purchased its own land with the ambition to build a big retreat and teaching center. It is located in Yichun, Jiangxi Province, in the central-east part of China. It is about 8 acres wide and has

already got an infrastructure to build a 270 square meter Gonpa, many rooms and a few apartments. Ideally it can hold teaching retreats for over 500 people. China is still not very free for religious practice, but we do it in terms of Yoga and a retreat center, which is quite acceptable and understandable to the locals. The refurbishment will start soon while we are busy preparing for the Hongkong Retreat May 16–20, 2012!

We also successfully registered the Dzogchen Community Samtenling in March 2012 with the Hongkong government and in early April it should be able to function normally!

Rinpoche has mentioned many times that he dreamed of a lot of great manifestations of Dzogchen teachings in China. We sincerely hope we can contribute more to this great picture, which we believe is very important to this world. ©

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sian-speaking countries to coordinate Dzogchen Community activities in the absence of a Gar.



Yantra Yoga with Fabio Andrico, 2001.

Season 2: Kunphenling (2006-2010)
The new owner and the management of the former Kunsangar were Rinpoche’s students, too. They opened a retreat center there where not only the Dzogchen Community but all Buddhist schools and spiritual traditions could organize their events. Rinpoche approved this idea and gave this place a new

name – Kunphenling – “land that brings benefit to all”.

The place was perfect for this kind of activity: clean and lovely area, convenient location, vast

territory with all facilities (several halls of different sizes, a big canteen, a swimming pool, rooms for 200 people, powerful technical basis, Internet etc.) in combination with a Teaching background and “spiritual” atmosphere made it unique and very attractive. Very soon Kunphenling became a highly popular venue for events related to Tibetan Buddhism, Zen and Theravada, Tao-

ism and Qi Gong, teachings of Osho and Gurdjieff, various kinds of yoga, health-improvement and psychological techniques, creative development etc. Being the only Buddhist retreat center in the Moscow region and the biggest one in the European part of Russia, Kunphenling became a significant part of Buddhist culture in Russia. There were gifted teachings and initiations by such mighty Buddhist masters as H.H. Sakya Trizin Rinpoche, Ratna Vajra Rinpoche, Dzongsar Kyentse Rinpoche, Ganteng Tulku Rinpoche, H.E. Namkha Drimed Rabjam Rinpoche, H.H. Khalkha IX Jetsun Dampa Rinpoche, Ayang Tulku Rinpoche, Garchen Rinpoche, Khenpo Choga Rinpoche, Rangrig Dordje Rinpoche, Karti Lachung Rinpoche, Gyetrul Djigme Rinpoche, Odzer Rinpoche, Pema Dorje Rinpoche, Karma Punt-sog Rinpoche, Drikung Ontul Rinpoche and many others. At the same time Kunphenling kept in touch with the Moscow DC, which was organizing courses with instructors in Vajra Dance, Yantra Yoga and SMS there. In April 2008 Khyentse Yeshe gave Dzogchen teaching there for the first time.

Season 3: Kunsangar North (2011 and onwards)

After some years Kunphenling was already totally self-supported and all legal affairs were solved, too. So at the end of 2010 Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, at the request of the Kunphenling administration, gave this place the status of a Dzogchen Community Gar again. He named it Kunsangar North (in distinction from Kunsangar South which opened in Crimea in early 2010 and is now functioning as a coordinating center of the Russian-speaking Dzogchen Community).

The Gar’s new history started in January 2011 when Khyentse Yeshe gave two retreats of Semde and Longde teachings there, with several hundred participants. In April 2011 Chögyal Namkhai Norbu arrived there for the first time after a 10 year break and presented a teaching on Tibetan medicine according to the root text-terma of Rig-

dzin Changchub Dorje. He is also planning to give teaching there in July 2012 and in Summer 2013. Current activities at Kunsangar North are coordinated by a Gakyil in cooperation with the Moscow Dzogchen Community ling, Rinchenling. It traditionally holds regular retreats of SMS, YY and VD with DC instructors and teachers, webcasts of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu’s Teachings, calendar ganapujas, collective retreats and VD practice.

At the same time Kunphenling still exists as a part of Kunsangar North, inviting Buddhist masters and collaborating with various spiritual traditions. Such a symbiosis is a brand new experience for the Dzogchen Community, and it is still hard to forecast what will be in the future. But anyway, this place is still alive and going on to be a part of Russian DC life – with all its merits, obstacles and lessons. And this story is worthy to be continued. ©

Kunsangar North

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Website in Russian: <http://kunphenling.ru>
Webpage in English: <http://kunsangar.org/en/severnyj-kunsangar>

Focus on The Gars

12

Namgyalgar South The Mother Gar in Australia

Namgyalgar South is on the south coast of New South Wales, Australia, near the small village of Tilba Tilba, about 370kms south of Sydney and 670kms north of Melbourne. It can be reached by car, bus or plane from these 2 cities or from Canberra, 270 kms away.

The 62 hectares of Namgyalgar South is on the slopes of Gulaga mountain, sacred to the Yuin Aboriginal people. High on the slopes of the property the Guardian Rock of Gulaga overlooks the gar. Natural vegetation, a running stream, native wildlife including wallabies, wombats, goannas and many birds, and spectacular views of forests, mountains, sea and lakes provide a wonderful place for retreat, and karma yoga. There are several beaches in the area, so relaxing on the beach is 20 minutes drive away, as is Narooma with supermarkets, banks and other facilities.

The Gar has a rustic Gonpa, with a Vajra Dance mandala painted on the polished wooden floor, a Reference Library with all of our Master's published teachings, and a small borrowing library. Nestling in the slopes overlooking the Gar is Rinpoche's house 'Gawaling', and below it beside the road is the Sangkhang, on a flat grassy area. Tsamkhang #1, for light retreat is not far away, while further up the slopes in a quiet, well-hidden location is Tsamkhang #2 for dark retreat. There is also a small shelter high on the mountain, with wide spacious views. Other facilities include a well-appointed modern kitchen, a primitive camping ground with showers and composting toilets, 2 small dormito-



ries and some caravan accommodation. There are 65 campsites tucked amongst the gum trees, used during retreats. All electrical power is provided by solar energy, and water is fresh from rainwater tanks and a mountain spring.

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu first came to Australia early in 1985, with the intention of creating a gar. It was ten years before that vision was realized. The land for Namgyalgar was found in 1994 and the Inaugural retreat with our Master was held over Xmas and New Year 1995/1996. The first Santi Maha Sangha Base exam was held in March 1996. Since then several SMS exams and Retreats from Level 1 Training to level 3 Training have been held, occasions when many Vajra kin from all over the world have come.

In 1996, when Gawaling was being built, Sogyal Rinpoche visited, spending the day enjoying lunch and conversation with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu ('Balancing on Beams and Balancing the Elements' *The Mirror*. April/May 1996, Issue No 35). These two Masters had first re-met in their adult life at Mullumbimby, NSW, Australia in 1985, when both visited Australia for the first time.

During the Easter retreat, 1996, a local Yuin elder and the Doo-nooch Dancers visited, performing traditional dances and songs for Rinpoche and retreatants (reported in the *Mirror* issue 35). Another respected elder who has also passed frequently visited Rinpoche.* He was with us all when we welcomed in the new Millennium, as were many people from all over the world. Wonderful performances, fireworks and fire twirling entertained us.



Each and every one of our Master's retreats have been joyous occasions, although we usually are inundated with unseasonal rain, a little difficult for the campers! We always enjoy Losar celebrations with practice and games. We visit the beach, and dive into the ocean waves and swim like fishes, seals and whales, integrating with the different elements.

Namgyalgar encompasses the region of Oceania, with members from Australia, Papua New Guinea, New Zealand, Noumea, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Japan, Hong Kong, and Cambodia. Several new Lings are developing in the Asia region. With this expansion the International Community is transitioning to a Chinese-speaking gar.

We have benefited greatly from the courses with the four international Yantra Yoga & Vajra Dance teachers, and SMS retreats with Jim Valby. We are fortunate to have four SMS teachers of the Base Level, who conduct regular SMS retreats at Namgyalgar and in the regions. We have several local Yantra Yoga and Vajra Dance teachers, with others training to take on these responsibilities within our Community. The sure and steady growth of our community is a testament to the dedication of all our practitioners.

Namgyalgar South is important for SMS and offers a Scholarship which enables SMS students at Level One or higher to deepen their study and practice. The facilities are ideally suited for personal retreat and for smaller group retreats, utilizing the quiet surrounds for sessions of outdoor practice when the weather is fine. Members are indeed fortunate to be able to do both light and dark retreat in a secluded, peaceful environment. Our first SMS Scholarship recipients were 3 young Tibetan refugees from Nepal. Since then we have had 3 Australian SMS scholarship holders and another 2 international recipients.

Namgyalgar's expansion and project focus at present is 1,400 kms to the North in the Glasshouse Mountains, Queensland (Inaugural retreat March 2012). Namgyalgar South is now adequately equipped with facilities, with a few projects to receive finishing touches and continual maintenance the focus of our Karma yoga. ©

* Aboriginal people request that we do not use the names of those who have passed.

Namgyalgar South
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Namgyalgar North Paradise of the North, the Glasshouse Mountain Gar

Julian King-Salter

We have just had the first retreat with Rinpoche at Namgyalgar North.

The Development Application with the Council had not yet been passed, so we had an Event Permit. One of the sheds was transformed into a very nice temporary Gonpa, and with a Marquee extension this was enough for the 120-140 participants! This will remain the temporary Gonpa until one day we have a permanent one; just after the closing of the retreat, a vase prepared by Rinpoche was buried in the centre of the future Gonpa site (or



Lucy Wainwright digging the hole for burying a vase below the centre of the Gonpa-to-be.

maybe it will be a Stupa on this place!).

In one sense, this first retreat marks the beginning of the new Gar.

But the roots go further back in time.

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu's first retreat in Australia was near Mullumbimby, on the Far North Coast of New South Wales, in 1985. At that time, there was even a possibility that the first Gar in

Australia would be there – but it was not to be. Yet Rinpoche has always said that even though the early need was for a Gar between Melbourne and Sydney, one day there would be a northern Gar, (and maybe also one in the west)!

So in 1997 Rinpoche gave weekend teachings in Brisbane, and was taken on a trip to Noosa on the Sunshine Coast – driving through the Glasshouse Mountains on the way. The following



Rinpoche deciding the site for the Gonpa February, 2011.

year, during a retreat at Tashigar Sur, Rinpoche asked an Australian student living on the Sunshine Coast to look for property in that area.

Again in 1999 he gave teachings in Brisbane, and went to look at property in the mountains, to establish a northern Gar. At the Glasshouse Mountains Lookout, Rinpoche looked out over the

landscape and the mountains, and said, "Our people would be very happy in this valley – and if they are not, it would not be the fault of the mountains!"

But at that time, the Community of Namgyalgar was struggling even to maintain the one Gar on the South coast – it was not possible to take on another.

>> continued on the following page

Tsegyalgar East The First Gar in North America

Marilyn McArthur

Tsegyalgar (East) founded by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu in 1982 is located in Conway Massachusetts, a hilltown village that lies above the Connecticut River as it flows from Canada through New England to Long Island Sound. The story has it that as Rinpoche traveled for the first time across the Connecticut River at the town of Deerfield, he sensed intuitively what few could know without consulting history books, that this place of great beauty has



Rinpoche teaching at Khandroling in 1992.

in the middle, were eventually driven away, even as some English settlers were taken captive to Canada. To this day, French,

offers a view of stunning beauty across a wide and fertile valley.

The highlands above the valley have always offered haven from



Ganapuja under the Vajra Hall with Costantino Albini in 2010.

Photo: P. Barry

schoolhouse includes a dormitory, a Gonpa with two Vajra Dance Mandalas, U.S. headquarters of the Shang Shung Institute, and the residence of the director of the Tibetan Medicine program. The Gar hosts many courses with senior resident and visiting teachers in Yantra Yoga, Vajra Dance, and Santi Maha Sangha. Since 1982 many community members have made their home in Conway and nearby towns.

The forest beyond Conway is known as Buckland, so named because the deer (or bucks) and other wildlife are so plentiful there. In Buckland in 1989 the community purchased Khandroling, “Land of Dakinis.” Through the clarity of his dreams, Rinpoche received many Treasures there, including the Dance of the Vajra. According to Rinpoche, in six days of practice on this powerful land it is possible to realize what would take six months elsewhere.

Earlier stories also reveal the land as a powerful place. We know that in the year 1797 the great educator Mary Lyon was

born on the hill. Lyon possessed a prodigious mind from an early age. She went on to found Mount Holyoke College, the first institution of higher learning for women, and become a champion of education for girls and women worldwide. From the base of Khandroling, we can walk a short way to see her birthplace. In later years she would remember “that wild, romantic farm; made, one would think, more to feast the soul than to feed the body ...[and] .. the top of the hill, crowned by its high, rolling rock, ever inviting the enterprise of each aspiring heart. Every one was amply repaid who would climb that steep hill, and ascend that high rock.”

And so it remains today. On top of that same hill, now we build a Vajra Hall, the first Universal Mandala for Vajra Dance. The year 2013, the 30th anniversary of the founding of Tsegyalgar, will see the completion of this great work and the inauguration of the Vajra Hall. In preparation for that event, the development of Khandroling continues.

>> continued on the following page



The Retreat on Khandroling in 1990 with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu.

Photo: V. Maikov

seen great suffering.

Around the year 1704, European empires were fighting for control of the border lands between New France and New England. The native inhabitants, caught

Indian, and English descendents gather at Deerfield to commemorate the sorrowful events. The bridge where Rinpoche sensed negative influences paradoxically

the struggles below. The road Rinpoche traveled continues uphill to Conway, where the community bought an old schoolhouse in 1994, which is still today the seat of Tsegyalgar. The

>> continued from previous page

Instead, a house was bought for Rinpoche on a hill above Caloundra, looking across at the mountains and immersed in their positive energy.

On each following visit to Australia, Rinpoche taught one retreat in the Glasshouse Mountains region, at Ewen Maddock Dam, beginning with the Mandarava Tsalung retreat in 2003. At that time, he asked the Gakyil to start putting money aside for a northern Gar. On his return in 2009, almost as soon as he set foot in Australia, Rinpoche asked to view properties in the mountains, even while giving teachings at Ewen Maddock Dam. The main criteria – to have mains power, a view of the mountains, and be near enough to the coast. He was taken to 6 or 7 properties, up on the range looking back at the volcanic plugs which are the Glasshouse Mountains, and then right in the heart of the group. He didn’t always get out of the car, checking the energy of each place in his own way. Then, within a short distance from the Glasshouse Lookout where he had been some years before, the party arrived at the property we now own.



Photo: G. Horner

Two peaks were visible from the house, and later we found that all the main peaks are visible from the high point of the land. Asking price – 1.15 million Australian dollars!

Rinpoche announced at the retreat that he had found a place, and at first it seemed there was a donor who would buy and donate the property, the Gakyil need not worry! Everyone rejoiced!

But we are in samsara! The donor evaporated, and the Gakyil decided to take up the challenge to raise the money to buy the property. Nearly two years later, on Christmas Eve 2010, the Dzogchen Community of

Namgyalgar Incorporated became the owner of the property originally chosen by our Master, for \$980,000, with a loan of \$780,000 secured on both Gars.

Despite serious obstacles, Rinpoche returned to teach at Ewen Maddock in early 2011, and at Losar 2011, he led the Mandarava practice in webcast in a room at the new Gar, with 30 people present, and one year later the first full length retreat was held here – which is where our story began! ©

Namgyalgar North

Location: In the Glasshouse Mountains, on the Sunshine Coast of Queensland, one hour north of Brisbane, half way up the east coast of Australia.

Physical address: 206 Glasshouse-Woodford Road, Glasshouse Mountains, Queensland 4518

Postal address: Dzogchen Community of Namgyalgar North, PO Box 307, Glasshouse Mountains, QLD 4518, Australia

Geko: Naomi Tsubaki dancingflowers2011@gmail.com

Website: new website in formation.

Currently has page on Namgyalgar website, www.dzogchen.org.au/index.php?page=namgyalgarnorth

Lings: none as yet

Dzogchen Community in New Zealand

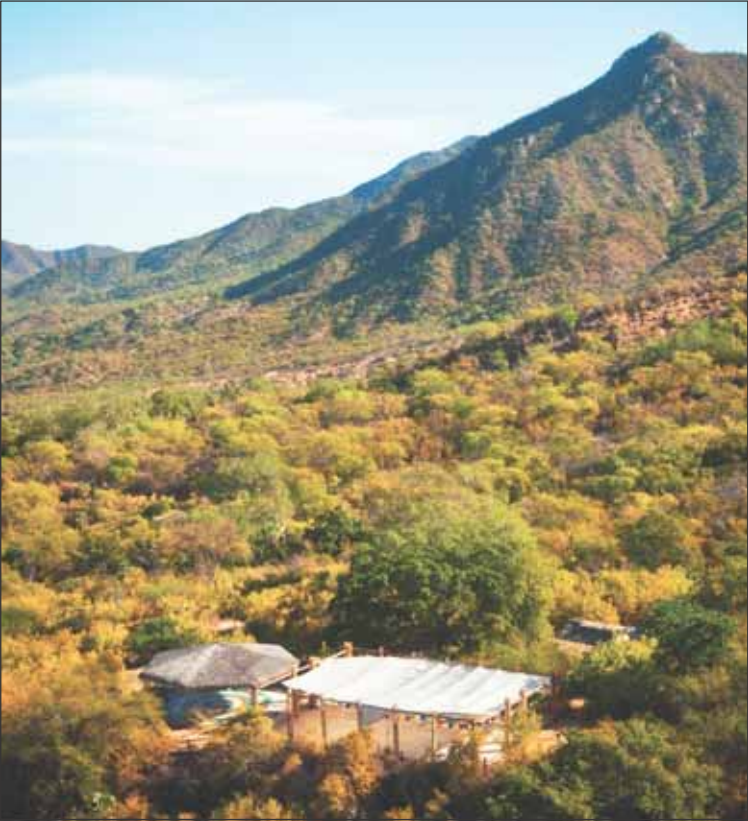
Contact : Gabrielle Kearney

rana@pl.net

www.dzogchen.org.nz

Focus on The Gars

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Baja Ca Sur, Mexico – Home of Tsegyalgar West

Baja Ca Sur, Mexico is the home of Tsegyalgar West, situated on Los Naranjos Road in the San Jose Mountains. The beautiful ranch was given to the International Dzogchen Community in 2003. Since then we have been offering teachings in Yoga Yantra, The Dance of the Vajra, Mandarava, Chod as well as Santi Maha Sangha study/practice and Dzogchen pure awareness practices.

Tsegyalgar West, in the mountains near San Jose del Cabo is a rustic retreat center. This beautiful

and wild 3,000 acre land has natural springs, granite boulders, grand vistas and deep quiet for retreat. There are 14 casitas available for sleeping and a nice camping area with bathhouses. Many good spots exist in the natural environment for personal retreat. In addition there is a Vajra Dance mandala platform with a palapa (thatched palm) roof, a communal kitchen for group retreats, solar electricity, a big open courtyard and many hiking trails.

Our mission is to preserve the Dzogchen teachings and to pre-



Retreat with Khyentse Yeshe.

serve this very special natural environment for spiritual practice. The land of the Gar was specifically indicated by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu as a special place for medium and long retreats for practitioners, especially Rushen and Longde practices.

The future program is to improve the logistic conditions for all kinds of retreats, to offer several principal events each year of group retreat, and to have ongoing presence of Santi Maha Sangha study and practice. Rinpoche and Khyentse Yeshe have started to work with the local Gakyil to develop and establish conditions and services for more long term personal retreats for practitioners. Both of them have given Dzogchen retreats at the Gar.

Several instructors from our Community are regularly invited for retreats in the winter season,

from November to May. Visitors here are very international, coming from Canada, Mexico, North America, Europe, Russia, South America and few from ASIA.

Tsegyalgar West invites everyone interested to special retreats, practices and introductory talks. Please see schedule of events or the web site www.tsegyalgarwest.org for more information. ©

Tsegyalgar West Lings & Groups

Tsegyalgar West Retreat Center
San Jose del Cabo, BCS Mexico
twestoffice@gmail.com www.tsegyalgarwest.org
<http://bajagar.blogspot.mx>

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Los Angeles		DZcommunityLA@gmail.com
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New Mexico	Julia Deisler	jmdeisler@aol.com
Portland		darren@the12stepbuddhist.com
Seattle	D. Winkler, H. Schorr	a@dzoghenseattle.org
		www.dzogchenseattle.org
Hawaii		
Hawaii		hawaiiandz@gmail.com

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Its 220 acres of hills, streams, pond, meadow, field and forest offer members several personal retreat cabins, including a guardian cabin, a stupa, and a bathhouse for retreatants and campers. A dance mandala has been in the sunshine by the pond since the day Rinpoche first sketched his dream on the rough platform there. On a nearby property there is the dark Retreat Cabin where Rinpoche received further

terma connected to the Yangti teachings. With karma yoga the community recently completed renovation of a farm house for Rinpoche and his family, and the community.

This year Khandroling will host its first annual three-month summer encampment on the land. Please visit our website www.tsegyalgar.org for a more complete description and application. All are invited to the July 2012 retreat with Rinpoche, and

to join in the preparations leading up to the Vajra Hall inauguration and retreat in 2013. Conway is 190 miles north of New York City, and 120 miles west of Boston. The nearest airport is Bradley International near Hartford, Connecticut, 50 miles to the south. Train or bus can bring you closer to Conway, but not all the way. For travel instructions and local accommodations, see the July Retreat Information on the Tsegyalgar website. ©

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What Does Tsegyalgar Mean to Me Personally?

Joe Zurylo

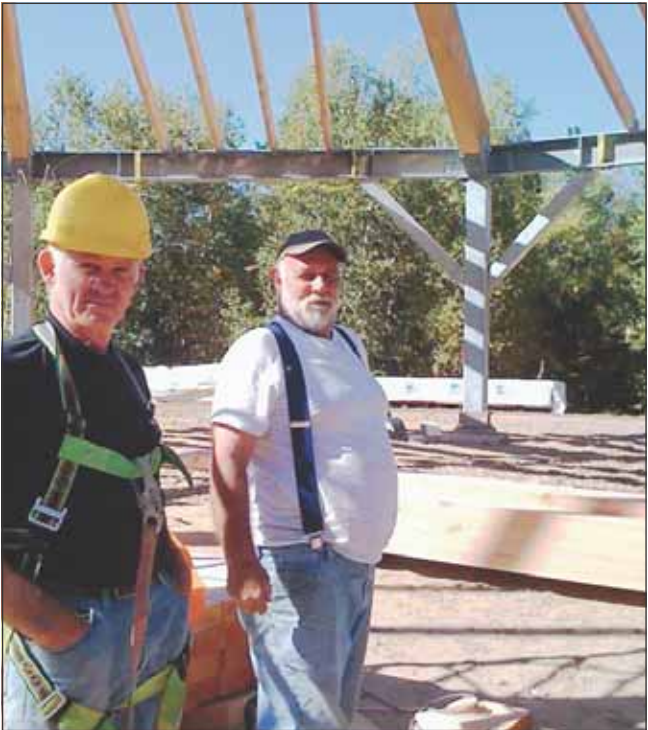
This is a little difficult to explain, but I will do my best to share my view. Tsegyalgar (East) to me is an integral part of right place and the famous right time. Three years ago, when I turned 60, it became all too apparent that my time here and now was getting short. Thinking like this and knowing very well that there is no way of knowing what can happen when you die, I felt strongly that maybe it would be best if there was a place to come back to, a place that one can be

reintroduced to the teachings and continue one's practice.

In order for this to happen there needs to be "this place." So I have committed myself to do what I can within my capacity and because of very favorable causes. With the help of those close to me, I have been able to spend the summer months at Khandroling trying to make something for the future. For sure the teachings can exist anywhere and anytime, but because we are human we live in time and we live in a place where we are fortunate and that isn't Afghanistan or Sub-Sahara Africa. We live in a place where the teachings are spoken. So this place Tsegyalgar is very important like a repository of the teachings for us to be able to continue. For all those that share this view and for

humanity in general, I try and do the best I can.

Where is Tsegyalgar now?
Like a flower
waiting for the rain
the sun to shine
its petals to open



Nary Mitchell (left) and Joe Zurylo at the site of the Vajra Hall on Khandroling. Photo: J. Gens

Tashigar North, The Island Paradise

Tashigar Norte is located in Venezuela on the island of Margarita, one of the southernmost islands of the Caribbean. The project of having a Gar in Venezuela began at the end of 1998 when Rinpoche wanted to develop something linked to Tashigar Sur, but in the northern part of South America. Specifically, he wanted something on the Caribbean coast close to an airport.

In March 2002 the Community purchased 30 hectares of land and the local government approved the construction of 34 houses together with an agricultural project involving the planting of 10 hectares of aloe vera. The land came with a house, a large barn, two wells and two large water tanks. Two small buildings were gradually transformed into a campers' kitchen and a storage area, and a third larger building was transformed into a comedor and kitchen. This is currently the place where all the big meals are served and everyone gathers to play bagchen on Sundays.

The land was paid for by the sale of the 34 lots to individuals who then would have the possibility to build a house and live at the Gar. People from all over the world participated and currently there are 22 lots with houses. Sometimes the owners reside in their homes, and at other times during the year, local members of the community and other people from around the world stay in these houses.

In February 2002 Rinpoche opened the Gar with the first Teachers training and afterwards transmitted for the first time the Longsal teachings. People came from all over the world and it was a particularly special moment because although there was no proper Gonpa, no money, and no Gakyil, everything manifested spontaneously in a very serene atmosphere. Goats appeared behind the wall where the teaching was given and Rinpoche hand painted the three statements of Garab Dorje on the walls. The Gonpa was eventually constructed to hold about 300 people and later expanded to double the capacity and allow for the building of a permanent mandala. Some years later Migmar visited and



The main road of Tashigar North.

completely painted the Gonpa with Tibetan motifs.

The first five years of Tashigar Norte saw unprecedented growth and coincided with Rinpoche's very regular presence. There were ten retreats in 2004 and almost every day everyone gathered at Zaragosa beach to bath with Rinpoche and sing the Song of Vajra in the ocean. The Kalachakra teaching and the Mandarava chudlen were also highlights of that first intensive teaching year.

During the first Dzogchen Community drubchen held at Tashigar Norte in 2007, a huge thigle appeared around the sun in the

shape of the Goma Devi mandala. Five hundred people witnessed that. The second drubchen of Mandarava and Vajrapani also took place in Tashigar Norte in 2010 and 600 people attended.

There are a number of devoted members who have contributed in some way to maintain the Gar for the future and several projects have already accomplished. We now have a dormitory that can house 40 people and a posada for general visitors. We also have the possibility to offer camping and permaculture studies for school children on the whole island.

Tashigar Norte is a paradise and both Rinpoche and Khyentse Ye-



Paintings in the gonpa by Migmar Tsering.



Having fun at Zaragosa beach.

she have said that. In fact, Yeshe explained, paradise is not a place with angels, but a place where a lot of experiences of the practice can occur everyday. Please come and see for yourself. ©

Tashigar Norte Ling
Costa Rica
dzogchencostarica@gmail.com

Tashigar North

Diane Campbell


More than ten years ago, I met Gilberto and Monika at a retreat in Houston, Texas. Over coffee he introduced the subject of a place where we could live and practice together. He asked if I would commit to buy a lot for a house in such a place and before we finished our coffee, I'd said yes.

Maybe a year later there was the first retreat in Playa el Agua at Hotel Miragua. A group had

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SIDDHI ENERGETICS

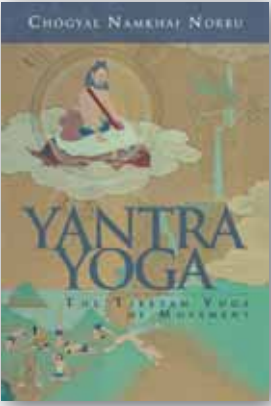
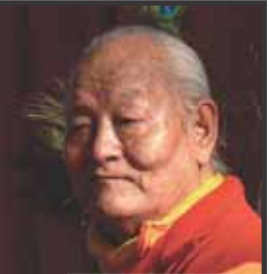
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Focus on The Gars

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Tashigar Sur - the "Auspicious Place"

Tashigar Sur is one of the Gars for South America, located in El Durazno, at the foot of the Giants mountain range (one of the oldest in the world), 5 km from Tanti, Córdoba in central Argentina. The land was bought in 1990, and the same year the first retreat given by Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche at Tashigar Sur was held. From that moment up to now, Chögyal Namkhai Norbu has given more than 20 retreats at this Gar.

From 1997, some practitioners started to build their personal houses or cabins for retreats in a specific big area of the land now called "Tashigar Mandala".

Tashigar means "auspicious place". We think it was given this name due to several conditions: a landscape of contrasts, with huge rocks, streams, open spaces filled with trees and birds, all in a place sufficiently isolated from the city and perfect for retreats and, at the same time, close enough to access electricity, water, telephone and internet.

There is a main house with rooms in which practitioners can stay for a few days, a Gonpa (place of meditation and teaching) where the teachings are held during retreats, and where practitioners perform Yantra Yoga and Dance of the Vajra. For the Dance, this Gonpa has two mandalas painted on the floor. There is also another external mandala in the middle of a group of huge pine trees.

The Gar also has an area suitable for camping located in a grove of acacia, eucalyptus and walnut trees, with bathrooms and showers with hot water and a full set of tents during teaching retreats. There is also a small room with a bath, a little apart, for personal retreats. Practices, study groups and courses of explanations are held regularly at the Gar dedicated espe-



Tashigar South Gonpa.

cially to those who wish to understand the principles of the Dzogchen teaching.

New Projects at Tashigar Sur

Last summer, Tashigar Sur had the joy of having the Master's presence over a long period of time when you consider all the parts of the world he travels tirelessly, even though it was extremely short considering our wish to have him here all the

time. On his arrival we received him with the first stage of the dormitories project completely finished.

This stage had been scheduled at the request of the Master and consisted of the renovation and equipping of the new bedrooms and bathroom. Three rooms were added to the two existing rooms, two of four beds each and one private for a single person. As always, the generosity of practi-

tioners manifested and allowed us to buy the furniture and all the bedding required to provide true comfort for our guests in order to enjoy the Gar in all seasons.

We also remodeled the kitchen, rebuilt the stairs of the dining room and, always under the supervision of Giovanni Boni, changed the roof that was so old and had so many problems. We also began rebuilding the stone

walls surrounding Rinpoche's house and other areas of the Gar.

Thanks to Rosa Namkhai and her wonderful idea, we constructed a children's park near the main house and this gave us the chance to share the joy of being at Tashigar with the children. Moreover, creating a space for the children is a concrete step towards the integration of practitioners' children at the Gar, a very important aspect for our Community. In the words of Rosa, "Although you don't know it yet, they are the future of the Community."

Finally we bought and planted about 200 trees of different species, fruit trees, carob trees and native herbs. This task was carried out in karma yoga hours that had a large number of practitioners willing to work, planting and building protection against ants and horses for each of the trees and plants and then taking charge of watering, so that everything grows well.

Master, thank you for giving us all a chance to enjoy working at the sacred place of Tashigar Sur. ©



Main House with new Dormitory.

Tashigar Sur

Phones: 0054-3451-498885/498356
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www.tashigarsur.com

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>> continued from previous page
gathered with the intention to make this Gar a reality.

This land was located and we visited it together. It was wild and untended. What is now the Gonpa was an abandoned and very broken cow-milking barn. What is now the comedor was a dirty old chicken house. Another place had been for pigs, and there were sheep roaming the property. What is now the office was a farmhouse and interestingly enough, also a small dormitory. You see, this land had been a farm that hosted a program to help troubled young people to find some healing and peace by being in nature. In a way we are continuing the tradition of the land itself, as it is the powerful place where our Precious Master has had treasured teachings revealed.

From that rough beginning a devilment plan was made, roads and sewer and water systems were put in, and work began on one or two houses. The cow-milking barn was cleaned and made into a place where we could gather for teachings – it was not fancy but it was well loved. Over time, people have gravitated to this powerful place – to learn, to practice, to live and to serve the Master.

I remember the times we thought this was too much to do – but somebody always came through with a plan, some money, some help. Why? One reason Rinpoche and the teachings.

Some people changed their whole lives and moved here from far away to be the anchors of a residential community – Gosha, Gala, Bodhi, Steve, Michel, Rosemary and Jerri – they moved onto



Buying the land of Tashigar South.

the land in the early days and made the village a real home for us all.

When it was time to consolidate some debts and to fully own this

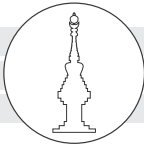
place, Dick stepped forward and relieved the community of a huge debt. This is something we clearly cannot repay in money – I can only hope that the existence of

this incredible place is a salute to his generosity.

By creating this place we have been forced to work together, to solve problems. We have been allowed to grow and to learn and to practice the essence of Dzogchen in real time, as a family. This has been and continues to be a priceless experience for us all. We can and we must continue to see this place thrive.

The list of people who have made this Gar real is so very long... but at the top of it and the bottom of it and everywhere in between, is the one name that matters most – that of our Teacher – Chögyal Namkhai Norbu. ©

MerigarWest



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Latest News

Report from the Red Gakyil

Over the winter months, a lot of work was carried out on the internal restructuration of Zikhang, the ‘capannone’. The Library that is home to many rare and precious Tibetan texts was extended and now has a new storeroom for books that is much bigger and better organised. Part of the internal restructuration meant the removal of the staircase from the Mandala Hall to the Library and creating new access from the Reading Room which is situated at the far end of the building. These changes now leave the Mandala Room as a completely separate space while the Library and Reading Room are connected.

The Reading Room is currently being beautifully decorated in traditional Tibetan style by a group of volunteers under the guidance of Migmar. In addition, the Mandala Hall has also been renovated internally and the admin-

istrative offices of the Shang Shung Institute have moved from Serkhang, the Golden House, to the first part of Zikhang.

The project for the ‘cinerarium’, the building that will contain cremated ashes, has been approved and we expect to lay the foundation for this in August of this year. There will be a fund raising project especially for this project. You can read more details about this and see the design for the project in the Merigar West news in this issue.

Then in order to start work on restructuring one of the dark retreat cabins we are collecting funds and hope to have enough to begin work during the summer. Shortly there will be a special page on the Merigar west website dedicated to this project (www.dzogchen.it).

Report from the Yellow Gakyil

An official resolution has been drawn up that regulates in a financially correct and transparent way the relationship between Merigar and its Lings. In

the resolution, it makes it official that Merigar and its Lings can be associated since they have the same aims and that:

- the Lings can contribute effectively to Merigar’s membership campaign;
- they can collect membership quotas on behalf of Merigar;
- they can transfer the quotas to Merigar;
- they can keep part of the quotas as a contribution and as indicated in the letter to members;
- the conditions for registering this contribution are precisely defined;
- the Lings that are associated among themselves will be able to permit their members to participate in reciprocal events which should encourage future associations between Lings.

Report from the Blue Gakyil

On June 2–3 there will be a course led by Andrea Calbucci. This year, one of the points that our precious Master Chögyal Namkhai Norbu gave us to follow as the Gakyil of Merigar West was to prepare people to be able to speak about and

present the Dzogchen Community in the best way possible to a wider public. In order to carry through this project we have chosen Andrea Calbucci as the most suitable person in this field to lead the project. Now we would like to offer this service to all the Lings that are linked to Merigar West, starting with the Italian ones and the senior instructors so that there will be at least one person who will be prepared to present the Community to outsiders during events when this is required.

Each Ling has the opportunity and the responsibility to choose a representative to participate in the course for free. Each representative in turn will take the responsibility to present the Dzogchen Community to outsiders during events in which this is necessary and for the period of time in which it is necessary. If possible, we suggest giving this opportunity to young people. The first course will be in Italian.

Summer 2012 retreats & events

During the summer of 2012 there will be several practice retreats including the Mandarava Tsalung with Nina Robinson, Tara with Costantino Albini, Contemplation with Fabio Risolo and Yantra Yoga with Laura Evangelisti.

In addition, following the success of the same event last summer there will be a Yoga Holiday for Adults and Children July 16–22 at Merigar, a family event combining Yantra Yoga and meditation for both adults and children as well as different activities involving theatre, movement and colours for the children.

At the beginning of September there will be a fantastic dance competition called ‘Merigar Under the Stars’ that will involve the different Gars in the Community and will have its first turn at Merigar West. You can read all about this international event in another article on this page. ©

The International Dzogchen Community Cinerarium Project at Merigar West

From the founding of our Community up to now, many practitioners have expressed their wish to be able to have their ashes preserved near a place that they loved so much and where they met the Teaching.

For this reason, some years ago, our Master Chögyal Namkhai Norbu expressed his idea of building a small cinerarium in the area of the Gonpa after the passing of several of his disciples whose ashes were dispersed in those places at their request.

In response to the wishes of our Master, the first cinerarium of the International Dzogchen Community will begin and be completed in 2012 in the place he has indicated, at the Merigar West Gar.

With this project we would like to honor all those practitioners who, in this life, have devoted passion, time and energy to the development and preservation of the Teaching.

The Small Cinerarium at Merigar West will be a small building of about 50 square meters with a form similar to the symbol of the Mandala.

Inside it will be set up with facilities that will be able to contain cinerary urns and it will be decorated simply in Tibetan style. The main source of il-

lumination of the cinerarium will be a glass dome at the top of the building. The building will have a small space dedicated to individual and collective practice.

The project for the cinerarium has been approved and we expect to lay the foundations in August of this year. We hope to offer the Master the opportunity to inaugurate the small cinerarium with the placing of the first urn during his next stay at Merigar West.

We would like to ask you, if it is possible, to consider giving a small donation for this project. There is no limit to generosity and every little donation will be very welcome.

In closing we would like to thank you for reading this and for your support for the Community.

Yuchen Namkhai & the West Merigar Gakyil

Banca Popolare Etruria
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SWIFT/BIC: ARBAIT33126
Paypal (www.paypal.com)
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Merigar Under the Stars

“Merigar Under the Stars” is a dance competition between all the Gars of the Dzogchen Community. It is an initiative to encourage collaboration among practitioners from different countries through a joyful and exciting activity, dancing. Each team should represent a Gar with active collaboration between choreographers, costume designers and dancers of all the countries belonging to the Gar. Merigar West will be the Gar hosting the first round and the teams that have been randomly selected for this first event are: Merigar West, Merigar East, Kunsangar North and Kunsangar South.

Congratulations to all the participants! In 2013 another Gar will host the second round in which the teams of the other Gars will be randomly selected. During the final round, the winning teams from each of the previous rounds will compete. The final winning team will receive a Special Prize put up by the Master. You can read the contest rules below.

The first round will take place at Merigar West during the Master’s retreat (August 31–September 6). Each team will present their dance in front of a jury made up of representatives from the Gars not participating in the competition. A final vote will establish the winner of the 1st round.

On the evening of September 1st, 2012 there will be celebrations in the main square of Arcidosso (by popular demand after the success of the 30th anniversary celebrations). During the celebrations, the four teams will present their dances in the square of Arcidosso, giving the public the opportunity to actively participate in the choreography. For this reason, the dances should be easy to dance by everyone – adults, children and the elderly – and the rhythm should be captivating.

A warm welcome to all!



Merigar Under the Stars

Organisation of “Merigar Under the Stars”, an International dance competition among the members of the Dzogchen Community

Regulations

Art. 1 Participants in the competition, in groups of up to a maximum of 20 people, should present a dance in costume according to the criterion of originality, that is, both the dance and the costumes must be completely invented. The costumes should not be too complicated or expensive but bright and colorful. In particular each Gar will be represented by the following colors:

Merigar West base red + yellow
Merigar East base red + orange
Kunsangar North base yellow + green
Kunsangar South base yellow + blue
Tashigar Norte base green + blue
Tashigar Sur base green + red
Tseggyalgar East base white + multicolors
Tseggyalgar West base white + red and yellow
Namgyalgar South base blue + multicolors
Namgyalgar North base blue + green

Art. 2 The dance can last 15–20 min., should be a dance which can be participated in (to involve the audience!), and include various shapes and figures, for example, circular, rectangular, in pairs or singles. The dance can be of any kind (including modern), but must be original and children and old people should be able to dance it.

Art. 3 Each of the 4 groups will be the result of the collective work of all the Nations of a Gar, and representatives of each Nation must be authorised by their local Gakyil. Each Gar invites two representatives (per country) one of whom will be in charge of the dance and the other in charge of the costumes and organizing the event. The resulting group will coordinate the preparations for the show, setting up meetings and creating a timeframe. (If they consider



it appropriate to appoint a PM, they should find one among themselves or someone of their choice).

Art. 4 The costs related to travel to Merigar West (or the Gar where the competition will be held) should be covered by the local Gakyil (this means the Ling that is sending its representatives) while Merigar will be in charge of finding accommodation with local people or in Merigar’s own buildings and will provide the main meal (lunch) at a reasonable price (4–5 euro per person).

Art. 5 A panel of judges will be appointed, made up of 4 members chosen from representatives of the Gars not participating in the competition.

Art. 6 The group/Gar that wins will be determined by votes from the panel of judges.

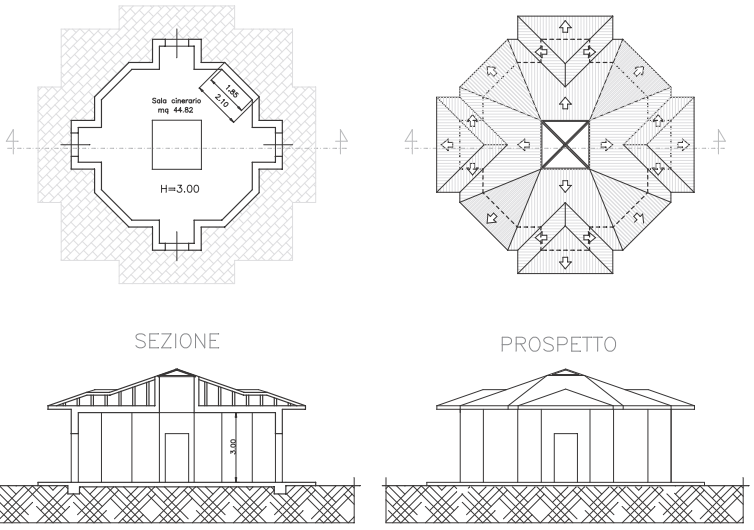
Art. 7 The groups will be selected by lots for their turn.

Art. 8 The application of the 4 Gars should be sent by letter to Merigar West before April 30th 2012. By July 15th 2012 each Gar has to communicate the duration of its show, the music chosen and the stage requirements (must be simple) of the group.

Art. 9 The prize for the winning Gar will be a bonus of 4 courses taught by the senior instructors lasting 10 days each, for use in 3 subsequent years.

Art. 10 The first competition will be held at Merigar in September 2012 on the occasion of the visit of our Master and will be between teams from Merigar West, Merigar East, Kunsangar South and Kunsangar North. The following competitions will be organized by the other Gars that, first of all, should make a request to the Master specifying the period, the teams in the competition and the prize.

Art. 11 The winners of each competition will compete again, by lots, until the final. The winning team will receive a special prize put up by the Master himself.



Khyentse Yeshe Easter Teachings

by Matteo Maglietti

The uniqueness of Khyentse Yeshe’s Easter retreat at Mergiar was evident from the first moments when the teacher did not sit on the traditional ‘throne’ as usual, but at a white desk that had been brought especially for the occasion and placed on the warm floor of the Gonpa, right next to a widescreen TV. After he had joked a bit about how the wheeled office chair he was sitting on reminded him of the office, the teacher began by introducing the first explanation of the main topics of the retreat, communication. Focusing initially on the difference between communication and transmission, he then went on to explain how communication is used by today’s society – now very different from that of decades past – which no longer produces according to their raw materials, but instead produces knowledge and this consumes. During the hours of teaching in the three-day retreat he mentioned many times words like communication, transmission, marketing, education, evolution and human knowledge. If the



Photo: P. P. Krak

latter, the teacher went on to say, had first of all been understood as a collection of all knowledge in alphabetical order, like an encyclopedia, it has now undergone a transformation, and human knowledge no longer means knowing things, but knowing how to acquire information and become re-

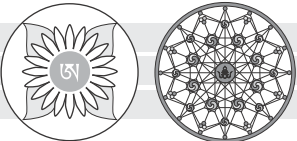
sponsible for a specific action. So the main point is knowing how to do things. What came through the words of the master, in my opinion, was the attempt to try to explain to students some of the basic mechanisms of modern society in which we ourselves are reflected, and how to become aware of how it works,

since based on it, we have to learn to behave, both in our individuality and as a community. Man is evolving, said Khyentse, and many of the limitations of the past have been abandoned, like national boundaries, or, at least in certain areas of the planet, religious and racial boundaries, and individuals

are becoming more and more similar to each other. The same thing is happening to countries and hence to the same products that we produce and consume. Even education, produced by external influences, seems to be an important point. This shapes the way we understand what is being communicated to us, through our mind frame, through the reference points that we are sure of. Another important point that the master mentioned is how the Dzogchen teaching is appropriate for our times, to contemporary evolution, and it appears that he is concentrating his efforts to ensure that the teaching and the community are as much as possible an integral part of this evolution because everyone can benefit from it, as Chögyal Namkhai Norbu often explains. The teacher brought the retreat to an end by talking about communication again, reminding people that it is important to know what we are talking about, and not to enter into debate for the sake of it. If we really have to, we should speak about topics related to our senses that we know about more directly. ©

France	Germany	Netherlands
New French Gakyil Yellow: Marie-Christine Dauge mchdauge@noos.fr Françoise Casabianca francoise.casabianca380@orange.fr Béatrix Orbeiceta beatrix.orbaiceta@free.fr Red: Jean-Pascal Pillot pillotjp@yahoo.fr Marie-Madeleine Perez marie-madeleine.perez@wanadoo.fr Gabriela Arnon g.arnon@wanadoo.fr Blue: Stoffelina Verdonk stoffelina.verdonk@gmail.com François Leverrier francoisleverrier.list@yahoo.com Catherine Duez (Director) duetz.catherine@yahoo.fr gakyilfr@gmail.com	New Gakyil Germany Yellow: Heidi Lindner Lenka Kroh Red: Heike Engerer Rico Aurich Blue: Günther Frosch Ilona Makrutzki Assistants: Vilma Eiden (yellow), Viktoria Gershevskaya (red), Daniel Kucera, Michael Voigtländer (blue)	New Gakyil Berlin Yellow: Thomas Eifler ei@dzogchen.de Red: Hannes Strobl hannes@netzradio.de Blue: Jan Böhm janoboheme@gmail.com Assistant for Red: Christine Strobl gakyil-berlin@dzogchen.de Spain, Barcelona >> Kundusling New Gakyil Kundusling Blue: Ana Paula Sánchez Ferraz ana_azul@dzogchen.es Red: Francisco Javier Ruiz javi_rojo@dzogchen.es Yellow: Soledad Cañero Sesar sol_amarillo@dzogchen.es Gakyil Kundusling Dzogchen Community in Spain gakyil@dzogchen.es www.dzogchen.es
		Dutch Gakyil for the Year of the Water Dragon Blue: Anneriet Meijers anneriet49@gmail.com Annalen Gall (assistant) annalen_gall@hotmail.com Red: Ans Swart ansswart@xs4all.nl Yellow: Larissa Katayeva katayeva@gmail.com Andy Hodge (assistant member & collaborator with the Board of Directors) hodesxm@gmail.com Secretary: Maarten Schoon maarten.schoon@gmail.com Dzogchen Community in The Netherlands info@dzogchen.nl www.dzogchen.nl Cheers! Maarten
		Switzerland New Gakyil Yellow: Patrick Celka Red: Jasna Adler Blue: Sabine Attenhofer Best regards Jasna Adler, red gakyil@dzogchen.ch

MerigarEast



Merigar East Asociatia Culturala Comunitatea Dzog-Chen	23 August 907005 Constanta Romania	phone: 0040 746 26 08 61 office@dzogchen.ro www.dzogchen.ro
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Merigar East is looking for new Red Gakyil members

Due to various reasons, the Red Gakyil of Merigar East is in a weak condition, and we need to find new members to take care of the responsibilities. This is especially urgent now, as we will soon commence various projects (Gonpa painting, construction of sang khangs and bases of the Stupas) as well as preparations for the summer retreat at the Gar. At the moment the Gekö is effectively performing the tasks of the Red Gakyil (and the administrator), but this is of course too much work for one person, especially when there are more activities. We need people who are able to actively take charge of

the projects, keep things organized, and communicate with the other Gakyil members about all aspects of the work and so on. If you have the necessary qualities and can offer your time and energy, please get in touch. As it is quite difficult to manage construction works from a distance, some visits to Romania will be required. We can discuss the schedule in more detail with the interested candidates. This is a very important task, and a great opportunity to contribute in the collaboration to develop the Gar. If you want to offer your help or check details, please write to **yellow@dzogchen.ro**.

We hope to hear from you soon!
With best wishes, Merigar East Gakyil

My Reincarnation Screening in Bucharest, Romania

By Mira Mironova

On the 17th of March 2012, the anniversary of the great yogini Ayu Khandro, a real spring came to Merigar East: it was above 20°C, sunny and very pleasant. In the morning we had put up the mandala in the Gonpa and performed the Vajra Dance tun to connect with all the practitioners worldwide on such an auspicious day. And though we were only two people dancing (the gekö and me), it felt like all our vajra family was present there.

Exactly on this special day there was a documentary film festival *One World Romania* in Bucharest and *My Reincar-*

nation by Jennifer Fox was going to be screened there. Of course, there were no doubts about going there and so off we went. We met the local community and did a Ganapuja at a practitioner’s apartment in Bucharest and afterwards we all went to the cinema.

The screening took place in **Noul Cinematograf al Regizorului Roman** (The New Cinema of Romanian Directors) which is situated in a very interesting building at the Muzeul Național al Țăranului Român (The Romanian Peasant Museum). The cinema hall of 340 seats was completely full of visitors. It was the third time I had seen the film but again and again it touched me so deeply giving me a strong feeling of connection with our precious Masters and the

Dzogchen Teachings. The documentary shows the relation between father and son, student and Teacher so intimately and so open that everyone – practitioner or not – watching it was filled with a sense of trust and devotion. The fact that such great Dzogchen Masters have shared their private lives with all of us shows their absolute confidence in the purity and power of the Teachings.

After the screening Jennifer was asked many interesting questions related not only to the technical details of filming but also to spirituality that indicated great potential for the growth of the Community in Romania.

With immense gratitude to Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche, Khyentse Yeshe and special thanks to Jennifer Fox. ©

Czech Republic

Losar in Prague
Presentation of the Dzogchen Community and Tibetan Buddhism and fundraising for ASIA Onlus
by Tereza Starkova, Fijalka Turzikova

The Czech Community is happy to inform you that this year once again we organized Losar celebrations in Prague – Saturday February 25, 2012 from afternoon till late night in the ancient New Town Hall building. The Losar event has been a successful project for the public which we have already been organizing for 7 years.

The Tibetan Buddhist groups existing in Prague are involved and also many organizations supporting Tibetan culture and human rights together with the Tibetan community living in the Czech Republic.

The Czech Dzogchen Community is the main organizer of the whole event every year. Our team with 15 people had



a few intensive months of work ahead of the event, but it was definitely worth it. How wonderful it is to meet your Vajra



family every week and collaborate on something useful for others!

On the main stage we presented a cultural program for the general public: Tibetan singer Loten Namling (living in Switzerland), several other music groups (in which practitioners played), a short explanation of practice and meditation for all led by Raffaella Blasi, a short presentation of ASIA Onlus and its projects by Andrea Dell’Angelo, an astrological

explanation of the Water Dragon year by Geshe Nyima Woser, a Tibetan costume fashion show, a lottery and so on.

There was also a huge space for specific workshops and presentations of various traditions, in which the Dzogchen Community presented Yantra Yoga, the Vajra Dance, Kunye, Moxa, Pagchen and the Game of Liberation.

The whole event was also designed for families with children, so there was

a playroom and various workshops for children (painting Buddhas, making Namkhas, theatre and clowns).

For hungry and thirsty people there was also a little restaurant with Tibetan and Indian food or a nice Tearoom for resting and playing Tibetan games. As usual we offered *tsampa* (roasted barley flour) sweets with *nyongdrol* inside. Visitors could buy books and many other articles from many dharma-shops.

The whole event was attended by approximately 700 visitors and we received some nice feedback. The Czech press was also present and various newspaper articles and radio interviews were published afterwards.

Fundraising for ASIA brought in 1850 euro, which will be sent for the long distance sponsorship project. We have adopted 4 children and one elderly person from the Losar proceeds since 2005.

On behalf of the Losar team ©

Greece

Hellenic (Greek) Dzogchen Community Gakyil
By Panayiotis Stambolis, blue gakyil

Dear Vajra brothers and sisters.

After first informing our precious Master about the renewal of the Greek Dzogchen Community gakyil and receiving his response, we are happy to announce to you that we have just had the elections for the new gakyil, which is in fact an expansion of the previous gakyil by four members, as we decided, in order for all of us who have been in the previous gakyil to assist until the upcoming retreat with

Rinpoche in October, and then withdraw and let the newer members take over from then, perhaps with a new expansion, if necessary.

The expanded gakyil members are: **Thanos Svoronos** and **Vasso Mamali** new **blue** members, Panayiotis Stambolis old blue, **Alexis Agelakopoulos** new **yellow** member, Fani Xenou and Ramos Paridis old yellow, **Satori M. Panagopoulou** new **red** member, Athina Katsilerou and Sofia Daskaroli old red.

On this occasion we would like to let you know that the email address dzogchen_gr@yahoo.com **does not belong to the community** but to an individual who was in the past a member

of the gakyil and the Greek community and has initially created and then maintained the account as personal. So if you want to get in touch with us, please do so through the emails on the official site www.dzogchen.gr

We are currently renewing our site, hopefully within 3–4 weeks, and preparing our first announcement for the retreat to be publicized in Norbunet, and elsewhere. We will soon decide upon which hall or appropriate hotel preferably by the Athens coast to choose, since October can be quite summer-like in Greece, so that those attending the retreat may also enjoy some holidays by the nearby beaches.

We are also collaborating with The Shang Shung Institute in organizing a pre-retreat event one weekend before the week of the retreat, about Tibetan Culture, Kunye, Vajra Dance, Yantra Yoga, Tibetan Medicine, and the Dzogchen Teachings, about which we will inform you soon. Despite the current crisis, we are preparing in various ways and making plans for the retreat, the development of the Community and Garabing. We are very pleased with our collaboration in the gakyil and the community and looking forward to seeing you in Greece in October.

The Hellenic Dzogchen Community Gakyil

Hungary

New Gakyil

Yellow:
Zoltán Varga
dolma@freemail.hu

Red:
Zoltán Erdélyi
lungkhor@gmail.com

Blue:
Márton Ganszky
ganszkym@gmail.com

The Hungarian Dzogchen Community’s secretary email address is: info.dzogchen@gmail.com

KunsangarSouth



Kunsangar South
kunsangar.blue@gmail.com
<http://kunsangar.org>

Kunsangar South News

Today the construction of the Gonpa is nearly finished except for the interior works which are supposed to be completed in May this year. Then in June we are starting the decoration of the Gonpa under the supervision of Migmar who will be coming from Merigar West.

In addition the Gekö’s house has been completely built and will also house a library and an office with reception. Then in May we will begin to build a dark retreat house, one of the first among the Gars in Eastern Europe. There’s already one Sang Khang for Sang practice and one more will be constructed soon.

Meanwhile we are establishing contact with the local villagers. For example at the end of the winter we organized a Losar celebration for them. It allowed them to get more acquainted with Tibetan Culture and the Dzogchen Community – we screened a film about the Community. It was nice entertainment for the local children!

We have received Rinpoche’s permission to build a Longsal Stupa at Kunsangar South.

This stupa will promote peace, harmony and purify of negativity from all those who come into contact with it. It



Children at Losar Celebration. Photo: T. Vinokhodova

will be a special Stupa, filled with unique Longsal texts. On its top there will be a Longsal symbol as well. This will be one of the first stupas of this kind in the world! In fact this summer Rinpoche

will perform a ritual of putting precious relics into the foundation of the Stupa. If you wish to accumulate merits by donating to this amazing Stupa please contact stupa.sbor@gmail.com.



The newly built Gekö’s house with library and office. Photo: T. Vinokhodova

We have an intense retreat programme this year which, first of all, includes Chögyal Namkhai Norbu’s teaching from a Terma of Changchub Dorje and Vajra Dance Second Level Teachers’ training with Adriana Dal Borgo and Prima Mai.


Visit our website kunsangar.org!
Contact us at kunsangar.assistant@gmail.com!
Welcome to Kunsangar South! ©



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KunsangarNorth



Kunsangar North

kunsangar.blue@gmail.com

http://kunsangar.org

Russia, Izhevsk

The Dzogchen Community Kungaling in Izhevsk, Russia invites you to participate in the Longsal Stupa Project

The project is supervised by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu and Khyentse Yeshe.

The idea of this project was born long ago. In 2000 members of the Izhevsk Community came to Rinpoche with a question about how to help one of the most depressed regions of Russia at that time. Rinpoche said that it could be good to build a Stupa.

Unfortunately for a long period of time secondary causes did not allow us to realize this project, but in 2009 the Community got its own Gonpa. The same year Khyentse Yeshe consecrated the Gonpa and gave a Teaching on the Seven Line Prayer. One day, after Teaching members of the Community were walking with Khyentse Yeshe in a picturesque park near the Gonpa. They expressed their desire to build a Stupa in it. Khyentse Yeshe agreed to this, saying that it could be one of the Stupas with the Longsal symbol, which



he has seen in his dreams. Since that moment the idea of building the Stupa has become a project. In 2009 Rinpoche blessed and confirmed the project of the Longsal Stupa.

In August 2011 the project was approved by the local authorities and the idea of the construction of the Stupa became material. The Longsal Stupa will be built in the very centre of the city in a city park about 10 m from the Gonpa. It's a very beautiful place. Rinpoche and Khyentse Yeshe are supervising this project. Giovanni Boni, an architect who built the Merigar Stupa and

many other buildings of the Dzogchen Community has been assigned as coordinator of the project. Migmar Tsering, who was invited from Tibet by Rinpoche to supervise the construction of the Merigar Gonpa and is an expert in the traditional Tibetan arts will supervise the creation of the essential elements of the Stupa.

The Longsal Stupa will be connected with the Dzogchen Teaching and the terms of the Longsal Teaching, discovered by our Master. In particular, Kungaling would like this Stupa not only to create a cause for meeting the Teach-

ing for all sentient beings, not only encourage the spread of the Dzogchen Teaching throughout the region and the country, but also to unite the energies of all the International Dzogchen Community, numerous Gars and Lings all over the world.

Construction has already started and we plan to finish the Stupa in July-August 2012. We will keep you informed of all stages of construction.

That is why we invite you to support the project with your energy and ask you to make any symbolic offering to unite your energy with the energy of the Longsal Stupa – a symbol of the Enlightened Mind of all Buddhas. Even now the energies of many Gars, Lings and practitioners all over the world have been united in this project: South Kunsangar has offered a golden Longsal Symbol, Merigar West – precious texts of our Master's Teachings, Kunsangar North has offered a mala, which was on the altar during the Teaching of our Precious Master, Tashigar North has offered the first volume of the Longsal Teaching in Spanish and some earth from the Gar, Tashigar South has offered a Buddha statue from their altar, pieces of the mandala drawn by Rinpoche and

natural crystals. Practitioners from all over the world are helping with finding the necessary materials, getting them to the place of construction, uniting their personal experience in designing the Stupa and finding solutions for its construction.

You can send your offering to the following postal address: 426006, Izhevsk, 54 Oruzheynika Dragunova str., apt 31, Udmurtian Republic, Russia. ATT: Natalia Sinyajeva .

You can also send a donation using the PayPal account sin.natalia@gmail.com or by direct wire transfer to Swift: SABRRUMMPC1

Bank: Sberbank (Zapadno-Uralsky Head Office) Perm Russia

Branch 8618/072

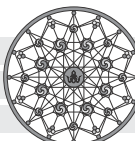

Account: 408 178 101 6800 113 5238

Beneficiare Natalia Siniaeva

We hope for your cooperation. If you have questions, please feel free to contact us by e-mail – mineraltherapy@mail.ru.

With love and respect,
Kungaling, Izhevsk, Russia ©

Namgyalgar South



Namgyalgar
Dzogchen Community in
Australia

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A Fortuitous Gathering at Namgyalgar South

by Ian Drummond

Rinpoche enters relaxed and smiling, “Welcome everybody”, then silence as we wait for the precise start time of the Webcast allowing hundreds of practitioners outside of our Gar in South Eastern Australia to take part in this retreat. As we wait, there is only the sound of small children settling down as all assembled prepare to begin the retreat of the Longsal Teaching *The Upadesha on the Twenty-Five Spaces*. Whatever the specific causal chain of events that has brought us here, we all have a connection with the Dzogchen Teachings; a fortuitous assembly of Teacher, Teachings and students.



Photo: G. Horner

Underscoring the importance of *The Upadesha on the Twenty-Five Spaces* for this particular time place and circumstance, this same Teaching was given by Rinpoche at Namgyalgar South in 2011. That year it rained heavily for days, leaving those camping on site scrambling for tools to dig more extensive trenches around their tents. This year the conditions on the side of Mount Gulaga, on which the Gar sits, are mostly of crisp air and clear blue skies. Perhaps these conditions mirror the clarity of the assembled students, perhaps not, but at the very least we all find ourselves in a situation of greater comfort.

Rinpoche begins the teaching with a clear and concise description of the method and function of the *Twenty Five Spaces*. This practice is of the “same family” of the Song of the Vajra. Rinpoche explains the specific method for creating a cause for liberation con-

nected with each of the ‘six senses’, that is, each of the five senses and the mind. As the object of auditory sense is sound, the object of mind is all phenomena. Integrating our mind in the Song of the Vajra then is a cause for liberation. What then for those who have a clear cause and are already on the Path? Rinpoche explains that these methods are very important for practitioners; diminishing obstacles and increasing clarity.

Rinpoche then leads into a description of the dreams of clarity associated with this precious teaching from the Longsal Terma cycle and then this evening and over the next six days skillfully guides us through *The Upadesha on the Twenty-Five Spaces* and, as always, to the Essence of the Teaching.

As mentioned above, the *Twenty-Five Spaces* are a cause of liberation relating to the mind, with each of the mantras having a specific function for practitioners. Using them all together, Rinpoche explains, is of course good, but “if we know a little more” practitioners can apply them individually to overcome specific obstacles, for example overcoming the mind’s grasping at concreteness or attachment to the five sense aggregates.

A cold front comes through at the end of the third day’s teaching, but not before many have another chance to drive from Mount Gulaga to one of the near-by beaches to enjoy the play of the elements; surf crashing into shore as the afternoon sun breaks through dark storm clouds, forming a rainbow on the horizon.

It is not possible to describe in the words of a short article the full panoply of the Master’s teaching over the seven days of this retreat, with important points and clarifications resonating with the condition of each individual student. What does find easy description though is the way many of these same individual students were engaged in active collaboration with each other to ensure the (mostly) smooth running of the retreat; from the activities led by the Santi Maha Sangha, Yantra Yoga and Vajra Dance teachers, to the various kitchen, cleaning, fire wood and other teams, to the many who lent a hand when the need arose, and the hard working yet relaxed Namgyalgar South Geko, Jakob.

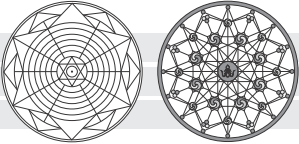
As the completion of the last day’s teachings, artist Urgyen Sonam commissioned made an offering to

Rinpoche of a beautiful large fabric appliqué thanka of Mandarava from him by the Namgyalgar community. At Rinpoche’s direction, it will now hang in the Gonpa at Namgyalgar South.

Immediately following the presentation and later that day, the Namgyalgar Community marked important moments of transition. Firstly, Rabgyi, a Tibetan (former monk) practitioner closely associated with Namgyalgar South in many capacities since his arrival from Nepal, marked his departure from the Gar by giving a speech eloquently reminding us first and foremost of our unique good fortune in having met Chögyal Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche. Some short hours later, a moving and inspirational memorial service was held for Jean Macintosh, a woman whose activity made such a vital and critical contribution the Dzogchen Community and was instrumental in developing the Gar on which we had gathered for this retreat. As the tributes of so many local people from outside the Dzogchen Community also indicated, her energetic and active compassion touched many lives in diverse and meaningful ways.

As Rinpoche reminded us on the last day of this retreat, in the Dzogchen Community we are all Vajra Sisters and Brothers together in the same boat to Illumination. In our human condition, encountering the ever present limitations of samsara, to have the opportunity to receive such a remarkable teaching as the *Upadesha on the Twenty-Five Spaces* in rural Australia is surely remarkable and a testament to the active collaboration of our Master and practitioners past, present and future. ©

TsegyalgarEast



DCA Tsegyalgar East		
PO Box 479	Phone: 413 369 4153	secretary@tsegyalgar.org
Conway, MA 01341 USA	Fax & Bookstore: 413 369 4473	www.tsegyalgareast.org

News from Tsegyalgar East

Preparations for Chögyal Namkhai Norbu’s summer retreat and SMS training in July are well underway at Tsegyalgar East where the Community looks forward to welcome Rinpoche and his family along with old and new practitioners and travelers from all corners of the globe.

Ongoing activities include fundraising and construction work for completion of the Vajra Hall’s Phase Three and special projects such as the first annual Three-month Summer Encampment

program on Khandroling. Tsegyalgar East also hosts monthly programs in Yantra Yoga, Vajra Dance and Santi Maha Sangha in addition to our weekly practice sessions which can be found on our website www.tsegyalgar.org.

The Tsegyalgar East Gakyil deeply appreciates the 184 separate donations from about 175 individuals (some of whom made multiple donations), from 17 countries including 8 lings and Gars. The international participation for this important project is truly inspiring. Against the goal of \$600,000 of phase 3, a total of \$415,000 was raised

or pledged and doesn’t include additional funds from the matching grant which is in effect through mid-May whereby donations are doubled. To read more about our matching grant visit the Tsegyalgar East website.

Spring is here and due to the unusually mild winter, the Vajra Hall builders were able to begin their seasonal construction earlier than expected. Over the past three weeks, the entire retaining wall surrounding the perimeter of the massive building was built. Skylights are ready for installation and the promenade is grated with sand and gravel

in preparation to receive the beautiful pavers/stones that will encircle the Universal Mandala for circumambulation.

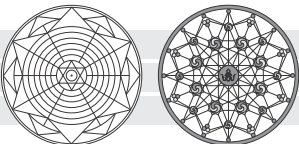
To accomplish this particular activity with over 6000 square feet to cover, everyone is invited to participate in some karma yoga between now and through the summer and fall of 2012 from a couple of hours to three months.

For individuals interested in spending up to three months on Khandroling, a special encampment program has been developed that integrates four hours of daily work with ongoing practice on

the land or schoolhouse in exchange for free camping and retreat with two meals a day. Many of the projects involve improving the conditions for camping such as building tent platforms and a new Khandroling kitchen. The encampment is especially open to beginners or younger practitioners who are interested in combining land management, carpentry and forestry skills within a practice community.

Best Wishes to all!

TsegyalgarWest



Tsegyalgar West	tsegyalgarwestsecretary@gmail.com
Baja California Sur, Mexico	http://tsegyalgarwest.org

Update from Pelzomling, Mexico City

Now that the new place that hosts the Ling is almost finished (with a small apartment for an Instructor), the idea is to invite instructors of the Community to stay at least one or two months In Mexico City to take care of the Ling.

We can give them the place to stay, a budget to cover the daily expenditures and work out with them a program for the Ling that could also benefit the instructor him/herself. They decide how many courses they want to do, for Community practitioners or external people; it can be every weekend if they like. We want them to conduct the regular practice section during the week. It is a mutually beneficial situation.

For August/September 2012 we have invited Jimena Piedra and Grisha Mokhin. We are waiting details on the dates. Hopefully we will have a program for all the year.

New Gakyil elected April 18, 2012
pelzomling@gmail.com

Blue:
Monica Patiño Marquez, entrepreneur
Vanessa Lew, entrepreneur

Red:
Karen Márquez , layer and painter
Gabriel Kleiman (*vice Director*), entrepreneur
Cristobal Espinola, freelance and artist

Yellow:
Giorgio Minuzzo (*Director*), Freelance
Josefina Robles, Instructor of Chi Kung and Thai massage

From March 2012, the new direction of Pelzomling is in: “Casa Drolma”
Calle de Pueblo 135 (esquina Orizaba)
Colonia Roma Norte
Tel: 55333278 / 55110550

Practice time:
Monday and Wednesday (**Yantra Yoga**) 19:00–20:30
Tuesday and Thursday (**Collective Practices**) 19:00–20:30
Saturday (**SMS**): 11:00–13:00
Sunday (**Vajra Dance**) 10:00–12:00

For more information:
pelzomling@gmail.com
casadrolma@gmail.com

Dzogchen Community in Tepoztlan, Morelos, Mexico, Wangdusling

For information contact:
Susana Dultzin sdultzin@yahoo.com

Direction:
Niño Artillero 33, Barrio San Miguel
PO 62520 Tepoztlan, Morelos, Mexico
Tel: 01 739 39 50192 / 045 777 186 0675
Info: sdultzin@yahoo.com

For information or assistance if you are visiting Mexico:
pelzomling@gmail.com
casadrolma@gmail.com

TashigarSur

Argentina, La Plata New Gakyil

On Saturday 17th March, Rinpoche approved the first gakyil elected in La Plata – Argentina.

The members of the new gakyil are:

Blue: Claudio Bruno

Red: María Gimena Tognana

Yellow: Verónica Zelada

dzogchen.lp@gmail.com

Courses & Retreats

Merigar West



Ongoing SMS course at Merigar West with Fabio Risolo.
Photo: C. Maritano



Ongoing Vajra Dance Course at Merigar West with Rita Renzi.
Photo: C. Maritano

France



Kunye with Aldo Oneto at Dejamling, France April 2012.

Germany



Namkha course with Liane Gräf and Viktoria Gershevskaya at Dargyaling, Cologne, March 1–4.

Italy



Introductory Yantra Yoga course in Udine led by Marco Baseggio March 31–April 1.

Italy, Venice >>Gyamtsholing



Advanced Vajra Dance Course with Prima Mai at Gyamthsoling April 21–22.

Photo: G. Giromella

Vajra Dance in Venice with Prima Mai

by Sabina Ragaini (Gyamtsholing)

In the words of our precious Master: “In the teaching of Tantra there are several links to sacred dances; some of these dances are connected to the Vajra Dance, while others have fewer links. In any case, these dances are the manifestation of the Sambhogakaya and for this reason they are used. The Vajra Dance is a special dance, because when we say Vajra we refer to our real nature, our real condition and the Dance is a means to enter into this nature, to integrate our existence in the state of this nature. For this reason, with this purpose, there is the Vajra Dance in the Dzogchen teaching. This is connected to the state of contemplation, and the state of contemplation is what we call Dzogchen.”

The Course for Deepening the Song of the Vajra Dance with Prima Mai began in Venice with guruyoga on a beautiful spring morning in late March. There were a number of participants but our level of preparation was not all the same – more experienced

dancers alternated with practitioners who had followed some courses but who were still trying to remember the steps. Prima Mai gathered us together and, seated around the mandala in the gym, we listened carefully to her introduction to the Dance: the symbolism of the mandala, the colors, the elements, the transition from the “human” dimension of the Nirmanakaya to the absolute condition of the Dharmakaya. The introduction was clear, full of details, with no risk that it was only an intellectual exercise. It was an integral part of the speaker and her practice, and for this very reason the explanation was clear for all of us. Every word was important, I imagined, even for the most advanced, in order to enter the mandala with greater attention, with an awareness that would bring each of us to give the best of him/herself.

For the complete opening dance we did not follow the music of the CD, but, on Prima’s advice, we sung the Song of the Vajra as we went through the steps, integrating the melody of the song, both at the physical and energetic levels. The first day was devoted in particular to

the rhythm – in turns we tried the steps of the first part of the dance in which quite often the rhythm of the movement can be missed. As always the Pamo were more numerous and had to alternate more frequently, but it was useful to follow the explanations even from outside the mandala. During the day we also repeated the long verses of the Dance trying to correct any mistakes we had made in the past, or, at the most, perfecting our practice.

Sunday was dedicated more specifically to the mudras and steps of the second part of the song. The tea break gave us some space for an interesting exchange of ideas on organizing a day of presentation on the work of the Venetian Ling that we are planning for next autumn. The practitioners from other Lings talked about their experiences, some of us made proposals and also expressed doubts and misgivings. Prima expressed her point of view without underestimating the opinion of any of us. She emphasized the importance of Tibetan culture, not as a corner of the world where an ethnic group lives in isolation but as part of the heart of



Photo: G. Giromella

Gomadevi course at Gyamtsholing

by Rita Degli Esposti

On March 3 and 4 Enzo Terzano gave a course on the short Gomadevi tun at Gyamtsholing (Venice). Due to circumstances, the course was held in three different places, that were, however, pleasant and welcoming.

A group of about fifteen participants, not only practitioners from Venice but also from other parts of Veneto and Friuli, participated in the course with pleasure and excitement, and I think I can speak on behalf of everybody in saying how much we

enjoyed the clarity, the amount of detail, and the smoothness of the Enzo’s explanations.

We felt very fortunate and united in the sharing of this valuable practice. Enzo replied to our questions with kindness, patience and generosity and there were many truly joyful moments. It is impossible to put into words how meaningful this experience was for us all – an experience that allowed us to focus on various aspects of the practice and that gave us practical tools to understand it.

We can only thank Enzo for his presence and for his careful study of this practice that he gifted us with. All of us hope to develop our practice and, if possible, to continue to study it. ©

Italy, Verona



Verona. Course of 1st series of Yantra led by Carla Castellani under the supervision of Laura Evangelisti, March 10–11.

Spain, Barcelona >>Kundusling



GreenTara, Explanation and Practice with Costantino Albini at Kundusling, Barcelona February 2012.

Photo: P. Fassoli

Spain, Tenerife



Aldo Oneto and participants in the Kunye course in Tenerife March 23–25.

Switzerland



Yantra Yoga for beginners with Patrizia Pearl, Valais (Swiss Alps) 13–15 April 2012.

Czech Republic



Yantra for beginners with Fijalka Turzikova in Prague 2–4 March, 2012.



Pranajamas with Fijalka Turzikova at Phendeling 30–31 March, 2012.

Czech Republic



Yantras 1 and 2 series with Fijalka Turzikova in Prague 23–25 March, 2012.



Three Vajras Dance course with Pavel Sobek supervised by Adriana Dal Borgo, April 7–9 at Phendeling.

China

Fabio Andrico in China

by Tracy Nee

Fabio’s China adventure started straight away on his way from the airport, driving past a lady in black leather on a huge Harley Davidson motorcycle. That is a symbol of how Fabio’s Chinese information system will be formatted from now on.

Since Fabio is always very busy, his teaching was really intensive this time. In 20 days, he gave a 1st level Teacher’s Training, a 2nd level supervision and an Eight Movements supervision. The first two courses were not large. Each had around 10 students. It gave us a very good chance to learn more from Fabio, and almost everyone had a chance to “touch” him well and learn precisely the correct breathing. He was so nice and patient, and not only gave each one enough advice to develop our Yantra Yoga, but also spent time after courses with our thirsty students to answer all kinds of questions regarding many topics, not just Yantra Yoga.

The communication was enjoyable, even the language. Fabio finally learned some Chinese which we even can understand, like “in”, “out” and “Vajra Wave”. Since 2009, people started to learn Yantra Yoga in China, and there is already a group of Yantra fans here. Then we met a bottleneck, not only for learning Yantra Yoga, but also for Rinpoche’s teaching. How do we go further? From the bottom of our hearts, we appreciate Fabio who came and spent all this time with us so patiently, so that we can deepen our Yantra Yoga practice, and have a more solid connection with Rinpoche’s teaching. We are looking forward to his coming back, maybe his next course will be in our new center!

It was a pity that Fabio only had a 2 day holiday during his trip so we were not able to show him how great Beijing is, with its numerous stores and merchandise, crowded subway, all brands of cars and iPhone 4s fill the streets, all these changed his impression on China. When Fabio returns, what will China be? ©



Level 1 Teacher’s Training course with Fabio Andrico April 8–15, 2012.

China



Level 2 Supervision course with Tracy Ni, supervised by Fabio Andrico April 16–19, 2012.

China



Eight Movements Supervision with Fabio Andrico.



Fabio and Tracy at the Lama Temple.

Russia, Moscow

IX World Dance Olympiad in Moscow

April 29, 2012

The Russian Dzogchen Community participated in the IX World Dance Olympiad in Moscow on April 29, 2012. Here we see the event, the trophy and diploma they were awarded and the direct email communication from the Community to Chögyal Namkhai Norbu about the event.

Precious Teacher!

On the 29th of April during the IX World Dance Olympiad in Moscow, the International Dzogchen Community participated performing the Vajra Dance.

The Dzogchen Community was awarded this diploma and cup in the Folk Dance category!

With love and immeasurable gratitude,

All participants of this event



Kunsangar North



Santi Maha Sangha with Igor Berkhin at Kunsangar North, “Entering the Knowledge of Emptiness”, April 29–May 1, 2012.

Australia, Melbourne



Mandarava in Melbourne with Elise Stutchbury

February 25 & March 3, 2012

The Melbourne Dzogchen community was fortunate to have Elise Stutchbury run a Mandarava Practice and explanation session over two Saturdays February 25 and March 3, 2012. It was as intensive as a two day teaching would allow for such a deep practice. In spite of the extreme heat wave at the time, all appeared to take in her clear descriptions of mudra, visualizations and melodies.

This was a great opportunity to learn freshly or renew a practice so personal to our precious Master and of such benefit to us, his students. This

visit also incorporated the Melbourne Dzogchen Community Open Day where Elise gave a knowledgeable introduction on the Dzogchen teachings for newcomers. Questions from the visitors and Dzogchen Community were thoroughly answered in a relaxed way.

After this there was a Yantra Yoga demonstration led by Emily Coleing, one of our Instructors, followed by the Six Spaces of Samantabhadra Vajra Dance by community members. The afternoon ended with an opportunity for visitors to mingle with Community members – fantastic. As it happened the passing of our Vajra sister Jean Mackintosh occurred on the evening of the Open Day, and the Melbourne Community met each evening to do Shitro practice.

Namgyalgar North



Harmonious Breathing with Fabio Andrico

Directly after our wonderful first retreat with Rinpoche at Namgyalgar North we were lucky to have a course in Harmonious Breathing with Fabio Andrico. Its amazing how if we simply give focus to our breath – something we take for granted – we can have real breakthroughs.

Lots of laughing is part of Fabio’s success in encouraging us to relax, so the breath also relaxes. His expertise when it comes to peoples tensions and his animated humor delighted us. People reported that the course is well worth travelling long distances for.

The only pity is that we don’t have more of Fabio here in Australia, but happily we all have experienced more of our capacity for relaxed breath to refer back to in our daily lives.

Tsegyalgar East



Refresher Course of the Song of the Vajra Dance with Bodhi Krause March 16th–18th, 2012. Photo: P. Barry

USA, New York City >>Kundrolling



The Vajra Dance of the Song of Vajra, first half with Kyu Kyuno skype supervised by Adriana Dal Borgo at Kundrolling, New York, April 2012.

Tsegyalgar West



Integration and Contemplation with Costantino Albini at Tsegyalgar West April 2012.



Photos: L. Pearce Bauer

Mexico, Mexico City >> Pelzomling



Dance of Three Vajras with Anya Neyman at Pelzomling Mexico city, March 17–18, 2012.



Chöd with Costantino Albini at Pelzomling Mexico City March 28–April 1, 2012.

Tashigar Norte



During the easter weekend in April 2012 Steven Landsberg led a course on the 7th lojong and the four applications of presence at Tashigar Norte.

Tashigar Sur



Emily Coleing teaching Yantra Yoga during the Easter Retreat at Tashigar South April 2012

Peru, Lima



Public Dream Yoga Program with Michael Katz in Lima, Peru, April 6–8, 2012.

Passages Born

Serbia



Born: Iskra was born to Jasna Jovicevic on February 4th 2012 at 16.20 in Subotica, Serbia.

Tashigar Norte



Born: Andres Palden was born to Gilberto Parella and Tatiana Fedorchenko on January 9, 2012.

Programs

Merigar West

Events Spring/Summer 2012

May 2–6
Purification in Sutra, Tantra, Dzogchen
with Jim Valby

May 12–13
Dance of Song of the Vajra Base course (part 5)
with Rita Renzi

May 19–20
Dance of the Six Spaces Base course
with Maurizio Mingotti

June 1–7
Vajra Dance Teacher Training Level 2
with Adriana Dal Borgo & Prima Mai

June 2–3
Approach to public speaking workshop
with Andrea Calbucci

June 13–17
Dance of the Song of the Vajra Base course (part 2)
with Rita Renzi

June 29–July 1
Mandarava Tsalung & Yantra Yoga retreat
with Nina Robinson & Tiziana Gottardi

July 3–8
Dance of Song of the Vajra advanced course

July 14–15
Tibetan language: correct pronunciation of practice texts
with Fabian Sanders
(in collaboration with SSI)

July 16–August 15
Tibetan language and translators’ training
with Fabian Sanders
(in collaboration with SSI)

July 16–22
Yoga Holiday Week
with Laura Evangelisti and Tiziana Gottardi

July 26–29
Tara explanation and practice retreat
with Costantino Albini

August
Practice retreat
Subject and dates to be confirmed

Guruyoga explanation and practice retreat
with Fabio Risolo (dates TBC)

August 23–26
Yantra Yoga fifth series with variations
with Laura Evangelisti

Children’s workshop with the Arcidosso Municipality
(dates and place TBC)

September 1
Merigar Under the Stars

August 31–September 6
Chögyal Namkhai Norbu
Longsal Atii Gongpa
Gojyed (Klong gsl a ti’i
dgongs pa sgo ’byed)
Retreat

September 7–9
Santi Maha Sangha Level I Examinations
September 10–16
Santi Maha Sangha Level II Training
with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

September 21–27
Chögyal Namkhai Norbu
Zhitro Khordas Rangdrol,
a Terma Teaching of
Ridzin Jyanchub Dorje
Retreat



Yoga Vacation for Adults and Children
July 16–22, 2012

Instructors
Yantra Yoga: Laura Evangelists & Tiziana Gottardi
Meditation: Fabio Risolo & Raffaella Blasi
Theatre Workshop: Cesare Torricelli

Program for Adults
Guided meditation, basic and intermediate levels of Yantra Yoga.

Program for Children
Yantra Yoga Kumar Kumari, stories for meditation, theatre, movement, vocal workshops, group games, working with colours and with the hands.

Fee for full week for adults: 250 euro
Includes all activities and organic lunch
Fee for each child: 100 euro
Includes all activities, organic lunch, snack and recreation times with supervision.
More information: Alessandra,
++39 342 7502986 or ++39 0564 966837
office@dzogchen.it
http://yoga-tibetano.blogspot.it

Germany

Vajra Dance Course for Beginners
with Karin Heinemann
12–13 May in Munich
Registration: Viktoria Gershevskaya,
Tel.: 02131-742 11 88
viktoria.gershevskaya@dzogchen.de

Vajra Dance
with Karin Heinemann
7–12 June in Höfen
Registration: Viktoria Gershevskaya,
Tel.: 02131-742 11 88
viktoria.gershevskaya@dzogchen.de

Dzogchen Practice Holiday Week
open for all practitioners
July 13–22 in Höfen
Registration: Rico Aurich
Tel.: 0177-159 36 03
rico.aurich@dzogchen.de

Italy

Khyentse Yeshe in Bologna
May 24–25

Thursday May 24, 8.30 pm
A showing of the documentary film, “My Reincarnation”
At the cinema Odeon, Sala A,
Via Mascarella 3
Khyentse Yeshe will be present for the film

Friday May 25, 6 pm
Khyentse Yeshe will give a free public talk
“Educating the Mind: Responsibility and Individual Evolution”
at the Great Hall of the Accademia di Belle Arti di Bologna
Vai Belle Arti, 54

Further information:
www.desalling.org
www.medicinacentratasullapersona.org

Spain, Mallorca

Chöd explanation and practice retreat
with Costantino Albini
May 29–June 3

Location: Balitx D’Avall in the Sierra de Tramontana de Soller in Majorca
Required materials: Chöd practice book, bell and damaru (optional)

Information and enrolment:
Alba Papini: **albapapini@hotmail.com**
Quico Tent: **quicotp@hotmail.com**
Sol Canero: **sol_amarillo@dzogchen.es**

Price of the retreat: 80 euro (with discounts)
Price of Lodging:
From 45–53 euro per had in shared room with dinner and breakfast included.
It is also possible to camp with a tent.



Longsal symbol on Merigar East gonpa.

Merigar East

May 23–27, 2012
Chöd Retreat
with Nina Robinson
During this retreat we will learn the meaning and the melodies of Chöd practice and how to perform it correctly with damaru and bell.

August 17–23, 2012
Chögyal Namkhai Norbu
Longsal Ati Nadzer
Retreat

August 24–26, 2012
Vajra Dance Course of the Six Spaces of Samantabhadra
with Eleonora Folegnani, supervised by Adriana dal Borgo

For more information on the retreats, accommodation and registration visit
www.dzogchen.ro

Kunsangar South

May 23–27
Goma Devi retreat
with Enzo Terzano

June 20–July 17
Dzogchen Summer Camp
with practical sessions on SMS base and Yantra Yoga, with Margarita Solovtsova and Oleg Troyanovsky.

August 2–9:
Chögyal Namkhai Norbu
Man-ngag Tag-drol Gyud,
a precious Terma teaching of Rigdzin Jangchub Dorje

August 9–16
Vajra Dance Second level Teachers’ training
with Adriana Dal Borgo and Prima Mai

September 29–October 7
SMS Base and Yantra Yoga retreat
with Igor Berkhin and Viktor Krachkovsky

Namgyalgar North


The Dance of the Song of the Vajra
with Cosimo Di Maggio
July 11–15 Part I
July 18–23 Part II

Machan’s Beach Hall, Cairns
North Queensland, Australia
More information contact:
Dammika 0432 410 422
dammiz79@bigpond.com or
Mimi 0413 910 171
mimiboivin@gmail.com

b o d h i

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Japan

Dzogchen Retreat in Japan!

June 1–5, 2012

Tokyo Grand Hotel

Schedule of the Retreat:

June 1, 2012 (Friday)

6:30–8:30 pm Dzogchen Teaching

June 2 & 3, 2012 (Saturday & Sunday)

10:00–12:00 am Dzogchen Teaching

1:30–3:00 pm Meditation (explanation + practice)

3:30–5:30 pm Vajra Dance

6:00–7:30 pm Yantra Yoga

7:45–8:45 pm Vajra Dance (practice session)

June 4, 2012 (Monday)

10:00–12:00 am Dzogchen Teaching

1:30–3:00 pm Meditation (explanation + practice)

4:00–6:00 pm Ganapuja

6:30–8:00 pm Vajra Dance

June 5, 2012 (Tuesday)

10:00–12:00 am Dzogchen Teaching

Venue for the Retreat:

Tokyo Grand Hotel, 5th Floor, “Keyaki Hall”

2-5-2 Shiba, Minato-ku, Tokyo

Tel: [Tokyo] 03-3456-2222

Access: Please see the hotel’s web site: Tokyo Grand Hotel|Location|Minato-Ku | Shiba

(Parking facilities are not available on site, so please do not plan to drive to the venue.)

(Important: Please do not contact Tokyo Grand Hotel with any questions except those related to access and room reservations.)

Cost of Attendance:

Attendance of Full Retreat:

Non-member: 39,000 yen (35,000 yen with early registration discount*)

Ordinary member: 31,200 yen (28,000 yen with early registration discount*)

Sustaining member: 23,400 yen (21,000 yen with early registration discount*)

Please inform your intent to attend, your full name, email address, mailing address, and telephone number in your application. For attendees with over-seas addresses, please inquire by email concerning method of payment.

Emails should be sent to the following address: **retreat_2012@dzogchencommunity.jp**

Keigo Yoneda

Blue Gakyil of Munselling Japan

Tsegyalgar East

Yantra Yoga: 3rd Series and Pranayama

with Naomi Zeitz

May 19–20

Santi Maha Sangha, 7th Lojong

with Steve Landsberg

May 25–27

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

Yeshes Khandro’i

Thugthig (Jnanadhakini)

July 4–10, 2012

Vajra Dance of the 6 Spaces of Samantabhadra

Supervison with Prima Mai

July 3–5, 2012

Breathing and Kumbhaka

with Fabio Andrico

July 11–12, 2012

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

Santi Maha Sangha Level I

July 13–17, 2012

(SMS Exams July 11 & 12)

Accommodations

Please make your reservations early as July is optimal vacation time in New England – Visit our accommodation pages for local vendors.

Tsegyalgar East does not have an accommodation manager. We will do our utmost to send out periodic communications on Norbunet and Tsegyalgarnet

on behalf of local host families and sangha who can accommodate lodgers and with whom you can contact directly. For all other vendors, please review our website links or search the internet.

USA, Hawaii



Dzogchen Retreat with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

Kapa’au, Big Island, Hawaii | June 13-17, 2012

Register: <http://Tsegyalgar.org/localcenters/hawaii>

Contact: hawaiiandz@gmail.com Ph: 608-406-1789

Dzogchen Retreat with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu 6/13-6/17

SMS Retreat with Steven Landsberg 6/8-6/10

Vajra Dance Retreat 6 Space Dance with Kyu Kyuno 6/18-6/20

Fabio Andrico Breathing and Yantra Yoga 6/13-6/17

USA, Europe

Dream Yoga Program

with Michael Katz

Dream Yoga

May 3–24

@ Tibet House, New York City

Event Details

Thursday, May 03, May 10, May 17, May 24 at 07:00 PM

About the Events

These four classes are intended to enhance creativity, self-exploration and spiritual/psychological growth through powerful techniques of lucid dreaming derived principally from the Tibetan dream yoga tradition. Lucidity within the dream state represents exceptional potential, and is a gateway to mastery of the dream process.

Participants will join Dr. Katz as he induces lucidity within a dream by combined deep relaxation training and induction. Afterword we will deepen our dream material through a process of psychodrama. Attendance at previous sessions is not required, but suggested. There will be a portion of the program where attendees are invited to meditate laying down. Comfortable clothes & an exercise or yoga mat are suggested but not provided.

Thursdays, May 3, 7–9 PM

General: \$ 25 per class/Members:\$ 22.50

Series (Thursdays, May 3, 10, 17, & 24)

General: \$ 90/Members:\$ 80

click here to register

Dream Yoga in Amsterdam

June 1–3

Contact Tom blue@dzogchen.nl

Dream Yoga in Paris

June 8–10

Contact Regina

contact@rayonmagenta.fr

USA, Los Angeles

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

Dzogchen Retreat

June 22–24

The Los Angeles Dzogchen Community invites you to a three-day retreat in Pasadena, California at the Pasadena Scottish Rite Center. The location for the retreat is accessible by public transit and is in close proximity to a variety of restaurants and accommodations.

For more information, please email dzcommunityla@gmail.com or call (323) 696-0108

Tashigar Norte

Courses of Vajra Dance

led by Bodhi Krause

Dance of Song of Vajra Part 1

(Through KE LA NAM):

Friday, May 11th to Wednesday May 16th

Dance of 3 Vajras

Friday, May 25th to Monday May 28th

Dance of Song of Vajra Part 2

(From SAM BHA RA TA):

Friday, June 8th to Wednesday June 14th

tashigarnortesecretary@gmail.com

www.tashigarnorte.org

THE MIRROR



Newspaper of the International Dzogchen Community of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

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How I Met Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

Vladimir Maikov

The Mirror: Vladimir, how did you meet Rinpoche?

Vladimir Maikov: I was interested in Buddhism when I was in my 20's, yoga and Buddhism, but not very much was available in the Russian language. There was traditional Russian Buddhology of course, academic Buddhology, and there were some academic studies, but as far as a living tradition, it was impossible to find a living teacher in the beginning of the 70s and 80s in Russia. In 1980 I became a postgraduate student at the Institute of Philosophy and at the same time I became a member of the underground transpersonal circle in Moscow.

Some people in this circle translated some books from transpersonal psychology and Buddhism, mainly books by Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche and Tarthang Tulku Rinpoche, and reading this material, like the book "The Myth of Freedom" by Trungpa Rinpoche, amazed me. This book was a very fresh message to me and also the translation by Trungpa of the Tibetan Book of the Dead. But the most important thing for me was meeting with authentic Dzogchen texts. I remember when the leader of our transpersonal circle asked me to edit a translation of The Natural Freedom of the Nature of Mind – part of Longchenpa's Trilogy of Natural Freedom, made by Herbert Guenther, and published in the Crystal Mirror. This text was about the natural freedom of mind and how samsara is fabricated from the ground of being. I remember when I read the name "Dzogchen" I had some feelings, a particular feeling, and I had no idea what Dzogchen was, but from Guenther I understood it was connected with the Nyingma school and Longchenpa, so I started to search for Longchenpa and what was available in the Crystal Mirror and the text, "Kindly Bent to Ease Us". But all was very complicated and very intellectual.

So in 1982 together with friend I traveled in search of living Buddhism and in Buryatia there was the place where Buddhism had traditionally been for several hundred years, as well as in Kalmykia and Tuva; all in the territory of the Soviet Union. So our main goal was to connect with the students of the a Buryat Lama called Bidia Dandaron, who was the only lama who transmitted Tantra and Dzogchen teaching to Western people, not only to Buryatians, since other lamas transmitted only to Buryatians.

M: You were living in Moscow then?

VM: Yes I was living in Moscow, and I was student, a 2nd year post graduate student in philosophy and a member of an underground transpersonal psychology circle where we tried to practice some meditation, Buddhism, Gurudjieff work, and some transpersonal Groffian works. And so it happened that in September of 1982 when we travelled to Buryatia, the Dalai Lama was visiting there at exactly the same time so, it was serendipitous for us and very good fortune! We were lucky to attend a 3-day teaching in Ivolginsky Datsan (main Buddhist temple in Buryatia) and there were approximately 10,000 people at that teaching. There were more or less 5,000 Buddhists and old Burytian men and women, and 5,000 KGB and extreme security, because it happened that 2 years before one man killed 2 Buryatian lamas at a

Buddhist temple. It was the second official visit of the Dalai Lama to Russia and the first one had been a long time before.

And so it was a great event and so it happens that the Dalai Lama became my first Buddhist teacher. I attended the teachings for 3 days and His Holiness gave Green Tara, Avalokteshvara and Manjushri, 3 basic teachings. So I remember I had some extraordinary experiences since the Dalai Lama was teaching in Tibetan, and it was translated into Buryatian language, and I did not know either language; nevertheless it happened that something beyond words came to my heart.

Then I connected with Dandaron's students and they showed me some secret text inside their tradition and also some translation of Longchenpa, which was made by Dandaron. It was very important for me since I had already learned about Longchenpa and his important place in the Dzogchen tradition, so for me this connection was very important. I received some practices and some connection with the Dandaron lineage and I got some initiation from Dharma-dody (translated as "Grandfather of Dharma") a lama at Ivolginsky temple, who gave me a practice, which was a special form of Vajrasattva from the Dandaron lineage.



First meeting with Rinpoche Conway, 1990.

M: Can you say a little something about the Dandaron lineage?

VM: Dandaron was a Burytian lama during the Stalin terror. He got his knowledge of tantric tradition not only from Burytia, but also from the Nyingmapa and yogic tradition, and as all Buryatian lamas, he was put in a labor camp during the great terror. All Buddhist temples were destroyed, all lamas were put into camps and only during the Second World War did Stalin start to rebuild Buddhist temples and Christian churches and all other religions. He used religious faith and power to fight the Germans. Stalin was a seminary student in his youth, so he had knowledge of the meaning of religion. It is remarkable that the village of the Ivolginsky Temple still has the name Stalin village, after all the reevaluation of Stalin's reign it is a kind of acknowledgement that Stalin not only destroyed but rebuilt the monastery.

So Dandaron spent 25 years in labor camps and in the same place with German professors, so he spent time studying different languages and cultures and they taught each other various things. He was freed from the prison camp and went back to Buryatia and started to teach, and he was the first lama to teach to European people, like Russians, Ukrainians, people from the Baltic States and there was a legend, which



was true, that the real knowledge of Buddhism in Russia was connected with Dandaron students. After I met his Buryatian students I made connection with students in St. Petersburg and Moscow, and I met Octyabrina Volkova, the famous sanskritologist and Buddhist, the great expert on Buddhism in Moscow. We became friends and another student of Dandaron was one of the greatest Russian philosophers, Alexander Pyatigorsky, who immigrated to London in 1972 and he was the chair of Buddhist philosophy at London University.

After this it was not easy for me to use these practices and there was agitation and hope and for years I was not able to integrate. I did not have obvious signs of practices. I was trying to meditate often at night, do visualizations, etc., but I had many more questions than answers. I was

doing the practices from both His Holiness the Dalai Lama and also the Vajrasattva practice from Dandaron and we had a small sangha in Moscow, as well as other cities, and sometimes other Buddhist lamas would come and teach. I also read many books.

Then suddenly in 1987 I got a book from a guy in St. Petersburg who was a famous figure in the new age movement. He was a half crazy guy who could speak English in the style of Alice Bailey for hours. He said to me, "I know you are interested in Buddhism and I have a book that may interest you." I took the book home and opened and it was called "Namkhai Norbu, Talks in Conway" – The Green Book. I do not know how that book arrived to that crazy guy and then to me. This was a miracle book for me and I was immediately involved in the book and it was so much more essential and practical in comparison to all other Buddhist books I had read. I was extremely excited and I printed several underground photocopies of this book, 5 maybe, and sent this book to my friends and said, "Look at this teacher!" My friends responded that they were very much interested.

Then I was trying to find ways to meet Rinpoche abroad. I made a trip to London once and at that time I was introduced to

Rupert Sheldrake, the famous scientist, and we had a talk. After some time his wife Jill Purce arrived and we started to talk and within 5 minutes I discovered that she was a student of Namkhai Norbu. She gave me the exact address of Rinpoche and encouraged me to write him and, of course, I sent a letter to Rinpoche informing him of my interest and asking him about the possibility to visit him. He replied and invited me to Merigar to come to the retreat, but it happened that the letter arrived a month after the retreat had started because all letters at that time they were examined and so the authorities kept it for awhile. But one advice he gave me was to contact someone at Tsegylgar for English books and Sara the secretary sent books and practice books and a letter of invitation for me and other people from the Moscow group who were interested to come to the US for a retreat. This all happened in 1990.

Then we started to prepare passports, visas, look for tickets and money and it was not easy. For me it was fortunate because I was part of a Soviet American exchange program and I got a grant for a 2-month study in the US, in the transpersonal field, so I was able to arrange my program in different ways, and since we had a conference of humanistic psychology in Burlington, Vermont I combined this visit with the one in Conway. And after I had a program on the West Coast so I met the West Coast Dzogchen Community and practiced with them.

So 4 Russians came to Conway and we stayed in a house in Shelburne Falls. We were very grateful to be there and we waited in anticipation for the retreat to begin. Then the day arrived and we were waiting under the tent on the land of Khandroling and something happened in the atmosphere, and then I remember there was an unusual silence and a kind of excitement and there was absolutely nothing to compare it with in any previous experience. The people were standing and Rinpoche arrived. This was my first time to meet Rinpoche and there was a feeling of tremendous love expressed by all the students. I had never been in such an atmosphere. Then Rinpoche started to teach and we know that there is a kind of great alchemy that happens from the living contact with the Master.

After several days Rinpoche asked Sara the secretary to arrange meetings with him for the Russian Community. We wanted to invite him to Russia and we had some short meetings and Rinpoche was very attentive about Buddhism in Russia and was very much interested when I mentioned that Dandaron translated from Lama Yangtig, a text by Longchenpa about how samsara and nirvana is fabricated from the essence of being. He said that the next year he was going to do a personal retreat but the year after that, the first country he would visit would be Russia (then called the Soviet Union). We were happy! He said that the next year he would send Fabio to Russia to teach Yantra Yoga, so in 1991 Fabio came to all places, Kiev, Moscow, and we were introduced to Yantra Yoga and Fabio.

The next year, 1992, I received a telephone call from Fabio. He said, "Vladimir, take a pen and piece of paper and write." He spoke in a very telegraphic style. He said, "Rinpoche will come to Lithuania, date, then Latvia, date, then St Petersburg, Moscow and then Buryatia. Make preparations!" We were just excited and I contacted people and called all the cities, and asked them to start making preparations. And so this became a new era for the Soviet Union.

M: So you were the kind of father of the Russian Community...

VM: I prefer the doorkeeper.