

THE MIRROR

Newspaper of the International Dzogchen Community

No. 116
May, June 2012

Upcoming Retreats with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu



2012

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

Tsegyalgar East
July 4–10
Yeshes Khandroí Thugthig
(Jnanadhakini)
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 Atii Nadzer” Retreat

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



Photo: Zhuopu

Hong Kong Retreat of the Song of Vajra

It was such a joyful moment when we caught the first glimpse of Rinpoche’s physical presence at the Hong Kong International Airport, heralding Rinpoche’s first Dzogchen Retreat to be held in Hong Kong, China between the 16th to 20th of May in this year of the water dragon. This was the moment that all students of Rinpoche, especially those of us living in China, had long been waiting to witness.

During Rinpoche’s 10-day stay in Hong Kong he also gave, at the invitation of the Chinese University of Hong Kong Centre for the Study of Humanistic Buddhism, a public lecture entitled “Dzogchen – the Essence of all Buddhist Teachings” at the Chinese University on the 15th of May. Rinpoche explained succinctly about the differences between the 3 paths of liberation and it was well received by the audience.

Rinpoche’s Dzogchen Retreat on the Song of Vajra started on the 16th of May. It attracted over two hundred participants from all around the globe, as well as the local and mainland Chinese which made up the majority. The participation of Vajra siblings coming from Singapore, Malaysia, the UK, Austria, Spain, Italy, and other countries was much appreciated. For five consecutive days, we were all joined together to receive the precious teaching of Dzogchen, in particular the commentary on the Song of Vajra by Longchenpa, from our Maestro, as well as to learn the Pamo and Pawo steps of the Vajra Dance of the Three Vajras and the Eight Movements of Yantra Yoga.

It seemed like a daunting task for the local Gakyil of Samtenling to hold this historical retreat in Hong Kong, China. But, with the blessings and help from the ‘Three Roots’, as manifested in the various assistance that was rendered to us by the more

experienced and new students alike, both local and abroad, the retreat was concluded successfully on the 20th of May with a Ganapuja and an auction dedicated to the completion of the retreat centre of Samtenling, which is located in Yichun city of the Jiangxi province in China. Thus ended the 5-day Dzogchen Retreat of the Song of Vajra in exuberance.

It is our sincere wish that Rinpoche will come to teach in Hong Kong and China again and again very soon. ©

Teaching



Chögyal Namkhai
Norbu
Introduction about
the Song of Vajra

» Page 2

Teaching



Khyentse
Yeshe
Educating the
Mind

» Page 3

Focus



Yantra Yoga

» Pages 10ff

>> continued on page 4



Photo: F. Andrico

An Excerpt from the Teaching:

Introduction about the Song of Vajra and how it is related to diverse methods of Dzogchen Desum

Hong Kong Retreat, May 18, 2012

Chochen barwa nyidai kyil chochen means total nature of all phenomena; its nature, wisdom and luminosity, just like the light of the sun and moon.

Now we are learning the principle of the Song of the Vajra. First of all, we ordinarily consider that the Song of Vajra is in the language of Oddiyana. Not only the Song of Vajra is in this language, but also the Twenty-Five Spaces of Samantabhadra and all important mantras. We cannot say it is only the language of Oddiyana, because we have many teachings, tantras and lungs, mennagde, and many tantras and commentaries of Dzogchen tantras from Guru Garab Dorje. We also have many lungs, which means only some part of those tantras. These tantras, which are the source of the lungs, still exist in other dimensions. For example, in the longchen, particularly in the *dral thal gyur* tantra, there is an explanation of thirteen different dimensions like the nirmanakaya. There are indications of special dimensions where there are important Dzogchen tantras, so many enlightened beings, many realized beings, which are being beyond time and space. So when many methods and teachings are introduced, sometimes they are introduced in our dimension and are not always with the same words.

For example, in the Song of Vajra you can find all parts of the tantras; the tantras which explain sixteen kinds of liberations. In most shiro practices there are these kinds of tantras. When you check you can find slightly different versions. Some intellectual people study and wonder which is the correct version and which is the wrong version. If we have the idea that this is only the Oddiyana language we can think that way, but many teachings come from different dimensions. It is very important how we receive from the teacher, the mantras, etc. If you can apply that way you can produce fruit and have realization. You must not go in an intellectual way too much.

When you follow different teachers you might receive the 100 syllable mantra in different ways. How do different teachers pronounce the mantra? For example, most Lamas say benza instead of vajra and in some places they say

vajra. Vajra is a little closer to the Sanskrit pronunciation. I received many teachings with both, but the teacher I received Dzogchen semde, longde and upadesha, Negyab Rinpoche, his teacher followed the lineage of Sanskrit and said vajra, not benza. Also my teacher from college said vajra, so that is why I use and apply in that way. You should not worry, if you learned benza or vajra it does not matter, you can apply as you learned. I am not inventing vajra, that is how I learned it.

There is in ancient story in the Sakyapa tradition: Sakyapandita was a very important teacher, and one day when he was walking to a Sakya monastery there was a small river nearby and when he walked by the river he heard the sound of Vajrakilaya in the river. Sakyapandita thought there must be some good practitioners of Vajrakilaya at the source of the river. One day he searched along the river to find out who was doing the practice of Vajrakilaya and at the end of his search there was a rock and in the rock there was a cave and in the cave a yogi doing a personal retreat. When he asked the yogi what practice he was doing, he said he was doing Vajrakilaya, but he did not say Vajrakilaya, he said Vajrachilaya. Sakyapandita thought it was a little strange that the yogi was not pronouncing the practice well, because Sakayapandita had a very high level of Sanskrit and he was a translator. He asked the yogi, “How do you chant the mantra of Vajrakilaya?” The yogi said, “I chant om vajra chilichilaya svaha.” So then Sakyapandita said, “You are not pronouncing well” and told the yogi how to pronounce it. Then the yogi said, “I want to check” and he took his purba and put it on the rock and said, “om vajra kilikilaya svaha” and the purba did not go in the rock. Then he chanted “om vajra chilichilaya svaha” and the purba entered into the rock.

Sakyapandita was very surprised and then he understood one should not only go after pronunciation. He discovered this yogi of Vajrakilaya was really realized. The yogi was then invited to the Sakya monastery where he gave the initiation of Vajrakilaya. So therefore, in the Sakyapa tradition for the practice of Vajrakilaya there is a lineage of this Mahasiddha. When we do this initiation and this prac-

tice we should chant “om vajra chilicilaya”. That is a very good example, because it is very important how we receive transmission and we should do practice with confidence and have realization.

So we cannot say the Song of the Vajra is always in the language of Oddiyana. There is a consideration of this language and ancient translators like Vairocana studied and learned most Dzogchen tantras and books very well from the Oddiyana language, not Sanskrit. Many words in the Oddiyana and Sanskrit language are very similar, but the grammatical system is not the same. For example, in Sanskrit and Hindi, the adjective is used before the name. For example, if they say Dzogchen it is Maha Santi, but in Tibetan and Oddiyana they use the adjective after the name. The way of using adjectives in Tibetan and Oddiyana language are similar, but the language is not similar. We say, for example, Santi Maha, Maha is the adjective that comes after, not before. If you read Dzogchen tantras, in most Dzogchen Tantras there is the Oddiyana language; you can understand if it is so when the adjective is always used after the name. So this is the difference in the language of Oddiyana and Sanskrit.

For example, Longchenpa translated the meaning of the Song of Vajra from Sanskrit and Oddiyana language, and the Song of Vajra called the non dual or union of the state of Samantabhadra yab and yum. In general, there are two kinds of the Song of the Vajra if you are reading or learning Dzogchen tantras or many tantras of tagdrol, The first is called the state of the yab, Samantabhadra and the second is called the state of the yum, Samantabhadri. Two kinds always exist, but then the union is only one union of the yab and yum which, in general, we use and sing. Longchenpa roughly translated the sense of this.

The real meaning of the Song of Vajra is the essence of the Dzogchen teaching. Even though it is the essence, there are still explanations. With this rough translation I give you the meaning of the Song of Vajra, which is translated from Longchenpa.

The first four verses are:

Emakirikiri, mashtavalivali, samitasurusuru, kotalimasumasu

It is unborn, there is no birth. There exists no interruption or end. There is no going and no coming. Total bliss, the supreme real condition of the state. Miyowa means movement, when we are integrated with movement there is no consideration of movement. Everything is self liberated beyond time. No problems or defects exist. So this is the first group and another way we are studying and learning these four lines is connected with the teaching of Dzogchen semde. Remember we have Dzogchen semde, longde and upadesha and that I will explain later.

Now the second group:

Ekarasulibhataye, cikirabulibhataye, samuntacaryasughaye, bhetasanabhyakulaye

So these four lines are connected with the series of the Dzogchen longde. The meaning of the words is that we are searching for the root, the origin, and we cannot find anything. Also there is not something that says we are connected with this origin, since we are not confirming the origin and there are no secondary things related to it.

In general, when we are in the state of contemplation we say, “Now I am in the state of contemplation.” This is our mental concept. If we are really in a state of contemplation we are beyond concepts, even if we do not have this concept. That is the same thing when we are thinking of the dimension of sambogakaya, we are thinking what sambogakaya is. We say sambogakaya is the pure dimension, a manifestation of the dharmakaya. Then we are thinking how this manifestation is.... we see wrathful, peaceful and joyful forms. All these things are our mental concepts, but we need to enter from mental concepts. This becomes indispensable.

Mental concepts is not how we really enter sambogakaya. Maybe in sambogakaya we are in our real nature and we discover how are infinite potentiality is. In that moment, we are totally beyond time and space. This is the real condition of sambogakaya and there is that explanation.

There is nothing we create or make. There is the total existence or real condition. Since the beginning its real nature

>> continued on page 4

“Educating the Mind: Responsibility and Personal Evolution”

An excerpt from a public talk given by Khyentse Yeshe in Italian at the Academy of Fine Arts in Bologna, Italy on Friday May 25, 2012

The important thing is to understand that culture, knowledge, is something internal. It is not something external, it is not something based on looking at people or judging from the outside. When we have the possibility of understanding a little better the aspects of knowledge, first of all we pay attention to the inner aspect, to looking at oneself.

Normally if we look in a well-defined direction, which is towards the outside, we open our eyes and look. Now we imagine that we are looking inside [ourselves] and we start to understand what it means to reverse this kind of approach. The point of view is towards ourselves, and at this point everything changes, the paradigm changes, because we have to understand that normally we are unique, in a certain moment, in a certain instant, and in a certain place, and we look at a number of aspects as reality. But in this case we are looking at ourselves, and we ourselves, now or in a few seconds or a few seconds ago, are still ourselves. This doesn't change. This is the essential point that we have to understand first of all because it does not change.

How can we observe more in detail this aspect of ourselves? For example, we have a sensation or we feel something related to any topic. We like or we don't like something, an object of reality or a projection of our way of being. We might like it for five minutes and then five minutes later we might not like it. Let's try and observe what the fundamental aspects related to this judgement are. We are speaking about something that has this direction, so towards ourselves, and in this case, this 'looking' is always true, can never be false because that truth from five minutes ago is the same truth from five minutes later. We can't say that we've changed. In reality we are always ourselves so if we look for the truth, it is always with us. There is no separation with the truth. This is the first fundamental aspect.

If we look at it from an anthropological or religious point of view when we look inside ourselves we don't have the problem of distance. Normally we perceive a problem of distance – the projection of our being towards aspects of reality, aspects of daily life or simply a projection of our ideas. So this being of ours projects itself in many aspects. In some aspects we might like it, in others we may not. For example, is this aspect close to me or far away from me. In this case the problem of judgement, evaluation, projection is this connection – how far or how distant is it? But if we look at ourselves, seeing as the truth is always with us

because we are always ourselves, five minutes later or sooner, the main point is no longer the distance. So when we speak of being, in this case, being as distance, the problem of distance doesn't exist. We are close to ourselves because if we were distant from ourselves everything would be a problem. Existence would be a problem.

In this case if we speak of knowing or understanding something in a complete, total way, it becomes very difficult because if we start from the idea that we are distant from ourselves, then we cannot know anything. It makes sense to speak about something that is unknowable, like reality that cannot be investigated. In this case, this expression makes sense.

Let's try and take a responsibility, that of recognising that at least we are close to ourselves. The same person who made a judgement five minutes earlier is the same person who will make a judgement five minutes later. And this judgement is always true because when I project this kind of sensation – I like or don't like this person or object – when I make this judgement I am actually describing something very simple. If we look at it from a personal point of view perhaps it might seem complex so let's start looking at it from a very simple visual point of view like a colour. For example I like or don't like red. I prefer red to blue, something like that. In this case it's very difficult to make a judgement or evaluation in terms of quantity. We have to make an evaluation in terms of quality, so I can say this is red and that is blue. How red it is or how blue it is, is relative. It is not important because if it's red, it's red and if it's blue it's blue. In the same way I either like it or don't like it.

Let's look at more essential things connected to life where the quantity aspect becomes totally irrelevant – I like a person or I don't like this person, I am in love with them or not. I can't give a number and say that I am in love 5. That doesn't make sense. I have to understand whether I am or not. In this case if I am, it is total. If I am not, that's obvious. In these cases we can understand clearly what truth means.

When we look inside ourselves everything is always true. Our being is in the aspect of truth. This distance, that is nothing other than the projection of our perception of reality, we have to take upon ourselves as a responsibility, as an understanding that it does not exist. It's just our own projection. In this case if we understand that this distance is not very useful or efficient in order to learn and know something, we slowly enter into the aspect of what it means to have the right



optimal conditions for getting to know something. This closeness with ourselves is essential, understanding that that which is relative is time and space, this is relative.

We can also look at it from a scientific point of view but this is not the right place for giving this kind of explanation. But we can understand what it means – relative in space. It means we don't have the capacity of being everywhere. And in time, we don't have the capacity to understand a time that is totally relative because our body is subject to certain phases, for example the initial phase of birth, the phase of growth, of becoming something or someone. Then we have a phase of decline, of getting old and becoming sick and lastly the phase of having to face death, which is one of the most important moments of life as it comes last. So for example, if we observe from this point of view with this closeness, we can understand better what it means to have a good base in order to know something. It means first of all being responsible for this closeness, so understanding that that which we consider true or false from the point of view of the observer towards ourselves, is actually not so important because it can be true or false according to the relativity of time and space. It means that in a little while it may be true and a little later it becomes false. How can we notice this? How many times do we change our mind during a day? Within an hour or a minute. We have something important in our minds, an idea, a project, and we evaluate all possibilities of this project. How many creations and projections do we have in our mind – a great many.

Let's observe the mechanism of this capacity to create. First of all it's visual. It's an aspect, like a

projection, like watching a movie at a cinema, or watching a projection through the principle of light and shadows. It means that there is a starting point, a source, and there is an arrival point where this projection exists. In this case this is the visual aspect, one of the most important senses. When we open our eyes and look, at that moment we are working with vision. Seeing as this vision is one of the most important sources of knowledge, it projects internally as the aspect of the value, the guarantee of knowledge itself. So if we can confirm it from a visual point of view, then it means that it is true or false.

But this is just a mechanism, a capacity that we have, one of the many faculties of the mind. The truth in itself is just a concept and this concept is now confirmed and becomes concrete within us because it corresponds to a mechanism, a task, that the mind has carried out. When the mind carries out a task efficiently, automatically it generates satisfaction and this is called emotion. This mechanism is an aspect of the functioning of the mind that we project inside. The capacity of this projection is infinite, whereas the capacity of the projection towards the outside is finite.

We can accomplish one project, in this moment, at this time, perhaps in the next few days we will accomplish one project, but inside we will be projecting millions of variables, possibilities and alternatives. So we have to understand this aspect, this opposition between that which is an outside projection and that which is an inner projection. Inner projection has no limitation, it has the faculty of creating something. In this case we have to understand well the difference between knowing and creating.

In general we have an idea of putting together these two aspects – the aspect of knowing or simply projecting something visually within our minds, within ourselves, with creating something, as if it was an entity that can be touched or shared. For example, today I have this sensation, I feel this emotion and I also have the idea to share it with other people, as if the capacity of feeling this emotion was something that could be shared with and transmitted to other people.

First of all we should observe that we all have the capacity of feeling emotions so the first question is – why are my emotions so special compared to other people's emotions? It is very important to ask oneself this question. Why should my emotions be projected on the outside and communicated to others? Why is it so important? This is one of the most important aspects that distinguish Western culture from Eastern. The sun rises in the East and in the East people also have a different idea about projecting emotions outside. This idea of wanting to share emotion is more a Western characteristic. The more you go to the West, the more there is this idea of sharing one's actions and emotions. So the act of sharing makes emotion become something of value. If it remains on the personal level, it is still in an embryo-like state. It's not complete. When you go towards the East, you see that this idea of sharing does not exist. What exists is the knowledge of the potentiality of feeling this emotion as something universal. So we see that these ideas change very much.

In our case it's important to understand that both are fundamental. Why are they so important? In Western culture, from a more philosophical point of view that can embrace all outer aspects of the person, we have reached the creation of something very efficient like science in which any young child is capable of developing intellectual capacities connected to say mathematical or geometrical calculations or carrying out some simple tasks like imagining 3 dimensional projection of objects. We have to understand that this is part of this capacity of sharing. Since we have this idea of sharing we also have this capacity to project it in a universal way. But the intuition related to imagining an object rotating in space in a 3 dimensional way done by a young child is not something obvious for a person from the East. It is something very difficult to do. And so we find many systems of meditation in order to reach this capacity that is a little bit like the opposite of the capacity of the approach that people have in the East.

But we have to look at what the characteristics of thought, of capacity, are in the East. Turning one's eyes backwards and looking inside is something natural. It's a kind of knowledge and way of seeing and being that is abso-

>> continued on the following page



>> *The Advice* continued from page 2
is the self liberated state. In general, this word in Tibetan is ye. You remember when we say wisdom we say *yeshe*. And when we say since the beginning we say *yenas* or *yedoma*. Ye means from the beginning how its real condition is.

So we are not conditioned by ordinary dualistic vision or can we liberate something; everything is the relative condition in our mental concept. So the verses we learn later are very much related to Dzogchen longde and explain particular methods. You see in the Dzogchen teachings, we have Dzogchen yangtig and thögal, particularly the verses that explain experiences of the practice and how they manifest. Then we know the method and when have the capacity to integrate we can have the realization of the rainbow body.

So always the Dzogchen teaching develops with four kinds of visions, *nangwa zhi*. The first vision is called *chonyid ngonsum*, we see the vision of the thigle, and in the Dzogchen teaching it says that is the manifestation of our real potentiality. We have that knowledge and we see something concrete, that represents our dharmata, our real nature of mind. That is the starting point of thögal and yangtig practice.

Then there is a series of methods and practices called *namnyang kongphel*. Therefore in the Sakyapa tradition for the practice of Vajrakilaya there is a lineage of this Mahasiddha. Nyam means experience of the practice. In general, we have different experiences. Like eating chocolate, we taste sweet and that is also an experience; with this experience we discover all sweets. This is an ordinary experience. When we do practice we have the nyam of the experience of the practice. This is very important. If we are doing practice of course we need to have experience. If there is fire there is smoke, smoke is not fire, but indirectly we can understand where there is smoke there is fire. So manifesting signs of the practice means the practice is working and it is alive. So this is called nyam of the practice.

We can have different kinds of nyams. We say *nyamnang* and *semnyam*. Nyamnang means we see something with our eyes, like an object, and there is an experience related with the nature of elements. We coordinate our energy and strengthen our elements, and that is sufficient for our practice and we succeed in realizing that. Of course, we can have visions like the color of elements. When we say the nyam of vision we are not only seeing with our eyes, maybe we are also hearing and smelling, we have all kinds of contacts of senses with objects that can manifest. Sometimes when we are very relaxed and we do practice in the dark retreat, we can sometimes hear someone playing music, like the Song of Vajra, and in the real sense there is no one but you who can hear it. That is an example of experience.

Sometimes when you are sitting in the dark some very good smell manifests and it seems like someone with a very good smell is passing in front of your nose. It is not only imagination, it can seem completely like that. So this is called *nyamnang*.

Another one is called *semnyam* and that is related to our mind. Sometimes when you are doing shine and you succeed to do it for a longer time; you remain for hours and hours and you don't feel uncomfortable. That is something like realizing the practice of shine and you feel happiness related to your manifestation of clarity, etc. Even if you are not thinking or judging some mysterious things can manifest in your mind, maybe something mysterious you wanted to know manifests, for example. In *shenyam* different things can manifest. This is also called a kind of nyam.

Nyam also means developing visions. For example, if you are doing something like practices of thögal and then with secondary causes you are gazing in sun rays, etc, and applying the visualization of the thigle, from this many thigles can develop, and not only thigles, but inside the thigles are the manifestation of sambogakaya. Many different kinds of thigles can develop one by one. Increasing different kinds of visions is just like pure vision, this is called the state of *nyamnang kongphel*. In periods of your practice all kinds of visions develop and you do not need any effort. This is the second stage.

The third stage is called *rigpa tsepheb*. Rigpa means the state which you have discovered, not only that you are in the state of guruyoga or the state of contemplation; self perfected it matures in the dimension in the state of *rigpa*. In the state of *rigpa* there are *khadag* and *lhundrup*, all self perfected qualifications, which are perfected and you are in this matured state. There is no need to develop visions of seeing or hearing anymore. You are matured and totally integrated. There is no subject and object. This is called the state of *rigpa tsepheb*. Until that point we have developed many visions and we think our practice is developing. Instead of developing, now it is disappearing because it is integrated.

Of everything in the Dzogchen teaching, the most important is that we succeed to integrate. Many people find integration very difficult. We cannot integrate everything in a perfect way because we live in dualism. For example, we know that everything is unreal, as Buddha said, everything is just like a dream. In a dream in that moment, you can see and touch and do everything. Then when you wake up, you understand there was nothing concrete. When we have this knowledge and we do not succeed that everything remains non dual, we are in the direction of integration. We should apply that way and develop slowly. Of course, when we have developed and realized, then we can integrate everything.

For example, when you do the practice of *namkha arte*; *namkha* is space and you have your inner and outer space. You are gazing in outer space, in emptiness, and in that moment you are not doing any visualization. You are trying to be in instant presence. When you are in instant presence you do not have any consideration of outer and inner. It is very easy for you to integrate with inner and outer space. There is nothing concrete in the dimension of space. In our dimension everything is relatively concrete. It is not so

easy for us to integrate, but when we know its real nature and we are in that real nature, what you see is already governed with that knowledge. So you consider in that way and integrate and develop. We should go that way.

So this state is called *rigpa tsepheb*, the third stage. When we succeed with that, then we say *chozed*, *cho* is dharma, *zed* means all phenomena connected with our mind is consumed. We are no longer in the mind. We are in the nature of mind and we are totally integrated in that state.

When we are in that fourth stage, when you are learning and studying Dzogchen thögal and yangtig methods, when you are in the last stage, if you have not succeeded to finish your practice and you only rose into the fourth level and you are dying, your physical body manifests the rainbow body. To manifest the rainbow body, not only do you need to rise into the fourth level, but you must succeed completely in this fourth level, e.g. explanation, methods and everything. Now you have no vehicle; just like the story of Guru Padmasambhava and Vimalamitra. Because your existence, your physical level, has already dissolved in your vision of thögal. Totally integrated and very slowly your physical body disappears for ordinary people. This is called *jalu phowa chenpo*, the Great Transference. So these are the final realizations of methods of Dzogchen yangtig and thögal.

When I explain the four nangwa, I am not giving thögal teachings. Some people think they have received thögal instruction that way from me. I am saying you should integrate and then do something in your way, instead of saying you should do the practice of thögal. This is not thögal or yangtig. When you seriously study thögal and yangtig there are precise instructions, step by step, related to body, voice and mind, and how you should develop. These kinds of practices are related very much with the experiences of the vision, etc.

So here more or less, it explains these meanings. *Khyabdal khangsang yeyod myid*, *khyabdal* means the perfected conditions of all qualifications which we have. *Yeyod* means since the beginning what we have, not that we are doing practice and developing something, *khyabma nyamle namdepa* means how it is perfected just being in that state and we are not changing or modifying anything. We know how to continue in that state. *Yangso* means this is the perfected condition everywhere. It is total for everything. *Namkhai ying* means just like in the dimension of space. *Chochen barwa nyidai kyil chochen* means total nature of all phenomena; its nature, wisdom and luminosity, just like the light of the sun and moon. You remember when we are singing *suryabhatarepashanapa*, that is the meaning. ☸

Transcribed and edited by Naomi Zeitz

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu Schedule 2012

>> continued from page 1

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

>> *Educating the Mind* continued from page 3

lutely natural. It doesn't require any effort. Perceiving something big and universal through the thought of an artist that tomorrow could become a trend, or a direction to follow for the future, will also be an input or an address given to science and markets and all studies etc., in order to have a certain kind of future where ethical aspects are respected. In this case who is the first one who embodies this thought? The artist, not the scientist. Obviously. The artist in his condition and capacity, has this sensation within himself, this vision of the future, and obviously he tries to communicate it on the outside through a work of art which becomes universal because it connects to ourselves and our capacity of feeling emotions, and obviously it also affects scientific thoughts. Tomorrow we have things, ways of

thinking, paradigms that are totally different but that were actually born from this perception, this deep understanding that it is inner. In our society, this inner understanding has to develop through a process of art in this case. It's not an instinctive type of understanding. It's not spontaneous.

It's a spontaneous and instinctive understanding that what we study in school is useful, like a collection of knowledge. When we ask what human knowledge is, what it is that man knows, it is difficult to give an immediate answer. If for example we ask what's on TV tonight, what's for dinner tonight, it is easier to give an answer. But if we ask ourselves what human knowledge is, we have various ways of explaining it. We can do it like an encyclopaedia, we can make categories for example: what is terrestrial, what is

extra-terrestrial, what is material and non-material. And we slowly go to describe on the basis of a principle, the principle of observation. How does this observation take place? From the inside towards the outside. It doesn't come from outside to the inside.

So if we reverse this point of view according to Eastern philosophy we see how our description of human knowledge will change completely. In this case it won't be many different sectors or areas of competence or volumes, but the opposite. We try to have a single word, a single sense, a single meaning and go in the opposite direction. If we imagine that now to describe human knowledge we have one to a million aspects of this knowledge and we put them together and assemble them, but I am the one who is assembling them. Even if this "I" can be shared by the whole of humanity

but at this moment, in this place, this is me and I cannot be everyone otherwise I would be God, but I am a man. Human knowledge is something that refers to man, and man is in this moment, in this instant. The moment that he describes his knowledge, he has to go from himself towards everything, all fields of humanities and from one it becomes millions and billions. This is typical of Western culture and knowledge.

In Eastern knowledge and culture it is the opposite. From millions of phenomena we go towards one, a single condition, which is knowledge of one's own state. If you've heard Buddhism spoken of, this is the principle. In this case it's not important to say which of the two points of view is better because the sun rises according to the rotation of the earth. It is not fixed. Everything is in movement in the universe,

each system is different. There is no single solar system, no single earth and there is no single "I". Everything that is within the field of life is relative in space and time so we have to learn to accept at least these opposites, these two points of view.

When we have the possibility to change completely and look within ourselves as well and have awareness and knowledge of both aspects, then the opportunity of knowing will obviously be greater because we will no longer be looking from only one direction which has the goal of understanding one thing, but we will be able to understand more. We will be able to see according to different perspectives and ways of being. ✽

Translation by Alessandra Policreti
Transcription and editing
by Liz Granger

Father Ernesto Balducci, born into a poor mining family in 1922 in Santa Fiora near Merigar, was a spiritual guide, outspoken in ideological and political battles of his time as well as a great intellectual. Author of a history of philosophy and numerous essays, in 1990 he published "L'Uomo Planetario" on the necessity of researching a form of universal humanism that was not only based on Western thought but able to integrate in itself all cultures. He passed away in 1992 following a car accident.

Father Balducci and the Spiritual Tradition of Amiata

Fabio Risolo

On April 28 and 29, 2012, a Conference was held at the Santa Fiora Municipality Hall of the People, just a few kilometers from Arcidosso, to celebrate the twentieth anniversary of the death of Father Ernesto Balducci.

As Headmaster of the Secondary Schools of Amiata-Grosseto, I was invited to give a talk at the Conference, attended by the authorities of Amiata and Tuscany as well as scholars who had studied his work.

I immediately accepted the invitation extended by the Mayor of Santa Fiora because speaking about Father Balducci seemed a good opportunity to highlight and promote some very basic aspects of his thought, which can still be very useful for the inhabitants of Amiata. I also had the opportunity to present the Dzogchen Community of Merigar, founded by Master Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, and offer some advice from his teaching.

The most important spiritual personalities born on Mt. Amiata over the past two centuries have been David Lazzeretti and Ernesto Balducci. The story of Lazzeretti, the idealistic and prophetic dreamer who founded the Giurisdavidica Community on Monte Labbro, the mountain overlooking Merigar, is fairly well



Courtesy of the Fondazione E. Balducci.

known in this area. As his nature rebelled against any form of corruption and established dogma, this led the political and religious powers of the time to become personally involved in his murder, which took place right in Arcidosso.

Less known, though certainly of greater spiritual strength and depth, is the thought of Father Balducci, who was known and highly regarded both in his area and abroad. Ernesto Balducci was contrary to any type of conventions and conformity – his spiritual quest was intimate, vital, alive. He was a simple person, who cared about the miners and mountain people of Amiata, but who had a capacity to move freely in various cultural and spiritual fields and showed a non-sectarian attitude well ahead of his time. I remember that he visited Merigar and that a very interesting interview with him was published in the Merigar Letter [Merigar – n.7 March 1991 – *Le radici della pace – Intervista a Ernesto Balducci su Francesco d'Assisi*].

Beyond ideologies

Although Ernesto Balducci was a priest and spent his whole life within the Church, it was very clear to him that no vision, no point of view is in itself better than another, because the form is never the substance. In particular in *Luomo planetario* he stated that any ideology is based on separation, on dualism, on the misconception of being right as opposed to someone else. The labels, the forms, the abstract models are barriers that prevent us from seeing: "The world is not just everything that surrounds us. It is also our relationship with it. Unfortunately, however, we see the world divided into nationalities, political, religious, social and ethnic groups. Poor world! It is as outwardly fragmented as we are inwardly. And it is precisely this division that destroys love and freedom, that makes people hard, that makes them hate and leads them to war. All actions based on an ideology create divisions and unifying the divisions is impossible for the simple fact that you cannot join two prejudices. Only when we understand that we are all human beings and therefore not divided by names or labels, will these senseless wounds be healed."

We must learn to be men beyond the labels, intact and not

fragmented. Ideologies are nothing other than prejudices. This holds true even more so for religions and spirituality, because negative judgment on the spiritual paths that are different from our own hardens us into superficial and formal mindsets that, inevitably, prevent us from turning our attention to ourselves and getting to know our true nature, beyond any type of framework. This position created many problems for Father Balducci within the church hierarchy with its conservative and dogmatic nature.

Defining oneself a Christian or in any other way makes no sense – it is just a mindset: "Those who are still seeking ideologies and call themselves atheists or secular or Marxists and are looking for a Christian to complete the series, do not look for me. I am only a man."

The inner search

Father Balducci writes: "Conditioning, no matter where it comes from, always generates a condition of servitude and submission, which dulls the mind. For example, a man who has been trained and conditioned by the Catholic world can only have visions of Christ and the environment of his faith, which, of course, are projections of his state of dependence. Similarly those who have been educated in the tradition of Krishna have experiences and visions born from their beliefs and their culture. That is, recognizing vision as that of Krishna or Christ is the result of conditioned knowledge. In this case it is very difficult for the mind to open itself to what is fresh and alive."

According to Father Balducci, stating that the common base of all religions is the same does not mean assimilating them all into one, or promoting interfaith meetings that remain on the surface of the problem, but rather recalling the common essence of the profound nature that dwells within each one of us. Only from this understanding will it truly be possible to open ourselves to others and, thanks to our own consciences, promote peace in the world. Real peace in the world is only possible if we change inside,

if we come back to a real humanistic view in which we finally believe in man. In the man who has the awareness to follow an inner path.

In this context the studies of Father Balducci on Buddhism and the centrality of the theme of compassion, which he roughly equates to the loving charity of Christians, are certainly striking. The realization of compassion is possible only in the real, not mental, recognition of the empty nature of all things, which in turn, derives from the collapse of egoistic and dualistic vision. Once again the central theme is total inner freedom, free from any bias and mindset. In this context faith means the willingness to embark on inner essential research: "No religion is global, only inner consciousness is"

Amiata – land of spirituality

Even 20 years after his death, the maturity and simplicity of Father Balducci's thought still maintains great strength. The themes of his thought that I have covered so far are certainly very familiar to us practitioners of the Dzogchen Community: from the principle of living beyond all prejudice and dogma, to the principle of freedom by opening our consciousness to our true nature, beyond any mindset.

It is important and not by chance to note that the extraordinary experience of the Dzogchen Community of Merigar founded by our teacher Chögyal Namkhai Norbu is rooted in an area, Amiata, where, in a completely different cultural context, some aspects of light and liberty have been understood and presented. This recognition is also part of the principle of integration with the Amiata area and its culture, to which I tried to make a small contribution with my speech at the Conference on Father Balducci.

With the hope that the Master's Teaching will continue to develop and be an opportunity to integrate not only for ourselves but also for all residents of Amiata! ©



ASIA Onlus
Via San Martino della Battaglia 31
00185 Rome, Italy
Tel +39.06.44340034
Fax +39.06.44702620
info@asia-ngo.org
www.asia-ngo.org

Association for International Solidarity in ASIA, Inc.
ASIA, Post Office Box 124,
Conway, MA 01341-0124 USA
Phone: 413.369.4153, Fax: 413.369.4473
andreamnasca@yahoo.com
www.asia-ngo.org/en/

Förderverein ASIA Deutschland e.V.
c/o Gisela Auspurg
Königswieser Str. 2
82131 Gauting
Tel.: 089 / 127 630 32
info@asia-ngo.de
www.asia-ngo.de



Update from Kathmandu

Dear friends,

I would like to thank you for having responded enthusiastically to our appeal to save the Manasarovar school.

Thanks to the participation of so many supporters we are now halfway to the fundraising goal that we set earlier in the month of May: we have managed to collect 29,000 euros!

There are exactly 31,000 euros missing for the Manasarovar Educational Foundation to finally become the owner of the building in which, after 13 years, a continuously growing number of Tibetan children in exile in Kathmandu – 350 at the moment – has access to quality education that respects their cultural roots.

As you know, and many of you have been able to see personally by going to visit the school, the priority of the Manasarovar Educational Foundation, founded and directed by two women, is to accompany the children in their learning process with activities aimed at developing a greater awareness of their origins and strengthening their sense of cultural identity, so as to better prepare them for life.

It is a difficult but absolutely necessary task in order to allow these children, mostly born in exile, to keep alive their sense of belonging to a people and a culture with ancient traditions. Without this strong link with their roots, these young students, living in a very difficult social context, would be at great risk of losing their identity.

On the other hand the Manasarovar children have very clear ideas and dream about their future: Dawa Dolkar wants to become a teacher of Tibetan, Dicky Rokya wants to be a nurse and

The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams

Eleanor Roosevelt

open a hospital where people can receive free medical care, Dhondup dreams of becoming a great Tulku (Reincarnation) and teach the Dharma, and there are many others like them.

Tibet is currently experiencing one of the most difficult periods in its history. In just over a year 39 people have immolated themselves, carrying out an act of extreme protest to the silence of the international community.

Please help this school, which offers a service of great importance to the Tibetan community in exile, and gives us the opportunity to take concrete action in support of the Tibetan people, an action that has a special value because it is directed towards children and hence aimed at protecting the future.

Special thanks to the many groups, Lings and Gars that have been active in Italy and around the world. In Poland, Singapore, Taiwan, Japan, the United States, Australia and France, many of you have started fund raising, organizing events and sending out information. Your support is invaluable. In fact, your support is essential. We hope that others

will want to participate in this initiative and help us buy the school. The goal is near, we are half way, let's not stop now! ©

Best regards
Linda Fidanza
Fundraising ASIA Onlus

You can help the Manasarovar School with a donation by:
Bank transfer to ASIA onlus
IBAN: IT 27 M 01030 72160 000000389350
SWIFT BIC: PASC IT MM XXX

Credit card on our website –
www.asia-ngo.org/en

Learn more on
www.asia-ngo.org/en

PS: Donations to ASIA are tax deductible in Italy as well as in countries where ASIA is formally registered. For information:
ASIA Germany: info@asia-ngo.de
U.S. ASIA: asia-usa@tsegyalgar.org
UK ASIA: info@asia-ngo.org.uk
ASIA France:
hmsmf@hotmail.com

Namkhai Norbu Biography

Wednesday, 23 May 2012 09:48

Italy
I have the pleasure to forward you all the first biography of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche ever published in an international indexed journal.

In fact, my article "Chögyal Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche: Dzogchen and Tibetan Tradition. From Shang Shung to the West" <http://www.mdpi.com/2077-1444/3/2/163> has been published in the Special Issue "Spiritual Exemplars" of the international indexed

journal Religions www.mdpi.com/journal/religions/special_issues/spiritual_exemplars

Religions (ISSN 2077-1444) established in 2010, is a young but quoted international interdisciplinary, open access scholarly journal on religions and theology, published by MDPI online quarterly, publishing peer reviewed studies of religious thought and practice. It is available online to promote critical, hermeneutical, historical, and constructive conversations.

You can find the other relevant details on
www.mdpi.com/journal/religions/

Religions is actually covered by following indexing and abstracting databases:

- Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ)
- e-Helvetica (Swiss National Library Archive)
- EBSCOhost
- Google Scholar

I tried to do my very best, hoping it is of help for the Sangha. You can duplicate, print, share my article. ©

Paolo Roberti di Sarsina,
Bologna, Italy

Find a downloadable pdf of the biography at www.melong.com





Shang Shung Institute Italy
Località Merigar
58031 Arcidosso (GR, Italy)
Phone : +39-0564-966940
info@shangshunginstitute.org
www.shangshunginstitute.org
www.shangshungstore.org

Shang Shung Institute Austria
Gschmaier 139
8265 Gr. Steinbach, Austria
Office: 0043 3386 83218
Fax: 0043 3386 83219
www.shangshunginstitute.org
www.ssi-austria.at

**Shang Shung Institute UK,
The London School of Tibetan Studies**
The London Centre for the Study
of Traditional Tibetan Culture and
Knowledge
www.shangshunguk.org

Shang Shung Institute of America
18 Schoolhouse Rd
P.O. Box 278
Conway, MA 01341, USA
Phone (main-Anna) 413 369 4928
Fax/Bookstore 413 369 4473
www.shangshung.org

10 years Ka-Ter Translation Project Anniversary

We are very happy to announce again the coming activities of the Shang Shung Institute. As it is the 10th anniversary of the Ka-ter Translation Project we invite you to participate in new Tibetan language courses.

Very best wishes,
Oliver Leick
Director of the Shang Shung
Institute Austria

Weekend Seminar on Drajyor

Tibetan Language and correct pronunciation of practice texts
July 14th-15th 2012

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, our precious Master, has pointed out many times, that it is extremely important to pronounce Tibetan words correctly in order to make them meaningful. In particular the practice texts are said to be efficacious only if pronounced correctly, both in Tibetan and Sanskrit.

Although Chögyal Namkhai Norbu devised the Drajyor phonetic transcription system for students who do not know Ti-

betan in order to be able to easily pronounce the Tibetan practice texts of the Dzogchen Community, not many students are able to pronounce Tibetan correctly.

For that reason the Ka-Ter Translation Project of the Shang Shung Institute Austria offers this specific course that has three main parts:

1. A general introduction to the Tibetan language, its nature, structure and general grammatical features.
2. Explanation of the structure and phonology of the Tibetan alphabet.
3. Explanation of the Drajyor system, following the texts of the main practices of the Dzogchen Community also including the correct pronunciation of the Sanskrit mantras.

Dr. Fabian Sanders from the University of Venice will lead the course.

Place: Shang Shung Institute Merigar, Italy.

How to participate: In order to be able to participate in this course one has to be a member of the Shang Shung Institute and the Dzogchen Community in 2012.

Costs: Course fee: € 50. Food and accommodation are not included in the course fee. All participants are requested to individually book their stay in the Merigar area and are advised to do so early.

Planned schedule: Saturday and Sunday 10.00–12.30 am and 4.00–6.30 pm.



Tibetan Performing Arts at the Shang Shung Institute, Italy

Venerable Rinpoche has dedicated his life to the preservation and promotion of all aspects of Tibetan culture. Tibetan performing arts, which encompass singing and dancing among others, is also a very important part of the Tibetan tradition especially for lay people. As such venerable Rinpoche has asked us, Topgyal and Tsering Dolker, to take some initiative in this field.

We are therefore resolved to do our level best and try to fulfill venerable Rinpoche's selfless wish by taking charge of teaching Tibetan performing arts not

only at Merigar West but also in most of our Gars if possible. We have constantly been working to improve our skills and expertise in this area with the motivation of serving our Gars and Lings whenever needed.

But our readiness would not mean much if we lack the necessary support and help of our Institutes, Gars, Lings, ASIA and, most importantly, of individual members. Taking this opportunity we would like to request all our members and Dzogchen communities to lend us your helping hands and supporting advice to

strive together to promote Tibetan performing arts.

Many of you already know about our project but for the sake of newcomers we would like to give you an outline of what we will do. We organize Tibetan song and dance classes including Tibetan language Pronunciation sessions. We will provide Dra Nyen (Tibetan guitar) lessons, Tibetan children's rhyming songs for children, teaching children aspects of Tibetan culture by doing together etc. We are sure we will be able to cater to the needs and interests of various kinds of people irrespective their age although for our convenience we might classify participants into two groups, namely an adult group and a children's group. We believe our time and effort would be most productive if we start only when there are at least 4 people in each group.

Please do not hesitate to contact us for clarifications, suggestions or anything you would like to share with us. ©

With many Tashi Delek,
Topgyal Gontse

t.gontse@shangshunginstitute.org
courses@istitutoshangshung.org
info@shangshunginstitute.org

Tibetan Language Course and Training for Translators from Tibetan

July 16th-August 15th 2012

Tibetan is a sacred language. It is a perfect recipient to contain and convey all of the Bon and Buddhist teachings. It is used by the practitioners of all related paths to explain the Doctrine and the Practice, to establish communication with subtle beings, to evoke the content of their visualizations, to proclaim the attainment of the fruit of practice and so on. The sheer beauty of the Dharma is mirrored by the clarity and imaginative creativity of the Tibetan language. For these and many other reasons the study of Tibetan language represents a crucial step towards a closer relation with the teachings and particularly with their practice. As many people put it, it is a marvelous experience to be able to directly understand the words you are reciting during the practices; it cuts through the distance between the mind, the sound of

the words and their actual meaning. Even more than that it is certainly very fulfilling to be able to follow Dharma teachings while reading the text on which they are based.

To give the possibility to the practitioners of the Dzogchen Community and others to begin and further the study of Tibetan language, the Ka-Ter project of the Shang Shung Institute has been organizing trainings for Translators from Tibetan. Starting from 2010 we have divided the course into three levels: beginners, intermediate and advanced.

From July 16th until August 15th 2012 the Shang Shung Institute will be offering the tenth training at Merigar, Italy. Dr. Fabian Sanders from the University of Venice will again be the instructor.

The course will be held in a sequence of three days of work and one day of relaxation. For example Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday could be working days for courses on all three levels while Thursday would be free. Friday, Saturday and Sunday could be working days for courses on all three levels with Monday being free, etc.

The precise schedule and the division of the courses will be communicated by Fabian Sanders on Monday, July 16th at 10.00 am.

1. Beginner's course

This course is open to everybody who is interested in learning Tibetan, no specific requirements are necessary for participation. It is designed to teach the basics of the language starting from the alphabet and pronunciation up to and including all the basic grammatical features. It takes place in the morning from 9-10am and will be supported by audio/video materials on pronunciation, calligraphy and grammar produced for the Tibetan Language Project of the Shang Shung Institute. During the whole day the teacher will be available for support.

Course fee: € 115.00, for people who also participate in the course on Drajyor: € 95.00. Food and accommodation are not included in the course fee. All participants are requested to individually book their stay in the Merigar and are advised to do so early.

2. Intermediate Course

This course is open to all those who have participated in a be-

ginner's course, directly or online, or have otherwise acquired the basics of reading/writing and grammar. The main work during this course will be focused on the translation of a selection of texts of different styles. Participants will work three hours in the morning and two in the afternoon session, individually or in small groups, and from 12 am–1 pm and 4.30–5.30 pm they will discuss and explain their translation with the instructor and the participants in the advanced course.

Course fee: € 70.00, for people who also participate in the course on Drajyor: € 50.00. Food and accommodation are not included in the course fee. All participants are requested to individually book their stay in the Merigar and are advised to do so early.

3. Advanced Course

The participants of the advanced course will read a few lines each in turn and translate them without having prepared them in advance. The translation and all the related issues will be discussed with the other participants and the teacher. The resulting translations should then be published.

Course fee: € 35.00, for people who also participate in the course on Drajyor: € 10.00. Food and accommodation are not included in the course fee. All participants are requested to individually book their stay in the Merigar area and are advised to do so early.

Dr. Fabian Sanders

After studying the languages and cultures of China, India and Tibet in both academic and traditional ways for more than twenty-five years, Fabian teaches Tibetan Language and Culture at the Università 'Ca' Foscari in Venice. He has also been teaching language and translation courses for the International Shang Shung Institute for many years.

Place

The Shang Shung Institute at Merigar, Italy.

How to participate

All courses or trainings with its three levels takes place in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere so, in our opinion, this is a wonderful opportunity for all those who wish to learn or further their understanding of the Tibetan language.

>> continued on the following page

Shang Shung Publications
Upcoming Titles

Awakening Upon Dying
The Tibetan Book of the Dead
Introduction by
Chögyal Namkhai Norbu
Translated by Elio Guarisco
Edited by Nancy Simmons

A new edition of the classic text of *The Great Liberation from the Intermediate States through Hearing* together with an introduction by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu will be published by Shang Shung Publication in the coming period.

Excerpt from the text:
Now that I journey alone, separated
from my loved ones, and
Images of emptiness which are my own
manifestations arise,
May the enlightened beings (swiftly)
reveal the power of their compassion
So that fear of the awesome intermedi-
ate states dissolves.

When the five radiant lights of wisdom
shine,
May I recognize them without fright
and terror as my own state, and
When the forms of the peaceful and
wrathful deities manifest,
May I, fearless and confident, recog-
nize (the nature of) the intermedi-
ate states.

When I suffer because of past (nega-
tive) actions,
May the Great Compassionate One
dispel that pain.
When the natural sound of reality
crashes like a thousand thunderbolts,
May I hear it as the teaching of the
Greater Vehicle.

When I wander without refuge, driven
by past negative acts,
May the victorious peaceful and wrath-
ful ones dispel that suffering.
When I experience the affliction of
habitual tendencies,
May the blissful contemplation of
luminous clarity arise in me.

The book will be available from
www.shangshungstore.org.

>> continued from previous page
In order to be able to partici-
pate in this training one has to be
an ordinary or sustaining mem-
ber of the Shang Shung Institute
in 2012.

Everybody needs to register
first. Without registration and
valid membership we cannot ac-
cept students wishing to partici-
pate.
Please send the following in-
formation as soon as possible to
office@ssi-austria.at
· first and family name, address,
city and post code, country, date
of birth, email and whether or
not you have ever participated in
one of the SSI Tibetan language
training courses. ©

**The Mirror and The
Fifteen Questions**
By Chögyal Namkhai Norbu
Edited by Adriano Clemente
Translated by Andrew Lukianowicz
and Nancy Simmons

The *Mirror: Advice On Presence
And Awareness* and *The Fif-
teen Questions* will be pub-
lished together as one book in
the last quarter of 2012. The se-
cond text, written by Rinpoche in
the seventies, contains answers
to puzzling questions asked him
by his students, including an ex-
planation of different Buddhist
paths and their relationship with
the teaching of Dzogchen.

Excerpt from the text:
The Nyingma tradition has many tan-
tric cycles such as the *Eight Sadhanas*,
the Peaceful and Wrathful Guru, and
others that are usually classified as
Dzogchen teachings. The reason is not
only that the accomplishment phase
of these cycles contains instructions
on meditation drawn from the nature
of the mind series of Dzogchen, but
mainly that the view and meditation
of the self-perfected state of Dzogchen
is found throughout the development
and accomplishment practices. In this
regard Araga explains:

In the system of Dzogchen, the Primor-
dial Yoga, in the mandala of the funda-
mental nature of mind the universe and
beings are perceived in the primordial
dimension of the base where they mani-
fest as infinite pure deities.

In the language of the New tantric tra-
dition this is expressed thusly: “a mo-
ment of presence is enough for all to be
perfected.” It is not necessary to purify
yourself with the mantra *om svabhava*,
and so forth.

Heedful of the point of view of emptiness,
You do not need to recite the verses
that describe the deity.
Just as a rainbow appears in limpid
space,
You visualize yourself as the yidam deity:
The outer world is its pure abode,
Beings are its divine retinue.
From the primordial beginning
No duality between the pledge deity
and the wisdom deity exists.
Your body is the pledge deity,
The nature of your mind is the wisdom
deity.
Receiving initiation means recalling to
mind what is.
When your view is inseparable from
the state of emptiness,
You realize the union of emptiness and
clarity of the yidam deity.
This supreme meditation is on the
union of development and accom-
plishment.

The book will be available from
www.shangshungstore.org.

**The Union of
Mahamudra and
Dzogchen**
By Raga Asye
Commentary Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

This book contains the
root text of *The Union of
Mahamudra and Dzogchen*
by Raga Asye (Karma Chagme
Rinpoche, teacher and student of
the renowned child tertön Nam-
chos Mingyur Dorje) together
with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu’s
commentary, based on the teach-
ings given in Merigar West in
June–July 2011.

Excerpt from the text:
The scriptures of the Sutras and Tan-
tras are extensive and very many in
number,
But life is short and intelligence is
small, so it is difficult to fully com-
prehend them all.
You may know a great deal, but if you
do not put it into practice,
It is like dying of thirst on the banks of
a big lake.
So it happens that an ordinary corpse
is found in the bed of a learned
person.

**Creative Vision and
Inner Reality**
**Easing the Beginner’s Way: The
Essential Points of Creation and
Completion**
Translated by Elio Guarisco
Edited by Nancy Simmons

This amazing text by
Jamgön Kongtrül the
Great presents the es-
sence of all practices in a way
which is easy to understand and
apply, explaining in particular,
as the *Creation and Completion* title
indicates, helpful ways to regard
the Vajrayana practice.

Excerpt from the text:
The only true foundation for practice
is the wish to be free from habitual
life.
The only approach is faith,
The main road is compassion,
And the only backbone is complete and
assiduous training.
Indispensable to the practice is
conscientiousness, presence, and
awareness.
Trust in the Precious Jewels eliminates
obstacles,
Devotion to the master enhances the
practice,
And the master’s instructions ensure
flawless practice.
All the essential points of practice are
unified in the Three Roots.
When the peaceful and wrathful
mandalas
Arise as the master’s display, this
alone is sufficient!

The book will be available from
www.shangshungstore.org.

The Sutras, Tantras and the words
of the learned and accomplished
masters of India and Tibet
Contain great blessings but are dif-
ficult for ordinary people to fathom.
Although necessary teaching in mo-
nastic collages,
They are of little help in the practice of
a single heart.
This “pointing out instruction of the
old lady” is more beneficial to the
mind than all the other scriptures.

All the countless and profound teach-
ings, such as Mahamudra and
Dzogchen
Whose respective root texts (represent
the true and unmistak (mean-
ing),
Are necessary when propagating them
among students that will hold the
lineages of these teachings,
But for practice for one’s own sake,
practice for the sake of one’s future,
It is more effective to unify all of them
as one.

The book will be available from
www.shangshungstore.org.

**The Precious
Mala of the Four
Dharmas**
By Longchen Rabjam, commentary
by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu
Edited by Jacob Braverman

This book contains the root
text of Longchenpa’s *Preci-
ous Mala* together with
Chögyal Namkhai Norbu’s com-
mentary, based on teachings giv-
en in Moscow in May 2009 and in
Argentina in December 2007.

Excerpt from the text:
What we can see clearly from the
transmission lineage of this text by
Longchenpa is that it is a lineage of
Dzogchen masters. This is because the
text itself emphasizes the practice of
Dzogchen. It also explains aspects of
the Hinayana, Mahayana, and Tantra
teachings, but these are not the main
point; for example, when he touches on
the main principles of the tantric path,
he gives a short explanation of the two
stages in tantric practice – the develop-
ment stage and the completion stage
– but xx gives no concrete instructions
on how we can apply these two stages.
This is because we should receive a
tantric initiation before hearing de-
tailed instructions on how to apply the
two stages of Tantra. Even then these
instructions are very detailed and com-
plex, and it takes many months to learn
everything. Although Longchenpa was a
great master and a renowned scholar,
he could not explain how to apply these
two stages of Tantra in the few words of
a small book like this one.

However, what he does explain
here in a concrete and clear way is the
practice of Dzogchen. This practice, like
that of Tantra, has a precise source and
a precise lineage of transmission. It is
important to understand that this trans-
mission is really something like the vital
life of the Dzogchen teachings, both in
general and for every individual practi-
tioner who holds this transmission.

The book will be available from
www.shangshungstore.org.

**The Lamp That
Enlightens Narrow
Minds: The Life and
Times of a Realized
Tibetan Master,
Khyentse Chokyi
Wangchug**
By Chögyal Namkhai Norbu
Edited and Annotated by Enrico
Dell’Angelo
Translated by Nancy Simmons

This long awaited biogra-
phy of Rinpoche’s ma-
ternal uncle, Khyentse
Chökyi Wangchug, will be pub-
lished by North Atlantic Books
and distributed by Random
House as of October 16, 2012.
Beginning with the history of
the Khyentse incarnations, the
book presents the life of Khyen-
tse Chökyi Wangchug, including
miraculous events and terma dis-
coveries, and ends with a chapter
about Khyentse Yeshe.

Excerpt from the text:
Chökyi Wangchug was also invited to
the Kyegu Gyanag Ladrang monastic
residence where the two reincarnations
of Gyanag Tulku asked for the Tseta
Sungdrel initiation.
That same evening in the temple of
the lamas’ residence, he performed,
together with the two Gyanag tulkus,
a lengthy offering ritual to Magzor
Gyalmo in front of the statue of that di-
vine protectress. When the *torma* of the
Lhamo was presented, a tongue of fire
blazed forth from the scarf that Chökyi
Wangchug had placed as an offering
above the reliquary containing the
statue. Since neither butter lamps nor
incense (nor other fonts of heat) were
near the *nyinmo deleg* scarf, all present,
astounded, interrupted the recitation
for a short time. Nothing but that scarf,
and none of the scarves offered by oth-
ers, were touched by the flame. This was
seen clearly by all of us.
Another time, invited by Trau Behu,
he performed the ritual for the benefit
of the dead linked to Buddha Akshobhya.
Almost everyone present saw that the
list with the names of the dead, readied
for burning during the ritual, burst into
flame on its own.

In the palace of that local chieftain
he bestowed a blessing to cure a man
who had become hydrophobic, having
been bitten by a rabid dog. That same
evening the man returned to normalcy.
On another occasion as he per-
formed a rite in front of the talking
statue of the Tārā of Denkhog, all the
onlookers saw a five-colored tongue of
flame more than a span in height surge
from the butter lamp in front of the
statue.

The Italian edition is already
available from
www.shangshungstore.org
You can preorder the English-
language edition now at the fol-
lowing address:
http://goo.gl/yRpIA

The Cloud of Nectar The Life and Liberation of Nyagla Pema Düdul

By Yeshe Dorje
Translated by Oriol Aguillar
Edited by Judith Chasnoff

This is the first time that the biography of the famous yogi and tertön who achieved Rainbow Body is published in the West. Nyagla Padma Düddul was the teacher of Nyagla Changchub Dorje and Ayu Khandro Dorje Paldron. As both these masters were the teachers of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, the book will be of special interest to his students.

On reaching the age of eighteen, he had an experience in which dream and vision were one, and he saw the incommensurable suffering of the lower hells. The vision contained the aspects of panic and terror of all dimensions. In the place where one could hear: Kill! Kill! Destroy!, Destroy! Phat, phat! and Hum, hum!, were the innumerable servants of the Lord of Death, looking like karmic butchers and with imposing and horrific faces. On a high throne covered in brocade and (pieces of) copper and iron was the Dharmaraja Lord of Death, dark brown in color and of extremely wrathful appearance. Before him were the two princes of karma, one

white, the other black, differentiating between virtue and evil. The evil-doers were chained and driven toward the infernal cauldrons containing molten copper by diverse types of multi-headed servants of the Lord of Death. The virtuous were invited to step onto the path by numerous lamas, excellent guides who led them to a white road of pleasant appearance leading upward. Then he thought, “Although I am not worried about having to go to the copper hell, I feel compassion for those beings with bad karma.” As he began to beseech the lamas and the Three Jewels, a smiling and pacific Mahakaruna, the supreme divinity who is a master, appeared before him. He asked:
My master Mahakaruna,
I feel great pity for those beings,
Is there no way of leading these beings – my fathers and mothers – to freedom?

Mahakaruna replied:
Yes, there is a way. Follow me, my son, sustaining your feeling of compassion.

When the Lord followed the Master Mahakaruna along a pleasant path that seemed a crystal staircase, there instantly appeared a beautiful and exquisite paradise, embellished with a wish fulfilling tree, a nectar fountain, a garden of many kinds of flowers, birds singing the six syllables mantra in harmonious tones, and so on, and everything was of great distinction. In the center of this kingdom was a celestial dwelling made of perfect, precious materials. There, on a throne of brocades and lotus, the great master (Mahakaruna) shone with intense glory, adorned with the thirteen ornaments which be-

stow ultimate peace. On his right and left were White Tara and Green Tara; in the intermediate directions were many bodhisattvas and adepts – male and female – from India and Tibet. (Then the Lord begged Mahakaruna):
My compassionate Master, I beg you to give me the method that frees those beings!

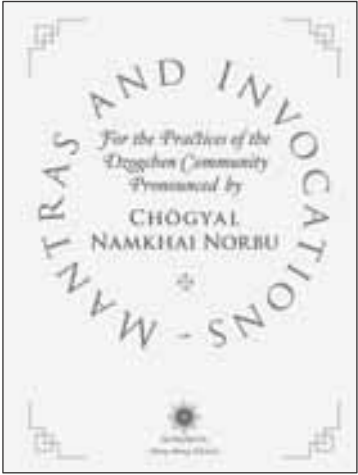
Mahakaruna replied by lifting up an object similar to the *jokhor* of existence, that is, the human dimension of the universe. Spinning it on his right palm, the master and his retinue began singing together the melody of the mantra of the six syllables. Finally, having spun (the *jokhor*) for a long time, holding it in his hand, he placed it on the Lord’s crown, saying three times:
Son, guide those beings by spinning a dharma wheel like this one.

Waking from this dream and vision he brimmed with compassion for the beings he had seen in the infernal vision and, remembering the noble beings in the pure dimensions, he felt a growing joy. Thus those two feelings arose in him.

The book will be available from www.shangshungstore.org.

Mantras and Invocations for the Practices of the Dzogchen Community

Pronounced by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu



Shang Shung Edizioni is pleased to announce the release of a new book containing a large collection of mantras and invocations transmitted by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu. The purpose of this book is to ensure the correct pronunciation of the mantras and invocations as transmitted by the Master. It comes with a recording recently made by Rinpoche specifically to accompany the book. The emphasis of these recordings is specifically on the pronunciation of the mantras. The melodies are not included. The book gives all of the mantras and invocations in transliteration as well as Tibetan script.

The collection contains all series of Guruyoga, Yidam transformation practices, all series of Ganapuja, long life practices, purification practices, protection mantras, and Guardian invocations as well as Medicine Buddha mantras, the Naga rite, Sang, and Serkyem. It is an essential tool for Dzogchen Community practitioners and is available in three forms:
· Printed book with MP3 CD (audio)
· Printed book with DVD (video)
· Downloadable ebook and MP3 file

www.shangshungstore.org

This publication should be treated with the greatest respect and is addressed to those who have received the transmission of the teaching from Chögyal Namkhai Norbu. ©

MP3 Downloads Now Available

Shang Shung Institute is happy to announce the availability of MP3 recordings, previously available as CDs only. All members of the Dzogchen Community, no matter where they live, now have the possibility to download and learn several secondary ritual practices, listen to the explanations by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu and practice while listening to the recording – without waiting for the CD to be delivered.

The first MP3 downloads currently available are:

1. Ritual Melodies
A collection of the melodies of the main practices of the Dzogchen Community, sung by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu.

2. Guru Yoga of the White A
The explanation and full practice of the Guru Yoga of the White A with Guru Garab Dorje, by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu.

3. Purification of the Six Lokas
The explanation and full practice of the Purification of the Six Lokas, Chögyal Namkhai Norbu.

4. Shitro
The explanation and full practice of the Shitro, by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu.

The Marvelous Primordial State

Translated by Elio Guarisco, Adriano Clemente, and Jim Valby
Edited by Nancy Simmons

This fundamental tantra of Dzogchen Semde is in the lengthy process of a complex translation. This profound text contains forty chapters related directly to the knowledge of the Primordial State. Our hope is to publish this book in 2012.

Excerpt from the text:

Great Being!
In the self-originated mandala of Mind, perfect wisdom abides like a mirror.
I am the wisdom of the buddhas which abide in the three times:
Since I have understood the principle of the primordial state, I am the embodiment of all buddhas;
I am the tomb of all buddhas;
I am the great charnel ground;
All great beings and all sentient beings come from me;
I am the tomb of sentient beings.
Fortunate one, understand this!

All buddhas are my realm.
All sentient beings are the treasure of the three enlightened Bodies.
Everything is the cause of my enjoyment.

The book will be available from www.shangshungstore.org.

5. Mantra and Invocations

In this recording, to be used in conjunction with the corresponding booklet, Chögyal Namkhai Norbu pronounces clearly, syllable by syllable, all the mantras and invocations used in the practices of the Dzogchen Community.

6. Tundus and Tundrin

The explanation and full practice of the Short and Medium Thun, by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu.

7. Ganapuja (practice and explanation)

The explanation and full practice of the Ganapuja, by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu.

8. The Long Ganapuja (practice only)

The full practice of the Long Ganapuja, by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu.

Please note that MP3 downloads are available to members of the Dzogchen Community only (valid membership is required). As these items are only for people who have received the corresponding transmissions, we ask you to take special care of the downloaded archives, and protect them as much as you can.

The MP3 downloads are available from the Shang Shung Store: www.shangshungstore.org. Please note that the links to files are not available immediately – please allow 24 hours for verification and processing. ©

Shang Shung Institute USA Upcoming Events

July 4
Tibetan Medicine School Graduation
Alumni House, Amherst College

July 16–21
Special Kunye Course (floor work) with Aldo Oneto
Florence Classroom

August 10–17
Tibetan Medical Intensive: External Therapies
Instructor TBA

In the system of Tibetan Medicine there are four main types of treatment: diet, lifestyle, herbs and external therapies. Of those external therapies is considered the strongest form of therapeutic treatment and is often considered only for serious cases. There are two categories of external therapies: strong and soft. Strong external therapies includes moxibustion, bloodletting and acupuncture. Soft external therapies include massage, compresses and medicinal bathes. This intensive will introduce each of these topics in both theory and application.

August 24–29
Tibetan Medical Intensive: Tibetan Kunye Massage Theory and Practice: Learning the Basics With Dr. Phuntsog Wangmo, Academic Director

Tibetan Kunye Massage is an effective, dynamic system of massage and bodywork therapies. It is an important aspect of Traditional Tibetan Medicine, one of the world’s most ancient and advanced lineages of healing arts. For many centuries, the renowned physicians and yogis of Tibet have relied on the practice of Kunye Massage for restoring health and balance. Kunye employs a variety of massage techniques and bodywork therapies, including: massage with medicinal oils, deep tissue massage, pressure points therapy, joint mobilization and assisted stretching, heated oils therapy, hot stones therapy, hot and cold compresses, herbal poultices and gemstone therapy.

Dr. Phuntsog will be available for consultations during the time of the retreat with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu from July 3–15. ©

For more information please contact: secretary@shangshung.org

Focus on Yantra Yoga

10

Yantra Yoga

Yantra Yoga is one of the oldest recorded systems of yoga in the world. It has come to us by way of Tibet, a land that holds a vast, rich Buddhist knowledge and heritage. Yantra Yoga’s unique series of positions and movements, combined with conscious breathing, can help coordinate and harmonize one’s personal energy so that the mind can relax and find its authentic balance.

Many positions used in Yantra Yoga are similar to those of Hatha Yoga, but the way to assume and apply them differs significantly. Yantra Yoga uses a sequence that consists of seven phases of movement, connected with seven phases of breathing. In particular, the position in the central phase of each movement helps create specific retentions of the breath that work at a deep, subtle level. For this reason it is not only the main position, but this holding and the entire movement that are important.

The system of Yantra Yoga contains a wide range of movements that can be applied by everyone. This is a superb method to attain optimal health, relaxation, and balance through the coordination of breath and movement.

lic. Based in Rinpoche’s wish to make Yantra Yoga more widespread and Khyentse Yeshe’s encouragement, this brilliant system of movement is being disseminated to the world.

In this issue of The Mirror featuring Yantra Yoga, we are presenting articles and testimonials by instructors and students alike, people who aspire to be yogis, practitioners who want to enhance their experience of other practices through the coordination of their prana, people working with children through Kumar Kumari, Yantra Yoga for children created by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, and older people with health issues to people who just want to feel better, be healthier and more relaxed in their lives. As you can see, Yantra Yoga is a system approachable by and of tremendous value to all!

History of Yantra Yoga

Yantra Yoga is based on the ancient text Nyida Khajor, known in English as “The Union of the Sun and Moon.” This text was written in the 8th century by Vairocana, one of the most skilled Buddhist Masters and translators of his time. This teaching has been passed down from teacher to student, in an unbroken lineage, since that time. The current lineage holder, Chögyal Namkhai

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu on Yantra Yoga:

Yantra Yoga, Discovering our Real Condition
(Excerpted from a talk on Yantra Yoga given by Rinpoche in New Delhi India on November 23, 1993*)

I would like to give a little information about Yantra Yoga, a Tibetan tradition. The word Yantra is a Sanskrit word, but it has different meanings in Tibetan. Yantra can mean “geometrical form,” like a mandala, or it can mean “movement of the body.” In Tibetan we say trul-khor, which means “movement.” We use movement to coordinate and guide our prana, or vital energy.

The Yantra Yoga that I teach is called Nyida Khajor. In Tibetan, nyida means “sun and moon” and khajormeans “union.” This is the title of the original teaching taught by Vairocana, who was one of the most important students of Guru Padmasambhava, and a great translator.

Vairocana received the transmission of this Yantra Yoga teaching from Guru Padmasambhava, who received it from a great Mahasiddha called Humkara. Then it was transmitted from Vairocana to Yudra Nyingpo, and various other masters. This is the lineage of this teaching.



Chögyal Namkhai Norbu Teachers’ Training Santi Maha Sangha, Yantra Yoga And Vajra Dance – Kunsangar South 2011

We asked each of the presenters here, what the principle of Yantra Yoga is and they all explained in a similar way. Yantra means movement. Movement is important because it is part of our energy. You know how important it is in Dzogchen teaching that we recognize and have knowledge that movement is part of our real condition. At our physical level, what we can recognize and have concrete experience of regarding movement, is breathing. Breathing is important, first of all, because breathing is life: if there is no continuation of breath, there is no life. Breathing is connected to prana energy, if we need to coordinate our energy, we must work on our breathing, not only with physical level. The physical level is only at the service of breathing and the movement of the elements, etc.

For this reason in Yantra Yoga the most important thing is breathing, not movement. Movements and positions are secondary aspects for coordinating energy and getting in its real potentiality, prana energy. This is why breathing is considered so important in Yantra Yoga. You see, for each movement there is a very precise explanation of the breathing, its timing and movements: there is no such explanation in other Yantra systems or trulkhor in Vajrayana teaching.

we have the possibility to arrive at real knowledge, or the understanding of our primordial state – our original condition. That is the real meaning of ‘yoga’ in Yantra Yoga. ©

* From The Mirror, the international newspaper of the Dzogchen Community of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche, issue 28, Sept/Oct 1994.

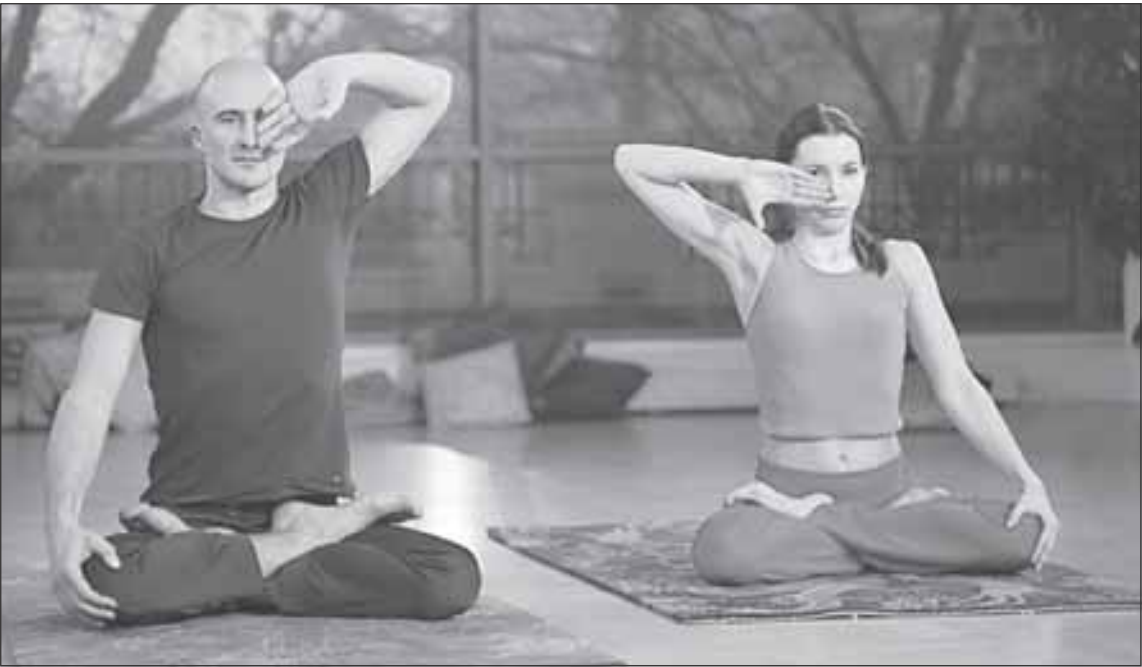
From the website
www.yantrayoga.org

This is something important to understand, especially for people who are going to teach Yantra. You learned quite well; that is a responsibility of our teachers, Fabio and Laura, who presented you. The important thing is that you do your best, learn more, became familiar with and follow the authentic movement, breathing, etc. This is the most important thing when you teach. People learn Yantra Yoga because they think it is something important, an ancient knowledge with such a transmission, connected to Dzogchen teaching. In Yantra Yoga we can have an open aspect and a more spiritual one. Now, we develop both of them more and more.

When you teach to the public, you must understand what kind of people are learning. Don’t jump immediately on the essence of Dzogchen teaching for example, but also do not treat it only as a kind of gymnastic, because Yantra has its principles. Even if we are doing something in a very simple way, these principles shouldn’t be missing, otherwise there is not much benefit. You see, today in modern society we have hundreds of different kinds of movements for doing exercises, so it is not necessary to do Yantra Yoga.

Yantra Yoga is for bringing people gradually into deep knowledge. Yesterday I already explained to you, when I started teaching, I began with Yantra Yoga, and when I was teaching Yantra Yoga I was not talking about Dzogchen, nor was I explaining that Yantra Yoga principles are (the same as those of) Dzogchen. But when you learn and go deeper, read about Yantra Yoga origin, for example in Yantra Yoga books, then you can understand. This is something relative but very useful to know. ☸

Edited and reprinted with the kind permission of the Merigar Letter 13



Maksim Leschenko/Ukraine:
Maksim received his first level diploma from Chögyal Namkhai Norbu in 2011. He has been a student of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu since 2006.
Ekaterina Stepanova/Russia:
Ekaterina received First Level Diploma from Chögyal Namkhai Norbu in 2011. Student of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu since 2008.

While today’s Yantra Yoga practitioner does not necessarily need to follow a particular spiritual path, anyone can practice without limitation. This fundamental and rich method is connected with the profound essence of the Dzogchen Teachings, and for millennia it has been taught for the purpose of finding the true natural state.

What we would like to highlight in this issue of The Mirror is the accessibility and value of Yantra Yoga for all people, no matter what age, size or physical condition, and the enormous benefit derived for practitioners and non practitioners alike.

With the publication of the Yantra Yoga book Yantra Yoga, The Tibetan Yoga of Movement, Snow Lion Publications, 2008, Yantra Yoga has become pub-

Norbu, is a renowned cultural scholar and Dzogchen Master. He wrote a detailed commentary to this essential root text in 1976, which was based on the extensive personal training and understanding of Yantra Yoga that he received directly from his uncle, Togden Ugyen Tendzin, and other teachers in Tibet.

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu has been transmitting Yantra Yoga in the West since the early 1970’s. His marvelous and complete text, called A Stainless Mirror of Jewels, is currently being published by Snow Lion Publications in Ithaca, New York. The resulting book, entitled Yantra Yoga: The Tibetan Yoga of Movement, is available for purchase from our webstore.

Besides this text, there is an oral transmission of Yantra Yoga. It is very difficult to understand Yantra Yoga by only reading the original text and not having a teacher. Practitioners of Dzogchen have applied these methods for centuries. I learned them principally from one of my uncles, who was a yogi and an excellent practitioner of Yantra.

In the practice of Yantra Yoga we use our body, voice, and mind. Using the body we perform positions and movements, with the voice we do many pranayama techniques (or breathing practices), and with the mind there are many ways to concentrate and visualize. The aim is to go beyond judging and thinking with our mind, and we call this contemplation. When we apply all three of these aspects together,

Focus on Yantra Yoga

11

“Yantra is a rhythm. It takes time to discover it”

Interview with Fabio Andrico
by Ilya Zhuravlev,
Wild Yogi Magazine



Fabio Andrico has been teaching Yoga internationally for over 30 years. He began his yoga career in the mid-seventies, when he studied Sivananda Yoga during a trip to India. In the following years, Andrico was exposed to many different yoga traditions. He ultimately met his teacher, Dzogchen Master Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, in 1977 and had the rare opportunity to learn the Tibetan tradition of Yantra Yoga directly from this lineage holder. Andrico is both a Hatha Yoga and Yantra Yoga instructor, as well as an authorized trainer of Yantra Yoga teachers. He teaches Yantra Yoga internationally to groups of up to 700 participants in venues on six continents.

Ilya: How did you discover yoga and how did you start to feel interest in spiritual disciplines?

Fabio: I started in my hometown in Italy with a friend of mine who was doing some yoga. He used to show me things and I got interested. I was in my 20-s, already not so young. After a couple of years a friend of mine was going to India and didn't want to go alone, so he offered me plane tickets and everything. I went with him and we ended up in an ashram in Bangalore with Shri Jyoti, who taught Sivananda tradition of Munger, Bihar school of yoga. So, I was learning Sivananda yoga in an ashram for 4.5 months. I was really practicing yoga 8 hours a day, fasting. Because in this system fasting is naturopathy; teachers were very strict to make students to practice naturopathy, cleansing procedures, kriyas. In fact, I very quickly progressed from almost nothing to lotus, from so much practice each day. Shri Joti used to say that would do much more in Munger – they would wake up at dawn, perform 108 Surya Namaskars, go to Ganges to do purification procedures, chant mantras and then practice the session, etc. Well, I was doing my best, one thing I know if you practice you can progress very fast, but if you don't practice nothing is going to happen. Forcing yourself won't bring you any good, but practice is important.

I: So, when did you meet Namkhai Norbu and started practicing Yantra yoga?

Fabio: I think it was 1977. At that time, I was learning and trying to apply my knowledge in a simple way in classes I led. I was actually teaching in the Yoga Federation Centre, trying to do my best. And during that time I met with Norbu Rinpoche and I received a teaching of Yantra Yoga from him. I also started practicing Yantra Yoga and after some time I started to teach in a proper sense. I was attending a Dzogchen Community centre in Napoli, because

that was where I went to the University of Oriental Studies, so in the evenings I would go to that centre, where I would lead the practice of Yantra Yoga. I was doing that for 4 years, every day in the morning, and at night I would teach Hatha Yoga and lead Yantra Yoga classes. In the meantime I was studying the “Book of Yantra Yoga”, to understand the underlying philosophy better. Actually, teaching and learning at the same time is the best way to learn faster and deeper. After some time people started to invite me here and there to teach Yantra Yoga, and gradually I became an official teacher of Yantra Yoga. I got an official certificate as a Yantra Yoga teacher. So, in this way I started to teach more officially and after some years we started to train other people to become Yantra Yoga teachers, because the interest grew and with it grew the need for more instructors.

I taught inside the Community at that point because all aspects of Yantra are more connected with the practices of Tsa Lung and should be kept with at least the minimum of control and understanding and also having transmission is essential, otherwise it's like the real life is missing. You can see the form and everything but that is not enough. If you are just doing Yantra out of curiosity, you are playing with some aspects of pranayama and energy, and that is not a very good idea unless you are following the path and you are practicing under the supervision of an authorized teacher with deep knowledge.

I: Let's discuss your particular lineage of Yantra Yoga. As far as I know, there are a few asana practice styles inside of Tibetan tradition under a general name Trul Khor, but can they vary depending on the lineage?

Fabio: Generally, when there is a series of teaching, when there is practice of Tsa Lung, practices dealing with channels (Tsa) and prana (Lung), there is also Trul Khor. It is a kind of support, preparatory exercises, to prepare the base and to maintain a certain condition. For example, there are eight movements in Yantra, which are very important in the beginning, because they help to reshape, to reprogram the

breathing patterns, and the conditions of our energy. So in order to create correct practice you practice Tsa Lung. But while you practice Tsa Lung it is always better to keep practicing Trul Khor, because it refreshes the base.

I: So, do I understand it correctly that Trul Khor is more connected with physical exercises and Tsa Lung is more dealing with energy?

Fabio: No, I wouldn't say so. I don't know that much about other traditions to be able to say in general, I'll be honest with you here. I doubt that a system of Trul Khor as articulate and rich as Yantra yoga even exists. There are only a few movements in Trul Khor, whereas there are 108 in Yantra Yoga. But in our Yantra Yoga there are already some aspects of Trul Khor and Tsa Lung, we have 5 different pranayamas, where the 3rd, the 4th and the 5th are already Tsa Lung practices, because they deal with channels and chakras. If you are an advanced practitioner of Yantra Yoga you can take any Tsa Lung practices you want. There won't be any problems if you have the right base, condition, understanding, knowledge and training.

I: As far as I know the source of Yantra Yoga is Tantra written by Vairocana in the 8th century? As the legend says, he received these instructions from Padmasambhava, the teacher who brought tantric Buddhism to Tibet from India. The word ‘Yantra’ here is not a geometrical picture for meditation, like in the Indian tradition, but a variant of translation for the Tibetan term ‘Trul Khor’, i.e. ‘body movement complex’. Is there an uninterrupted lineage of Vairocana?

Fabio: Originally, there were three texts: The text of Trul Khor; the text with the description of medical benefits meaning what happens on the level of the five pranas, nerves and joints and these two books were published. And the 3rd book was about the practice of tummo and it was lost, there is no copy of the text. And it was a more specific aspect of Tsa Lung.

I: Can you briefly describe the levels of Yantra yoga?

Fabio: There are not really levels. We can only talk about an open or closed level for the reasons mentioned above. Some things can be taught openly with a definite benefit from such practice and certain things have no sense to be taught without a transmission. But in the structure of the series there are no levels, in the sense that series of each of 5 groups (5 groups and there are 5 basic positions in each plus every yantra has two variations, so all together there are 25 yantra, each group covers five breath holdings, always the same sequence – open hold, directed hold, closed hold, pulled back hold and empty hold) are more related to the breathing aspect rather than to complexity.

I: In the book I saw some postures, which looked very complicated, like ganda bherundasana, a very advanced backbend. So, does the beginner do all “Eight movements” sequence, or begins step by step?

Fabio: It depends on the capacity of practitioner, but obviously first we teach the preliminaries. But my point is that in the groups of yantras themselves, in the basic yantras – the position of contracted hold or directed hold in the first group for some people is much more complicated than one in the third group. There is no an escalation of difficulty when you move from the first group to the following ones, of course there are variations, which are generally more difficult than the basic position. It is true, however, than the first and the second groups are a bit easier. When the practitioner starts the 3rd group, added some advanced movements, it is the way of jumping. Of course if a person doesn't practice with intent, there is no need to add it, however, if you practice it, then from there you start going more concretely in a certain direction. In Hatha Yoga there are sequences of asanas, for example the sequence which I've studied in Rishikesh, where you have a certain number of asanas, balancing, compensating each other. Every Yantra sequence is also balanced within itself – if there is twisting to the right with a breath hold – there always will be twisting to

the left, without hold, but just as a counter-balance. Then there will be a repetition for the other side, but again with a counter-balance. And the five yantras of the group counter-balance each other. The coordination and harmony of Yantra Yoga is amazing.

I: Are all of the exercises written in the Tantra?

Fabio: It is all in the root text and the commentary. Of course, the root text is essential, but commentaries are important for clarification. That's why you need Namkai Norbu Rinpoche's commentary, based on direct and oral instructions of his uncle – Urgyen Tenzin, who clarified different aspects. And Urgyen Tenzin himself had been receiving direct instructions from great Yantra Yoga practitioners for a long time in a place of retreat to refine and deepen his knowledge of Yantra, understanding and capacity. And Rinpoche received most instructions from him, based on which he took notes and after some time compiled the commentaries. Then, for many years he had been going through the book, making photos and drawings, clarifying different aspects. Later he would say, that he had never been so much into something than the book of Yantra Yoga. In his commentaries he made sure that each and every point was coordinated with the root text, clarified through instructions and explanations he received from his teachers, and that is the commentary text.

I: Comparing to modern schools of Hatha yoga, in this lineage nothing has changed. People of this lineage didn't bring anything new to it.

Fabio: It should be like this. One thing about Yantra Yoga, if you want to change it, is how to change it? How do you change the fixed sequence of movements? One movement leads to another, if you modify one position it will be impossible to move to another, you would have to invent another yantra. Of course, in reality two different people would do the same thing differently, because their energy, body condition are different, but they still are trying to do the necessary position. It is very important, that they are not transforming or changing, sometimes people modify position automatically because their body is used to doing a certain movement in a certain way. You can see that different Yantra teachers are doing it a bit differently, it is also due to the fact that Yantra has not developed a biomechanics as modern yogic schools. These details are not in the text. I doubt that yogis, practicing in caves, worried too much about the position of foot or toes. It is more our Western paranoia. Yantra is working more on the level of prana and energy, so it doesn't work in a same way with anatomy. For example, there is the Yantra of cobra – bhujangasana – generally it is taught to do with a chin

>> continued on the following page

Focus on Yantra Yoga

12

Yantra Yoga and Breathing in Switzerland

Patrizia Pearl

Patrizia received First Level Diploma from Chögyal Namkhai Norbu in 2010 and has been a student of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu since 1989.

Invited and living in the Swiss Alps and Geneva for the last three months, I am developing Yantra Yoga and Complete Breathing in Switzerland.

I have had the fortune to follow Fabio Andrico's courses on 'Breathing' last year and from then on I gave courses on breathing based on Yantra Yoga in Mexico City. People were delighted to participate in these classes given in Pelzomling, our Dzogchen Community Ling there.

Now back in the Swiss Alps, I continue to spread this knowledge and received great feedback from people who are steadily practicing the breathing methods; from doctors who have measured their oxygen saturation before and after taking the breath-



ing classes with very good results, to people who have discovered how proper breathing contributes at lowering their blood pressure and also those who have spoken about how much calmer and more relaxed they feel. All are saying how much benefit they get from these courses.

I feel enthusiastic to continue this work and to share people's

life changing experiences in small and simple ways, often very profound.

Breathing!

Margaret Jasinski

My first encounter with Yantra Yoga took place in Northampton, Massachusetts with Naomi Zeitz instructing. I was attracted to this form of yoga because I read how it coordinates energy and breath – that was enough inducement to get me to the first class. I had previous yoga experience, having practiced Hatha Yoga for many years, largely on my own.

I was not delusional enough to think of myself as a flexible yogini, but I was under the impression that I was capable of taking a complete breath. I was to find out that this assumption was incorrect. The first class, Naomi instructed the class how to fill completely with air, "from the bottom to the top." I found myself unable to do this very rudimentary exercise, and how ironic, I have walked, run, swam and cycled thousands of miles. This is not an exaggeration, I thought I was breathing the whole time, and indeed I was; however, the slowing down to take a complete

breath was an experience that evaded me after thirty years of regular exercise.

I experienced great difficulty in "filling up completely" and I left class rather discouraged, but with the spark of determination to continue. As the weeks of practice passed, my capacity in breathing increased through a more subtle awareness of the prana or life force. I practiced the exercises Naomi taught daily. Little by little my capacity in breathing continued. One of the yantra breath practices is rhythmic breathing where in breaths, out breaths and holding breath are alternated. This was a bit of a challenge to the point where I thought an in breath of eight counts was an impossible feat for anyone other than a very advanced practitioner. It came as a surprise a year later when I was taking a deep in breath for one of the practices. Although I was not instructed to count, I noticed that I could inhale for twelve seconds!!! I did not have the impression that I was an advanced practitioner as a result, but I acknowledged the benefit of becoming attuned to breath through Yantra Yoga. ©



>> continued from previous page

tucked, in Yantra yoga it is totally the same, but also arms straight, arch back, whole body stretched and tensed and with breath hold – that would be a nightmare for Hatha yoga. Cobra trains what is called an open hold, where you keep the air inside, without blocking, forcing or directing it, just expanding. The tension (in Yantra called "tzunchel") in body is at the point of trembling, but at the same time the breathing is completely open and relaxed. Its sometimes difficult to compare Yantra yoga with Hatha yoga, because they work at different levels of interaction between the body, energy and mind.

I: When comparing Indian Hatha yoga tradition with Tibetan tradition there are some things in common, but there are also certain differences. For example, is there anything in common in sitting pranayamas – do you have kapalabhati or bhasrika?

Fabio: No, not really. Trul khor, Tsa Lung is what you want to train for. In Yantra every single holding, every single movement works on its own, in its own direction, but always working with one or more of the five "Lungs",

that govern every aspect of our existence: breathing, eating, digesting, thinking, giving birth etc.

I: Is there the practice of watching some subtle elements, like thögal, which was used according to scriptures, for achieving "Rainbow body" (transformation physical body into light).

Fabio: As anything that can coordinate our condition, Yantra might be helpful for this also, but it's not going that direction, at least what I know of. But if you look in the book – the chapter about what is supposed to be the manifestation of different aspects such as channels, prana, you read it and it looks like a miracle – walking on water surface, it is a part of our potentiality. It is not that you are focused on that, but if you manifest your potentiality it will happen by itself. For example Rimpoche's uncle had manifestation, as far as I remember he was shot and nothing happened. He achieved the "Rainbow body". But not because of Yantra, even though he was practicing Yantra every day, still to do such kind of things you need special teachings.

I: Why do you think such techniques are not so popular in Vajrayana?

Fabio: I don't know, may be it was kept in secret and we simply don't know if they practiced it or not. I know that in different traditions there are different kinds of Trul Khor and there are different cycles of practices, related to Tsa Lung. According to the tradition you have to receive an initiation first, and then you have the connection, the life of the teaching, then you can learn anything you want, but if you meet people without this understanding and this connection, then you can't teach some aspects of Yantra, because there is no reason for learning it.

Now we teach openly all the 25 basic yantras and all aspects are being taught. It has always been open, Rinpoche always taught everything, but to a few people only who became his disciples. When you start to open up like this, then some of the aspects, which can harm, you don't teach. When I was studying at the University, there was a man, who got a book about Kundalini practices, and without full understanding he was trying to awaken it. He ended up in a mental hospi-

tal. So, you have to be very careful what to teach and what to avoid. And that is the only reason, and not because of some sort of an enigmatic secrecy. But there is plenty to learn even within these 25 yantras. Yantra is also rhythm, and as much as I've seen yoga practitioners, being flexible can even become an obstacle, because they stop being present in what they are doing, they get distracted by the easiness of what they are doing. Sometimes they get the difficulty in coordinating the breathing with smoothness of the movement. In this training, even if you are an advanced asanas practitioner, generally it still takes time, it doesn't come immediately. It is not only coordinating with the breath, but also coordinating the rhythm, coordinating how the movement starts and where it finishes with how the breathing starts and finishes, linking to the next movement and next breathing in the pace of the rhythm. In Yantra the rhythm is connected with the heartbeat of a relaxed person. And the rhythm of the heart coordinates the energy. Yantra is rhythm. It takes time to discover and appreciate it, but once you've done it then

Yantra becomes very interesting and valuable.

I: So, if someone starts Yantra, he/she can continue with Buddhist Dzogchen teachings. And if the person has no interest in that teaching, is it possible to continue practicing only Yantra exercises?

Fabio: Yes, absolutely, there are no limitations. Because every human being has the same characteristics – every one has a physical body, mind and energy. It's not like if you don't believe in Buddha you don't have a mind, body or energy. Doesn't matter whether you believe in teaching or not – body, energy and mind are there. If you work at that level, you work at that level, whether you believe it or not. ©

More about Yantra Yoga
www.yantrayoga.org

Edited and reprinted with the kind permission of Ilya Zhuravlev, Wild Yogi Magazine
<http://wildyogi.info/en>

Interview with Laura Evangelisti

Laura Evangelisti met her Master, Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, in 1980 and has followed the Dzogchen Teachings ever since. In 1994, she was authorized by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu to teach Yantra Yoga and train prospective Yantra Yoga teachers as one of the two primary international instructors. Laura extensively collaborated on the book *Yantra Yoga, the Tibetan Yoga of Movement*, with commentary by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu.



Merigar Letter: As a start, can you tell us how Fabio and you became the main teachers of Yantra Yoga? **Laura Evangelisti:** In 1983 the Master had certified about thirty people, after a ten-day retreat, in which he gave the lung of both the root text and the commentary of Yantra Yoga, and explained in detail the whole practice. Later Adriano Clemente started to translate the book. Fabio and I collaborated with Adriano, going together through the points that were not clear, then we would meet with the Master, show him the positions we had doubts about, and he'd give us the clari-

ML: You had to go through those who were already teaching. **LE:** Of course. It was a specific request from the Master, not our own initiative. Maybe someone had not understood in the beginning, but in general everybody accepted to be supervised, to be able to receive the final authorization from the Master. Before the letter, in fact, Dance and Yantra had more or less spontaneously been taught by those who had learned directly from Rinpoche, or from other practitioners.

tion of breathing. If supervision goes well, we present the candidate to the Master, in one of the Teacher's Training that he himself holds, in order to authorize teachers for Santi Maha Sangha, Yantra Yoga and Vajra Dance. In these trainings the Master asks some questions, and requests that the candidates perform some of the yantras. If he judges their preparation be sufficient, he confers a diploma, to be a local Yantra Yoga teacher.

that the heart is the most important thing.

ML: Since we are opening up to general public, would it be useful to enrich the formation process, including notions such as respiratory physiology, anatomy, Tibetan medicine, and the like? **LE:** No doubt, studying anatomy and physiology would be useful to provide a correct terminology. These subjects could be added to Teacher's Trainings, but so far we haven't had enough time for that. In the occasion of the last Teacher's Training I collected all the information regarding Tibetan medicine contained in the Yantra text, and organized them in a compact form. I also asked Gino Vitiello and Pia Barilli, two physicians from our Community, who are also authorized Yantra teachers, to work specifically on the benefits of Yantra in order to present them in a form that's clear for everybody, especially people not familiar with Tibetan medicine. All Yantra teachers could give their contribution, deepening a certain aspect, writing a sort of thesis that can be shared. This could really be useful. Actually,

ML: A few words on Kumar Kumari, Yantra Yoga for children. Can you describe its characteristics and benefits? **LE:** One of the results is present here, in front of us! (Franco Cocco, who now works for Shang Shung Institute with videos and books). That's why we have the project of founding a Yantra Yoga Academy, to activate many more open courses. The Master though, in the famous letter, stated: "The instructors must say clearly that these teachings belong to the Dzogchen Teachings, and that the Dzogchen Transmission represents the heart of Yantra Yoga and Vajra Dance. Just as without the heart there is no normal life, lacking the root transmission it is impossible to receive the correct benefit from this teaching". So we always have to keep in mind that the heart is the most important thing. **ML:** Since we are opening up to general public, would it be useful to enrich the formation process, including notions such as respiratory physiology, anatomy, Tibetan medicine, and the like? **LE:** No doubt, studying anatomy



fications needed. Years later, in 1995, the Master wrote a letter to all Gakyils, where he appointed two official responsible people for Yantra, and two for the Vajra Dance. When I saw the letter I was very surprised, I did not expect anything like that. I think that having collaborated with the book, checking everything to the small detail, was one of the elements that convinced Rinpoche to give me such task. **ML:** What else was written in the letter? **LE:** The letter – which was published on September 1996 issue of the Merigar Letter – explained precisely how the teaching of Yantra Yoga and Vajra Dance should be coordinated. As far as Fabio and I, we had to check everybody who had taught or lead practice groups until that moment; to see if they were doing it in the correct way, sticking to the original text, to prevent the rising of different styles or different ways of practicing Yantra. Another duty was that of training new Yantra Yoga teachers, in the Gars worldwide, so to have many local teachers in different places.

ML: So, in 1995 you lead the first official Teacher's Training. **LE:** We held it in the Gonpa at Merigar, and it went on for two weeks. About 60 people participated and practiced the five series of Yantra. **ML:** Which is the path for someone who wishes to become a Yantra Yoga teacher? **LE:** Obviously, first of all, one needs to learn Yantra Yoga, from a local authorized teacher or in an intensive course lead by Fabio and me. Usually the local teacher him or herself, notices if a student shows some qualifications for becoming a teacher. At that point he/she participates in a Teacher's Training and, when feels to be ready, organizes a course, where Fabio or myself go and observe how the candidate teaches. This is the so-called supervision. The most important aspect, in fact, is not how the person's practice, but overall how he/she communicates and teaches in a clear manner to the students. It is not just a matter of being super flexible, but to understand those who are in front of you, be attentive and collaborative, encouraging those with difficulties, clarify the essential points, above all, the func-

ML: What are the results until now? **LE:** We have about 60 teachers in the world; not all of them teach regularly though. **ML:** Do you think there might be some change in this procedure? **LE:** We will continue in this way until the Master gives different indications. We have to consider that circumstances are now very different from those of the early days. The Community has grown; a huge number of people can have access to Yantra Yoga through web sites, face book, videos, and books. That's why we have the project of founding a Yantra Yoga Academy, where we hope to activate many more open courses. The Master though, in the famous letter, stated: "The instructors must say clearly that these teachings belong to the Dzogchen Teachings, and that the Dzogchen Transmission represents the heart of Yantra Yoga and Vajra Dance. Just as without the heart there is no normal life, lacking the root transmission it is impossible to receive the correct benefit from this teaching". So we always have to keep in mind

what we care more for, is the capacity of transmitting the characteristic of Yantra Yoga, the sequences of seven phases in which one works with movement and breathing. This is the precious aspect of Yantra Yoga that must be enhanced and communicated as a peculiarity that makes Yantra Yoga different from all other kinds of yoga. **ML:** In your opinion, how should Yantra Yoga be presented outside, to attract new people? **LE:** That of last summer, demonstrating Yantra in public for the thirtieth anniversary of Merigar, has been a very positive and interesting experience. People liked it very much. Watching a complete sequence of Yantra, they are really struck by the harmony and the coordination of breathing and movements. Another way could be presenting the book in various contexts, such yoga festivals, forums and so on. Other possibilities can be offered by the videos that have just come out, on the open level of Yantra. Then we have web sites, face book, a lot of different tools we can use according to circumstances.

and physiology would be useful to provide a correct terminology. These subjects could be added to Teacher's Trainings, but so far we haven't had enough time for that. In the occasion of the last Teacher's Training I collected all the information regarding Tibetan medicine contained in the Yantra text, and organized them in a compact form. I also asked Gino Vitiello and Pia Barilli, two physicians from our Community, who are also authorized Yantra teachers, to work specifically on the benefits of Yantra in order to present them in a form that's clear for everybody, especially if they are not familiar with Tibetan medicine. All Yantra teachers could give their contribution, deepening a certain aspect, writing a sort of thesis that can be shared. This could really be useful. Actually, what we care more for, is the capacity of transmitting the characteristic of Yantra Yoga, the sequences of seven phases in which one works with movement and breathing. This is the precious aspect of Yantra Yoga that must be enhanced and communicated as a peculiarity that makes

Rimini Wellness 2012

Michele Salvatore

This year, Yantra Yoga was presented for the first time to the public at the Rimini Wellness event by Laura Evangelisti, international instructor from the Dzogchen Community, with a public lecture and demonstration both open to all those who were interested in participating.

Rimini Wellness is the largest European fitness exhibition with about 100,000 visitors this year from all over Italy as well as many international guests.

We were invited through the publication of an article last August and twenty or so photos (the article was entitled: The Yoga of Tibetan monks) in the Italian magazine Natural Style that captured the attention of one of the event organizers and thanks to



Laura and Michele presenting Yantra Yoga at Rimini Wellness.

the availability and the presence of Laura, the whole thing went in the best possible way.

Being at an important event at the European level is in line with the wishes of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, which are to convey the teaching of Yantra Yoga to all those who are interested, also outside the Dzogchen Commu-

nity. In addition, the experience showed us the possibility of a concrete integration with modern society through the language of the body that is easily understandable at all levels.

Coming from a clearly defined position and integrating with the everyday dimension represents an important step in the evolu-



Laura teaching at Rimini Wellness.

tion of the Dzogchen Community, and events like this allow us to have a showcase of large potential impact on a large number of people.

Understanding one's condition of body, voice and mind through Yantra is an experience that is accessible and can be understood even by those who re-

fuse to accept the concept of "spirituality", which is why I hope that participation in public events, like this, becomes something steady, a stimulus for all of us to do our best and to bring our contribution to modern society. If this continues over time the much hoped for fruit of evolution will not take long to appear! ©

A Gift for Every Child, Everywhere

Constance Soehnlen

Constance Ann Soehnlen was born the USA and lives in Rome, Italy. She is a certified Montessori teacher (2 and 1/2 years to 6 years old children). She has taught young children over 25 years, she has had the opportunity to present Kumar Kumari Yantra Yoga as an after school activity for children of 5-8 years for many years.



As I begin to write about my 12 year experience teaching Kumar Kumari Yantra to young children, I first wish to express my gratitude to Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche for this special teaching, a precious gift given to children, and for his encouragement when I asked him many years ago if I could introduce Kumar Kumari Yantra to a group of children in a school where I work in Rome as an early years teacher.

As I remember, after Rinpoche's beautiful instruction book "Garland of Lotus Flowers" (gZhon nu pho mo' l'Phrul 'kor padma'I phreng ba) was published, Cristiana De Falco and Jacobella Gaetani taught the children from Merigar. Laura Evangelisti taught Kumar Kumari Yantra in a school

in a small town in the Monte Amiata area and offered a weekend seminar at Merigar nearly every summer for parents and those interested in learning Kumar Kumari Yantra.

My experience was a little different. I had an opportunity to present an after school activity listed as Yoga for Young Children - Kumar Kumari. Within the international school where I work, there were a few families who followed Rinpoche and had visited Merigar and many others not. At the beginning, I was able to have a fairly large empty room, mats and eager young children participating once a week for an hour. With Rinpoche's book of instructions and his designs of each step

of each of the 15 movements, I felt ready to try my best.

After practicing the Kumar Kumari movements and sounds to present to children, I had to organize the lesson and work with children of 5 to 7 years old, about ten in the group. I began to figure out how best to organize the lesson, balancing the element of the children socializing, "having fun" as they learn, along with helping the child develop a sense of discipline and concentration in following a sequence of movements and linking this movement to a particular sound that produces a certain kind of inhalation or exhalation.

As the Kumar Kumari Yoga Club developed, the aspect of a

group working together formed; and socializing with one another, sharing food and drink was established as a fine way to end the class. I found out so much about different children listening in on their conversation with each other.

In the hour lesson, we would have about 10 minutes of warming up exercises, and about 20 minutes to a half hour of Kumar Kumari movements, followed by a snack at the end all around a table. It may seem to you a short lesson, but remember that these children were 5 to 7 years old; certainly older children can follow a longer lesson.

We spent some time warming up using a variety of methods, some brought by the children themselves. After warm ups it was time for our Kumar Kumari session. This was the time for being responsible and attentive, we always began with the purification breathing, followed by one or 2 tsjong, and possibly another movement: one tsandul, or one lungsang. We repeated the movements, we worked on linking the sound to the movement, I observed and watched, corrected a movement in a gentle manner. Every session of Kumar Kumari Yantra, long or short, has the nine breathings at the beginning and the final exercise.

Over the years I have recognized, how important it is to continue with adult Yantra Yoga practice. I must thank Laura Evangelisti who presents Kumar Kumari Yantra seminars regularly for parents and yoga teachers. Movements and sounds are presented and practiced together. These reviews are essential. Over time, one may have altered a movement or sound, and this is a time for noting corrections.

My last thought to share is that I have seen how beneficial Kumar Kumari Yantra is for children, even one lesson a week over a few months or so. Children become more aware of their breathing and how breathing helps them; they have noted if they feel calm or tense, or if they are more energetic or tired after a lesson. Please, if you haven't yet done so, take some time to read the introduction and look at the exercises in the Kumar Kumari Yantra book and note the beneficial effects that are listed for each of the 15 movements.

I have come round to where I began, just like a Garland of Lotus Flowers. I must say again, Thank you, Rinpoche, for this wonderful, precious Teaching for children. ©

Edited and reprinted by the kind permission of the Merigar Letter 13

>> continued from previous page
Yantra Yoga different from all other kinds of yoga.

ML: In your opinion, how should Yantra Yoga be presented outside, to attract new people?

LE: That of last summer, demonstrating Yantra in public for the thirtieth anniversary of Merigar, has been a very positive and interesting experience. People liked it very much. Watching a complete sequence of Yantra, they are really struck by the harmony and the coordination of breathing and movements. Another way,

could be presenting the book in various contexts, such yoga festivals, forums and so on. Other possibilities can be offered by the videos that have just come out, on the open level of Yantra. Then we have web sites, face book, a lot of different tools we can use according to circumstances.

ML: A few words on Kumar Kumari, Yantra Yoga for children. Can you describe its characteristics and benefits?

LE: One of the results it's present here, in front of us! (Franco Cocco who is recording the in-

terview) Rinpoche gave the transmission of the teaching of Kumar Kumari in 1992, and immediately we started to teach it to our children in Merigar. The main characteristic is the way of breathing, thought by the Master, in which the breath is combined with the ten syllables OM, AH, HUM, A, HA, SHA, SA, MA and HAM, that are very powerful and have a positive effect on children's energy and therefore on their growth.

Kumar Kumari is not so simple to practice, it needs a lot of concentration, and so has to be taught gradually, without forc-

ing the children, respecting their condition. If you proceed like that, they like it in the end.

If one wishes to learn in order to teach afterwards, a basic knowledge of Yantra Yoga is certainly needed. It is not enough though, because one needs to learn very well the specific breathing connected to the sounds, otherwise they could be forced, and this is not correct. I think that two days dedicated to Kumar Kumari could be added to usual Teacher's Trainings, for those who wish to teach it. Kumar Kumari is very suitable to be presented outside,

in schools. I taught it years ago in a school in Marroneto, and recently lessons have been given in another school in Arcidosso. The only thing is that, for those who do not follow the Teachings, you need to explain that the sounds of the mantras have a certain energy that can influence positively the children's growth.

ML: Thank you very much Laura.

Reprinted and edited with the kind permission of Merigar Letter #13

Five Years of Open Yantra Yoga in Venice!

Marco Baseggio

Marco Baseggio received his First Level Diploma from Chögyal Namkhai Norbu in 2010. He has been a student to ChNN since 1997.

Once again, this year, the open weekly course of Yantra Yoga I have been leading in Venice for five years now ended on June 1. The course is mixed with intermediate and beginners. Every year someone new arrives and someone leaves, but there is a core group that has regularly been participating in the course for 4 or 5 years.

This year in particular, it seemed to me that overall participation had increased, so that even at the end of the course that started with 22 members, 15 were still actively participating. Also the quality of listening was greater. At the end of the lessons every-



Marco with Yantra Yoga ongoing class of 5 years in Venice, Italy.

one (instructor and students) felt better than when they started and this is a good sign. It was really a pleasure to lead this course.

It must be said that the course was not very expensive – only 150 euro from October to the end of May. The course in Venice is organized by a sports club that uses the municipal gym, and years ago before I met the Teaching, I used to work with them teaching Ha-

tha Yoga. When I went back to Venice, they suggested that I collaborate with them again and I accepted but proposed the course of Yantra Yoga this time, in agreement with Laura Evangelisti who came to do the supervision.

Obviously, being an open course, we could not do pranayama but anyway we practiced up to the third group of Yantras and we

also did the rhythmic breathing without kumbhaka.

The idea of opening up the practice of Yantra Yoga to everyone really seems very interesting. Many course participants have told me that they are finally able to understand how breathing works.

When I asked some of the students what Yantra Yoga is for them, they made the following comments:

Franci: “I also practice Hatha Yoga and for me Yantra is a much more subtle form of Yoga that I feel works more on the energy and mainly on the breathing. After several years I think that I have experienced some changes thanks to Yantra and they have naturally been positive changes.”

Mario: “For me it is very important to practice meditation and make it part of my daily life. It is changing my life significantly, but also together with Yantra Yoga. When I am sitting in meditation I concentrate more on internal energy but Yantra Yoga has taught me to do the same thing in movement and so they are

perfectly compatible and both of them help me a great deal.” (Mario practices with a Kagyupa group in Venice.)

Vilma: “Yantra is an encounter with a new culture and a new way to move the body harmonizing it with the breathing. I have been doing it for so long (5 years) because I find it really beneficial.”

Claudia: “Yantra is the yoga of movement. It is also something for living well. I have been doing it for a long time because I feel good both physically and mentally and it also relaxes me a lot. I approach life differently, because I’m calmer and quieter.”

Ale: “Yantra is a practice that that is characterized by the pleasure I feel while I’m doing it. It’s like a sensation of moving the body together with the breathing but without effort. I’ve been doing it for a long time so that these things continue to be valid and because of this I will always go ahead with it, hopefully more and more frequently.” ©

Yantra Yoga in Australia

Emily Coleing

authorized 2nd level instructor

Emily Coleing received her First Level Diploma in 2003 and her Second Level Diploma from Chögyal Namkhai Norbu in 2010. She has been a student of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu since 1995.

Yantra Yoga offers a beautiful bridge to Dzogchen transmission and teachings. For me, this is one of my strongest motivators to teach. I came to the teachings myself through Yantra, having seen a poster on a post in Byron Bay for a course with Jeannie Alamkara and Fabio Andrico. I have really enjoyed sharing that possibility with others.

It never ceases to amaze me how people rave about benefits even as newcomers to Yantra. If they can feel it in the beginning, imagine what it will be like for them when they remember it “by heart” already! People who haven’t even received Dzogchen transmission feel the benefit, not only physically but holistically. Probably the most astounding example of this was a dear woman who had just had a hip replacement but wanted to come for an introduction to Eight Movements weekend. She sat in the chair to follow as best as she could. She said it was of enormous benefit, and very relaxing for her!

Experiences of participants in Emily’s courses:

Tania Steel, a relatively new Yantra Yoga practitioner from Queensland, explains her experience:

“I have been practicing traditional Hatha Yoga for about 20 years and was very drawn to Yantra Yoga, because to me it made



much more sense and added that ‘extra’ that I felt was missing. Although I have only learned the first Eight Movements, I have found from my practice that it works on a more subtle but profound level. I can’t wait to do the next level. Yantra Yoga leaves you feeling relaxed but energized and totally balanced.”

Andrea Brooks. Perseverance Qld, Australia:

“I am a 48 year young woman, married with 2 teenage daughters, and I work as a Mental Health Nurse 4 days per week. My life is busy and I really do enjoy doing this type of yoga, I have been doing Hatha yoga for about 7 years and while I love these postures and the benefit, I find I get such a better feeling or experience after doing Level 1 Yantra yoga. I like the fact that there is a direct lineage from over time and this lineage is known and respected prior to each yoga session. It feels so good to do and you feel so alive after doing it I think because of the fact that ones breathing is importantly embedded into the movement. Whilst I find the

postures challenging, it provides me with motivation to continue. It all just makes so much sense, that it is the way it is.

I have only been practicing a short time but I will be continuing, there is small group of us that now get together weekly and practice together. There is the connection that you make with in Yantra that is also wonderful. There is only good to come from my being involved with Yantra.

I look forward to future opportunities to learn more.

Emily is a wonderful teacher. She is gentle and positive and so enthusiastic and that’s infectious”.



Clarissa Mosley, Lane Cove, Sydney, Australia

“I went from a ball of stress to a bliss ball.

Emily, the 3 hour introduction to Yantra Yoga that I did with you on Saturday has had an amazing effect on me!

I have been managing our major home building project for several months and trying to juggle the needs of my 5 children. I have been living in my head trying to keep a step ahead of the huge learning curve in project management and coping with the guilt of not being able to keep up with the kids appointments, homework and desire for my presence was really taking it’s toll on me. I was feeling stressed, a bit anxious and frequently cranky.

Singapore A Home at last and Rinpoche's Visit

Leong Wai Ying

Ever since I joined the Dzogchen Community of Singapore in its activities, the one thing I would always notice is a 28-inch brown trolley bag. Over time and several Ganapujas I would get to know it well for it would contain all the belongings of the DCS. Plates, wine glasses, cutlery, photographs, copies of texts, candles, bottles of wine would be duly unpacked from it each time and then, carefully repacked after the



Rinpoche writing calligraphy at Namdrolling.

hours each time for our collective practices.

This nomadic lifestyle finally came to an end in February this year when the Gaykils successfully negotiated to lease some office space and in Losar 2012, the year of the Water Dragon, Namdrolling was born.

One of the first pieces of furniture we acquired was a set of shelves upon which the contents of the brown bag would be fully and finally disgorged. We did a Ganapuja and it felt wonderful not to have to be scrambling around looking for a wine opener hiding underneath a box of candles or a lighter which somehow got packed together with the box of forks.

Then in early May, Rinpoche came to Singapore to give teachings on the Invocation of Samantabhadra from an Upadesha Tantra based on a terma teaching

of a terton who together with two other masters, received indications to set out from different directions to travel to and uncover Sikkim when it was considered to be an unknown dimension on Earth at that time.

Rinpoche went on to distinguish the understanding from the Sutra, Vajrayana and Dzogchen teaching styles. In Dzogchen, we focus on the base for all, whether we are in samsara or nirvana and once we know the real nature of impure vision, we can discover Dharmata. As we all have Essence, Nature and Energy, we will experience sensations of the physical body, the clarity of visualisations and the infinite thoughts which arise and disappear. In rigpa, we are being in this knowledge. In marigpa, we are ignorant of this understanding and fall into dualistic vision, accepting and rejecting and giving rise to more and more emotions and actions which go on

infinitely. With the power of the Invocation of Samantabhadra, we can get liberated from these emotions and relax in the primordial state. Then, he gave the tridlung of Ganapuja and transmission of several practices. But he reminded us that the most important practice is that of Guruyoga, integrating our primordial state with that of the Teacher's.

Rinpoche was in tremendous form. He waived away all suggestions of an organic lunch and opted instead for street food at the nearby Newton Circus. The food-mad Singaporean crowd cheered as he chose to eat there 3 days in a row!

And again as this had already been done, he asked Cheh, our SMS teacher to lead a Guruyoga practice. With the A resounding and the Song of the Vajra sung by everyone, the place suddenly seemed filled completely with his presence. Rinpoche then generously spent 3 hours with all of us, playing Tibetan songs from his netbook, encouraging people to dance and sing and distributing BAM shell medallions to all who had a dadar for their practices. Someone produced a Chinese calligraphy brush and ink set and requested Rinpoche to write something appropriate for Namdrolling. This seemed a signal for everyone else in the room to ask



The organizers of the Singapore retreat.

At the end of the retreat, Rinpoche paid a visit to Namdrolling. There, he was served sweet rice flour sesame balls signifying reunion. He ate them all with gusto. When asked to inaugurate the space, he said that usually we do a Ganapuja, but since we had already done several, the next thing to do is to open the main door.

for a piece each for themselves. Mysteriously, hundred of sheets of rice paper appeared from nowhere and Rinpoche obliged us all with great patience and good humour. Everyone was smiling and happy and clutched their gifts like little children. There was a settled feel in the air. It felt like home. ©

Taiwan Longde Retreat in Taiwan

Harry Mao

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu's retreat in Taiwan has come to a successful end. It was the first time that a retreat of solemn Buddhist teaching concluded with a joyful session of Tibetan songs and dances.

During the retreat he asked the participants to have lunch with him in the public space at the retreat venue and they were able to chat with him.

At the beginning of the retreat, a Vajra brother from Singapore had a very serious heart attack and spent time in a "Dream Yoga" state at the Intensive Care Unit for six days, but with Rinpoche's special blessing and his strong faith in Rinpoche, he recovered very well and is now waiting for the right time to go back home to Singapore now.

We sincerely wish that Rinpoche will be able to come to Taiwan every year so that from Taiwan his precious teachings can spread to the whole Chinese world. ©



Rinpoche having lunch with retreatants at the retreat venue.



Photo: Mitsuko

Japan

The Teaching that Disperses the Darkness of the World

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu’s teaching of the “Upadesha on the Total Behavior of Equal Taste” in Tokyo

Tetsu

I am writing this article on the Shinkansen Super Express train from Kyoto to Tokyo. I will be giving a lecture on the interface between neuroscience and Buddhist meditation tomorrow, and then will go to Fukushima to meet some friends, see the actual situation, and do the practice of Green Tara with my beloved Vajra kin.

The cruel earthquake and tsunami that devastated North-eastern Japan and the subsequent severe nuclear power plant accident in Fukushima continue to have a deep impact on Japanese society, people and culture.

It was amidst this semi-turbulent situation that our cherished master Chogyal Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche gave an immeasurably precious and profound Dzogchen teaching from his Longsal terma cycle. More than 180 people gathered from June 1 to 5 to attend the retreat on the “Upadesha on the Total Behavior of Equal Taste” held in the Tokyo Grand Hotel.

He was to give the same teaching last year in Japan, but we needed to cancel the retreat due to the calamity and ensuing chaotic situation. Right after news of our cancellation Rinpoche graciously expressed his strong wish to come and teach the following year. Here in this small space I would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to him and to our Vajra Family all over the world. We have

been much encouraged and internally supported by Rinpoche’s compassion and wisdom and also by the many prayers, words of condolence and generous donations from our gracious Vajra Brothers and Sisters.

Rinpoche started his teaching by giving general explanations of the view, meditation and behavior (Ita ba, sgoms pa and spyod pa) and proceeded with the extraordinary upadesha on the liberation methods for each of the five basic afflictive emotions, which is the specific theme of the “Upadesha on the Total Behavior of Equal Taste”. The principle of Atiyoga consists in the self-liberation of all the phenomena that appear on the surface of the mirror of the nature of mind, including afflictive emotions, thoughts, perceptions etc. As for the self-liberation of afflictive emotions, its very basis is also the state of instant presence or “rigpa”, and once one is familiar with the instant presence, there is no need to work with the different kinds of afflictive emotions one by one. But until one has gained mastery there are also skillful methods we can apply for each of the five afflictive emotions, that is, desire, anger, ignorance, pride and jealousy. As for the behavior or Spyod pa in Dzogchen, there are no specific rules to follow in terms of daily behavior. The behavior of Samantabhadra in Dzogchen means that one should keep sheer presence, observe the situation, and act in a way that fits

the actual condition or circumstances.

Everyone was immensely happy to receive this profound teaching.

Rinpoche’s teaching in the morning was followed by the explanations of thun practices in the afternoon by older students, and

Everything went very well without any hindrance, thanks to the tremendous effort of our Gakyil and efficient volunteer staff members. Throughout his stay, Rinpoche seemed in excellent health and all the moments around him were filled with joy. He played the recorder and harmonica after the ganapuja, and there manifested

ignorance by the ever-expanding rainbow light of primordial wisdom.

We would like to offer our heartfelt gratitude to our beloved master for such a precious teaching and moments of joy in this time of difficulty. His compassion, wisdom and fearless freedom have been and always will be our source of inspiration.

May the lotus feet of the precious master stand firm upon the earth, may his enlightened activities be brought to completion and may our mind never be separated from his wisdom mind! ©



New Gakyil (left to right) Yoko Morito, Takatomo Sasaki, Keigo Yoneda. Photo: Mitsuko

sessions of Yantra Yoga and Vajra Dance in the evening led by our authorized teachers, Yoko Morito and Kyu, respectively. All the participants, especially the many new people at this retreat, were deeply impressed by the great effect of these profound methods in harmonizing and integrating the three aspects of body, energy and mind in the state of bliss.

The presentation of ASIA was also well received with moral support and generous donations that will be used for the Manasarovar School in Nepal, and also to help small children in Fukushima get away from heavily radioactive areas for a time, by enjoying themselves and recovering in the nature surrounding Kyoto.

many singers on the spot. It was awesome to listen to the Tibetan songs of Rabje and Miwa, who also played the danyen, or Tibetan guitar. Our mind was completely blown by the astoundingly powerful cheerleading yelling of Tomo, our popular red Gakyil, whose tradition comes from the Japanese martial arts and singing methods.

At the end of the retreat, Rinpoche emphasized the importance of getting some land of our own. The name of our Community, “Munselling”, means “an island or spiritual place that disperses all the darkness with light”. We do hope to start one such place or a “ling” which could serve as a center to remove the darkness of



For lodging nearby Merigar West and for general information

contact Christina at accommodationservice@gmail.com
phone: +39 0564957542
mobile: +39 3391370739
(English, French, German)

Focus on Yantra Yoga

18

Yantra Yoga and Life

Interview with Kathleen Fekete, Jacqueline Gens and Marilyn McArthur
Tsegyalgar East June 13, 2012

This is an interview with three senior practitioners in the Dzogchen Community, senior in terms of their age. Each one is a little over 60 years with various lengths of time in the Dzogchen Community, but all have entered the practice of Yantra Yoga a little older and have found tremendous benefit in daily life and as practitioners.

Naomi Zeitz for The Mirror: Would you like to tell us a bit about your experience of Yantra Yoga, how it benefits you and why you continue to practice? Some of you have been practicing longer than others and some of you have started relatively recently.

Kathleen: I started Yantra Yoga about 13 years ago and there is no question it has been a benefit in a number of different ways. It is not only beneficial physically, doing stretches and so on, but also recently we have done some weekends on breathing and that was really important because over the years I had done some breathing practice with the Yantra Yoga, but to do it intensively over the weekend like that it became a much deeper experience; the understanding and experience of the breathing became so much deeper and its the kind of experience that does not go away. It may be forgotten during the day a number of times, but it is also remembered, like for example right now, the way that I am sitting is hunched over but then I remember and I remember my spine, and the central channel and the complete breathing. When that happens everything changes. Its not like the water parts for Moses or anything, it is more subtle, but everything does change. I think we would call that presence.

M: Can you talk a little about how Yantra Yoga affects you in your daily life, the physical, emotional and mental aspects?

KF: Yantra Yoga touches on all of those aspects. Emotionally, Yantra tends to quiet and slow down the raging horses of the emotions, because very little else does. Cigarettes, alcohol and sex do not do it; nothing else does it like Yantra. I also think that I am such a beginner and there is so much to learn because it is such a big and vast practice. Yantra also makes a difference when I do other practices and all the practices seem to compliment each other; they are all in the same mandala.

Because of my work I cannot always come to practice, but I always try to come to the Yantra Yoga weekends. We are very fortunate that we have the Gar here and that we have Yantra Yoga instructors here like you and Paula Barry, because the instruction and guidance is so valuable.



“For me one of the most remarkable things is the feeling that we actually are yogins.” J Gens

In my daily life when I run into different tensions, more and more, I remember the breathing and sometimes it even comes naturally, I don’t have to think about it. All of a sudden it is just there.

Jacqueline: About 3 years ago I was doing a personal retreat preparing for the 2nd level Santi Maha Sangha exam and on this retreat I came across a footnote about parlung and I began asking myself did I really know what parlung meant. In my SMS base exam my first question was about parlung which I answered perfectly from the book, and I remember just before going into the exam I had checked what parlung meant. So I knew that parlung would be important to me and I had to ask myself did I really know what it meant. I did not really other than intellectually.

I also assessed that I was not developing as much as I would have liked, and I have always been dedicated to the teachings since a young age, but I felt my development was completely lacking. I had an epiphinous moment and decided that the way to correct this was to move to Conway and study Yantra Yoga. Many years when I first entered the lineage, I dreamed Rinpoche told me to study Yantra Yoga and I did not follow at that time, because I did one session of Yantra at one retreat and it was uncomfortable. I have always been kind of overweight and I am kind of mind person, not a body person.

Now I am in my 60’s and it is a very different situation. I need to pay attention to my body so that is my current challenge. Whenever there is a challenge is generally ones realization, I mean ones worldly or mundane realization, and its nice to connect ones challenges with ones potentialities.

About six months after living here I began to study breathing and some simple Yantra Yoga, the Breathe video was about to be released, and it was a great entree for me to enter into Yantra because Yantra can be difficult if you go fully into the movements. For me the breathing was a very good entree and by my second session of breathing and some simple movement I had quit smoking – I was still secretly smoking until then. I had quit over the years and understand the addiction very well, it is very strong. I literally, over night, after my second session, stopped smoking and I have never desired a cigarette again. It was like a kind of a blessing. Also my capacity for breathing has increased and improved and due to the years of smoking my breath

was shallow, there has been a huge improvement there.

I have to say that even though breathe is a ‘public’ practice, it is connected to the Yantra Yoga lineage and it helps with the practice of pranayamas and kumbhaka and with the awareness and presence of the breath and control of the prana. Basically these exercises of the complete breathing are giving us that elementary place from which we can proceed and that is why I think it is so brilliant and important.

I would also like to say that I think I would like to see more emphasis on Yantra Yoga, like Steve Landsberg did in the Santi Maha Sangha weekend, because it is part of the Base studies and I kind of ignored it, I kept thinking if ever I had an exam question I would reply “I don’t do Yantra Yoga, I don’t know”, and I really feel that was my limitation, and I really think younger practitioners should get into Yantra, as it contains the base for future practices.

M: Do you feel the breathing helps with the overall practice of Yantra? For example, if we do a course and in the beginning we focus on the complete breathing, does that help to enter the movements and the body of Yantra Yoga?

K, J and M: Absolutely!

J: So that is one part of Yantra but the most important thing for me is that even though I had studied Santi Maha Sangha, the Base and First and Second Levels, and now the Third Level, I was lacking in a kind of understanding and with Yantra Yoga I had some experiences of clarity as to what it is all about. Somehow all the practices came together for me. Yantra, for me, is kind of a preliminary basic practice and it accomplishes many things, but the fact that it accomplishes the calm state – I have always had a problem with shine, it always felt like the 10,000 horses marching through my mind, and for years I tried to accomplish it unsuccessfully.

To discover the calm state through Yantra is quite extraordinary. Yantra has helped me quite a bit in terms of furthering my development as a practitioner and I feel that being part of this lineage through Yantra one has a deep sense of the antiquity of our lineage and that thousands of previous practitioners, fat and thin, poor and rich, who have all labored to accomplish working with breath and prana. That is something very precious. Also just to understand prana; now I feel like I can be sitting and waiting at a stop light and if I apply a

kind of a gentle open hold I can feel the prana settling and it is really quite satisfying.

M: Do you want to say something about your recent health issue and how Yantra affects that?

JG: Yes well after have years of not taking care of my health, I have diabetes type 2 and I am overweight, and after a session of Yantra whenever I take my blood sugar it is normal. So Yantra is something I should do every day, and I joke that I am doomed to the discomfort of doing it every day, but once I do it I feel fantastic!

For me one of the most remarkable things is the feeling that we actually are yogins, as opposed to Westerners superficially practicing without real understanding. Somehow the teachings became more real for me through Yantra Yoga, that it is the real thing, that I am really working towards my realization with my Vajra brothers and sisters and we are all here to help each other and that is an enormous benefit.

M: So Marilyn do you want to add your experience?

Marilyn: I was introduced to Yantra Yoga about 3 years ago very shortly after being introduced to the Dzogchen Teachings of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu. I was amazed and very relieved to at last find integrated practices. I had been practicing in one way or another for over 20 years in the various places I lived. The way Americans shop around, I had tried various traditions and had sat with various sanghas over the years, on the one hand, and had gone to various yoga classes on the other hand.

I always felt a kind of shallowness and did not feel really part of them, and particularly in regards to the yoga which can be very shallow; there are very real and deep Indian traditions that I was not getting introduced to and not to mention the more new fangled American ones.

But with the Dzogchen Teachings I was introduced to integrated practices where I had the sense of a whole, including my own real nature, a whole, and in the other experiences there was no way to get into things being integrated. I am very fortunate to live by the Gar, I just happened to, it is so amazing. Every little piece is like another little part of a whole with so many benefits for myself.

For example, with the yoga, I have balance issues, and in all the other systems of yoga that I did every one of them emphasized the mountain pose, which I will probably always find difficult to do. I was a failure from the git go and permanently in all the other yogas that I tried, and not so with Yantra Yoga, where I make effort with the standing poses that are difficult for me, but there is much more that happens sitting down, and for me in Yantra Yoga I was able to achieve a life long goal of learning how to sit cross legged, and not to mention squat...I am so grateful to have these kinds of experiences and I am learning through

Yantra Yoga together with my Vajra brothers and sisters.

Regarding the physical health benefits, shortly after I began coming and discovered that with some effort I would be able to sit cross legged, I was not deformed, I had muscles, bones and tendons like everyone else, but that had been trained all my life in one direction and that gently I could learn something new. And the benefit to my balance issues and my gait, my walking, to have open hips and that gait straight ahead is inestimable. It is huge, it has to do with being able to stand, I could not ever stand comfortably, and to be able to breathe and to settle in any kind of way when I am on 2 feet.

The complete breathing exercises that you teach before we go into the Yantra, the how to breathe, helps to slow us down, past the thinking mind’s resistance, to slow down that far and that much, yet we are very comfortably on our backs and it is active enough because you are guiding. I have very clear memories of being agitated in the past when being taught about breath, and that the advice was very pat, oh yes, breathe in and out, and that experience stuck in me. The breathing really helps people to overcome their obstacles and helps to slow us down.

JG: I think what is so brilliant about the emphasis on breathing in the beginning, is that it starts out attuning you that it is not about the movements, it is about coordinating the breath and the different holds. That is a really subtle thing, because with yoga you see people in their yoga classes and their poses and you think it is about the external movements and being able to accomplish them, but its not, it is about understanding the holds. It is so simple but illusive, but by emphasizing the breathing, it does not matter if I cannot get my chubby thighs over or get into that position exactly right but the emphasis for me is not on the perfection of the positions but really understanding the holds and experiencing the holds; sometimes with repeated practice you do get into the positions and that is always kind of a magical experience.

MM: The breathing helps us integrate and therefore helps with mundane activities and to move better through the world with more presence. We are very “dis-integrated” in this world.

KF: What has helped me to work with this thing called prana or breath, is presence, because when we are directed to inhale and let the prana drop, my mind doesn’t really do that, so thinking about it is not enough, there is a kind of presence. Without the presence it becomes mechanical, and that is fine, the difference between doing mechanical movements and doing something with presence and noticing that is part of what happens with the practice of Yantra Yoga. That has been very significant for me.

©

Experience of Yantra Yoga in Sicily

Ester Saitta

My name is Esther and I am a therapist who works with the Mazières method and foot reflexology. Over the last 35 years I have lived in contact with people and their pain, until I had to take care of my own. After years of watching my current Yantra Yoga teacher, Tiziana Gottardi, doing harmonious movements in the fields of Monte Labbro, a place



Yantra Yoga Course with Tiziana Gottardi in Sicily. Tiziana received her First Level Diploma from Chögyal Namkhai Norbu in 2005 and the Second Level Diploma from Chögyal Namkhai Norbu in 2010. She has been a student of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu since 1977.

Yantra Yoga in the UK

John Renshaw

John Renshaw received his First Level Diploma in 2002 and his Second Level Diploma from Chögyal Namkhai Norbu in 2008. He has been a student of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu since 1979.

I first met Rinpoche in London in 1979 and immediately I became interested in learning Yantra Yoga. However it wasn't until 1983 in Merigar when Rinpoche gave a complete translation of the text on Yantra Yoga that I took detailed notes and drawings that helped me deepen my understanding of his profound teachings.

In 1987 Rinpoche was teaching at Rigpa and suggested that anyone wanting to learn Yantra Yoga should talk to John so I started teaching after that. Since then I have taught continuously at different levels; introductory weekends for beginners, intermediate, as well as on going weekly classes. This was not always straight forward as twenty-six years ago we did not have an organised system of teacher training and the Yantra text was not finished. Apart from Rinpoche, who was not physically instructing at this time, there were no 'expert' teachers to show how to do Yantra per-



Beginner's Weekend with John Renshaw February 2012 London.

fectly so we were all on a learning curve until we had Laura, Fabio and the teacher training program.

Teaching beginners is quite different to teaching on-going weekly classes for a long period of time. In the latter you have to be inventive and creative to keep students interested motivated and safely challenged. In on-going classes we can experience how students after some months display a different capacity and the teacher ideally should address each individual's needs. Differences in pupils capacity come to light with some students staying at the beginners level for months, others pick it up very quickly so I have to meet their needs whilst keeping in mind the primary and secondary objectives.

Over the years I have tried different ways of teaching beginners

and I have found that beginner's key tension or obstacle is mostly about their mind being too dominant and their difficulty getting into their body and allowing the movements to lead the breathing. I have learnt over the years the best way to deal with this key obstacle is to firstly introduce precisely the details of how to do a particular movement with breathing and to practice this a few times. Then I ask them to repeat the movement without any verbal cues; while they do this I suggest they feel present in the body allowing the mechanics of the movements to influence the breathing. I find there is a distinct difference in learning a movement and the effect of it; one being body-led and the other being mind-led. Through doing new movements with breathing

that I love like my Sicilian sea, I met this practice. It has been an amazing experience. Through the Eight Movements I have been able to become aware of a very fine and deep work on the muscles, ligaments, and joints. Having also studied acupuncture, I have observed that seemingly simple gestures, in my opinion, have stimulated the flow of the 'energetic' channels, which were obviously known thousands of years ago in Tibet.

My breathing and my contact with it have greatly improved. As an added observation, when I follow the sequence in the morning, during the day that touch of melancholy, that perhaps depends on

the sense of time passing, is now less pungent and often absent.

In Sicily we have done three courses, and although we are sure that the path is much longer, most of us have received benefits such as a good mood and greater clarity of thought in everyday decisions, more regular sleep, more energy, soreness in the muscles and joints was milder. In one particular case the frequency of episodes of premature ventricular contraction that had caused concern for one of our friends decreased.

Thank you to those who have taught us with love, patience and rigour. ©

the brain develops new neural pathways and this becomes part of memory and experience. This way allows us to train the brain via the body.

These years of teaching have given me a wealth of experience and the opportunity to learn from my students about their experiences and problems relating to the body and energy. If I can't offer adequate advice or if I am not able to understand their difficulties then I see this as a gap in my knowledge and a challenge to overcome. The 23 years I've been practising Traditional Chinese medicine and the little Tibetan and Ayurvedic medicine I've studied since have become very useful. So I've come to appreciate the many similarities between Chinese, Tibetan and Ayurvedic medicine and found this extremely useful as a Yoga teacher. Particularly, it has helped me gain understanding of Qi or Prana, and how we can change, develop or influence it with Yantra Yoga.

Many students I have taught in the UK are mature students; they mostly come within the Community or have an interest in Buddhism. They are enthusiastic but it is very common with this population to be not so physically fit and may also bring to the mat all kinds of physical and energetic problems. For these people Yantra may seem a difficult system and even after adapting and modifying it may still remain

challenging. Initially for this group I think the practice should be more individually focused and therapeutic, utilizing the best appropriate methods to prepare the body for Yantra.

Students who are not so challenged with Yantra Yoga can quickly develop the body and energy and with transmission they can work with experiences and the mind. Only then we can understand and witness the full benefit and potential of Yantra Yoga.

There is growing mainstream interest in yoga, breathing practices and meditation, especially if it's evidence-based and not limited by tight links to religious organisations. I have been collaborating with the SSI and other Yantra teachers to develop an open level Yantra Yoga training that may be more accessible for the general population.

Currently I'm doing a one-year professional training in Yoga Therapy which focuses on the mind and emotions; particularly depression, anxiety and stress. The training is evidenced based and I was particularly impressed about the amount of research available on yoga, pranayama and neuroscience. This experience has convinced me even more about what our Community of Yantra Yoga practitioners can contribute to the field of research on body, mind and energy approaches to health and wellbeing. ©

Teaching Yantra Yoga in Rome

Sergio Quaranta

Sergio Quaranta met Chögyal Namkhai Norbu in 1980 in Rome, Italy. In the summer of 1981 he went to California to follow his first Dzogchen retreat and received also Yantra Yoga, which he has practiced ever since. Soon after he started to lead small practice groups in Rome and received his first level diploma in 2005 in Tashigar Norte. He is currently teaching in Zhenphenling, the Dzogchen Community ling in Rome, and preparing for second level.



word of mouth: friends, friends of friends, acquaintances and they like. They had an idea of what they were going to approach, and they knew of Rinpoche, at least by fame. In other words they had a good disposition towards Yan-

tra and this made our work as teachers somehow easier.

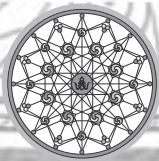
In the last few years, things have changed quite a bit. Now Yantra is more known in the yoga world. We have participated in several festivals, forums, meet-

ings, and public demonstrations. We have the Italian translation of the book, a professional set of DVDs, articles have appeared in famous yoga magazines, we have blogs, face book pages, web sites, and our main teachers and many others are doing a wonderful job around the world. More people are interested now and come to our courses. This is very nice, it is very rewarding and it is also quite a challenge for the teachers. People are usually genuinely interested; they are not just curious, they really search for something, so I feel I have to try my best to give an answer, communicate the sense and the connection of Yantra with the spiritual Teachings, with the lineage, and the main special characteristics of Yantra.

Many newcomers understand and show a true interest. But Yantra is not so easy to apply. Some have never approached any other form of yoga, or even any other physical activity. In few cases they are not so young and flexible and might suffer from some form of impediment in their knees, back or elsewhere.

Those who "survive" the first weeks or months become usually very regular and want to know more about Dzogchen and our Master. Eventually many come to Merigar to meet Rinpoche or Khyentse. This is very good.

For those who abandon I feel kind of sorry, and I hope I could have helped more to overcome or cope with their difficulties. ©



Merigar Under the Stars

Merigar West – Rises to the Challenge

The Merigar West team for the Merigar Under The Stars competition met for four days in late April to work on costumes and choreography. Another meeting in the middle of June will complete the choreography. The countries participating actively are: Italy, France, Germany, Switzerland, Finland and England. For the costumes we have representatives from Germany, France and Italy who are working on the final version of the costumes to be presented at the next meeting at Merigar.



Merigar East – Preparing the Garuda Dance

We would like to invite you to participate in the first Merigar East dance brainstorming weekend June 29–July 1 in Prague. If you're from: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Cyprus, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Israel, Lithuania, Republic of Macedonia, Moldavia, Montenegro, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Turkey you're kindly welcome. Bring your artistic, dance, musical and other connected talents, to the joint activity. We are particularly looking for good dancers and choreographers in general. Please come and share the beauty of dance. We are also looking for donors who will help to cover some of the costs of the dance organisation, mainly the



travel costs for participants coming from a great distance to the meeting. You can donate here:



Account number: 1021034511
IBAN: CZ825500000001021034511
Account: DZOGCHEN O.S.
SWIFT: RZBCCZPP
Address of the Bank:
Bělohorská 71, Praha 6
Postal code: 169 00

Meanwhile, in each country a choreographer is working with dancers to train them in what has already been created and to find other ideas for choreography. It has been challenging to start from very different personal ideas, backgrounds and experiences, and work together to shape a dance that is harmonious, enjoyable and involves everyone! During the next workshop June 15 to 17 at Merigar we hope to reach a final definition of the dance so that the choreographers can then teach it in their own countries and thus create different groups of dancers, from which we can create the final team. At the moment we are looking for

people who can help to sew costumes and for the organization of the evening.

Artistic director:
Adriana Dal Borgo
Project manager:
Luna Lattarulo
MWunderthestars@dzogchen.it

The position of the main coordinator, or artistic director of ME dance is open and can be shared.
It will be a great joy if you come and manifest your abilities.
Accommodation (for free) will be at Prague's Kunkyab Ling, Opletalova 35, right in front of main railway station. Space is limited so reserve in advance by sending an e-mail to: **thebestdanceever@gmail.com**
In response you'll receive a basic Idea of the Merigar East dance!
You'll be asked to interpret, change, or re-create it freely.
We will start with a Ganapuja on Friday June 29 at 18:30.
Come and bring your capacity of cooperation. ©

Coordinator: Marek Yaksa
thebestdanceever@gmail.com



This is under the guidance of the Czech Yellow gakyil, for questions contact him at: **yellow@dzogchen.cz**
This competition named Merigar Under Stars is about developing our co-operation, the first and most important capacity of a Dzogchen practitioner.



Kunsangar South – The Dancers Meet

On June 1 at Kunsangar South, we gathered to get ready for the “Merigar Under the Stars” competition, which is going to take place at Merigar West this autumn. We were there to dance, create and collaborate. So far, it is not clear that this was the most difficult for us. We all, 10 dancers, are so different! Everyone has his or her own favourite music, rhythm and style. First, we even thought that it would an impossible task - to unite everything into one idea. Perhaps we were helped by His Majesty Humour!
We cannot say that we came up the concept of a precise performance but we definitely got together a team of people full of determination to work and win!

The reality was more complicated than we might have expected. After all, we always love to complicate things and take this job our Teacher gave us very seriously. In the near future, we're planning to have another meeting and work out the final performance.
During the meeting many interesting things happened: we studied the movements by ourselves and helped each other, we caught the rhythm and mood of the music, we also rubbed our socks into holes, dancing in the gonpa. If we'd had a parquet floor in the gonpa, we'd have polished it to a brilliant shine! ©

Coordinator: Nadya Gurenko
nkpinchuk@mail.ru
Kunsangar South contact:
kunsangar.assistant@gmail.com

Kunsangar North – Brainstorming for the Dance

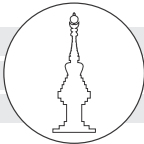
By Elena Fokina and Dmitry Reut (Moscow)

It is the first brainstorming of the Kunsangar North MWunderthestars team. We are in the gonpa at Richenling (Moscow). There are 12 of us: designers and choreographers and dancers from four Lings today. The atmosphere is very friendly and creative. We discussed the main concept of the dance and the shape of the costumes. Kunsangar North base colours are green + yellow.
We will continue our meeting for three days. Then the participants from Izhevsk, St. Petersburg and Ryazan will go home.
It was not easy to gather people from different regions! First, it was not clear which Lings belong to Kunsangar North and which ones to Kunsangar South. How to divide our ex-USSR into two parts? So we decided... not to divide it! It means everyone could choose the team to participate in. And it did not matter which city this person comes from. The result was: Kunsangar South has people from Ukrainian areas and Kunsangar South from four Russian cities. ©

Coordinator: Maria Lapina,
mla78043@gmail.com
Coordinator contact (for English):
Elena Fokina, **felen@bk.ru**



MerigarWest



Merigar West

Arcidosso 58031	phone: 39 0564 966837	office@dzogchen.it
GR Italy	fax: 39 0564 968110	www.dzogchen.it

Merigar West Update

Merigar West has several Lings, 17 of them. It is very important that the relationship between the Gar and the Lings is both harmonious and collaborative.

Over the years the Lings have become more and more numerous and increasingly active and are an important landmark in the daily life of many people. Many Lings and Gakyils are in towns and cities where they are valuable in that they give people the possibility to practice with others within a rhythm of ordinary life and to do basic courses of Yantra Yoga, Vajra Dance, Santi Maha Sangha, etc. Now that the Lings have become more active, attendance at courses at Merigar has changed.

Because of this change, this summer we want to try to foster this new relationship that people have with Merigar, by offering courses and practices that are difficult to find space for in the city, because people need a break from ordinary life, stay in a quiet place, and even better if it has been ‘empowered’ like Merigar has been.

In our calendar of events we have several retreats of intensive practice,



Photo: H. Schindler

some “self-managed” by practitioners, others led by experienced practitioners and some in depth courses.

To mention a few: a Mandarava retreat of explanation and practice with its Tsalung led by Nina Robinson and Tiziana Gottardi, a Tara retreat with Costantino Albini, a Shine and Lhagthong retreat with Fabio Risolo.

But there will also be practice retreats coordinated by the participants themselves, such as the Dance of the Vajra and the purification practice of the Six Lokas alternated with the Dance of the Six Spaces.

In addition there will be the in depth courses for which it is always difficult to find a sufficient number of people in the city, such as the in depth course of the Dance of the Song of the Vajra with Rita Renzi and a very advanced level of Yantra Yoga with Laura Evangelisti.

These activities are aimed at people of the Community.

At the same time we are trying to encourage activities open to a public “outside” the Community. We have a project agreement with the Town Council of Arcidosso, a sort of package holiday in which Arcidosso with its culturally significant places and cuisine

is promoted, and visitors are also made aware of the activities of the Dzogchen Community by visiting its complex (the Gonpa, Stupa, Library) and by having a kind of trial lesson of Vajra Dance and Yantra Yoga.

A project which is very important for us is the yoga holidays, a holiday of meditation and yoga from the most ancient Tibetan traditions, which will help to relax the body and mind and restore the natural condition of energy. An opportunity for adults and children to experience new ways of coping with everyday stress and enhancing wellbeing. We hope that this type of holiday will attract families, mothers or fathers and their children, both from the Community and outside.

In the future this and similar activities may be important for Merigar which, we should remember, should always be full of activities and alive.

Zikhang (the Capannone)

Work at Zikhang has finally been concluded. The room for storing books is ready and during the summer a Tibetologist, Prof. Fabian Sanders, will be working on cataloging them. The new reading room is ready for use, has been

beautifully decorated in Tibetan style by Migmar and his team, there are tables, wifi, a big television, in short, it is a room suitable to accommodate those who need a place to study, to hold classes or meetings of any kind, offering the possibility to connect your computer screen to see slides or to connect with other participants via the web.

The Mandala room has been renovated, the stairs have been removed, there is a new floor and the mandala has been redesigned over the old floor.

Finland

New Gakyil

A new Gakyil in Finland was elected on May 6, 2012, at the annual meeting of the registered association of the Finnish Dzogchen Community, and was confirmed by Rinpoche.

Blue: J-P. (Repe) Reilin
blue@dzogchen.fi
Red: Tiina Hyttiäinen
red@dzogchen.fi
Yellow: Harri Jäälinoja
yellow@dzogchen.fi
Secretary: Päivi Ahonen

Italy

Khyentse Yeshe in Bologna

24–27 May 2012

by Paolo Roberti di Sarsina, Cesare Pilati, Paolo Carta

Finally after long planning that started last January, Khyentse Yeshe was hosted in Bologna, Italy, for a four day program organized by the Charity Association for Person Centred Medicine in collaboration with Desalling Bologna and Hexagon.

The first days were organized to present two public events: the screening of “My Reincarnation” and a public conference.

The evening of 24th May, My Reincarnation was shown at the Odeon Cinema located in Bologna city centre. Almost all the very comfortable seats of one of the best movie houses in Bologna were taken with 250 people attending, many of whom were not members of the Dzogchen Community. Before the screening of the movie, Paolo Roberti



di Sarsina and Cesare Pilati introduced Khyentse Yeshe to the audience. A Bologna newspaper published news about the event and the public conference twice.

On Friday 25th Khyentse Yeshe delivered a public lecture in the wonderful venue of the Main Hall of the Bologna Academy of Fine Arts. All the seats were full and many people attended standing.

Khyentse Yeshe’s public lecture “Educating the Mind: Responsibility and

Personal Evolution” was the ideal continuation of the Lectio Magistralis delivered by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche at the University of Bologna on 10th September 2010, with great success among the public and the press and with international and national endorsements.

The Government of the Emilia-Romagna Region, the Government of the Province of Bologna, the Mayor of Bologna City, the Observatory and Methods for Health of the University of Milano-

Bicocca and the Noopolis Foundation in Rome endorsed Khyentse Yeshe’s public events in Bologna.

From Saturday 26th to Sunday 27th, at the same venue, the Charity and Desalling organised Khyentse Yeshe’s very first workshop in the Italian language “The Nature of Knowledge and How To Create The Perfect Condition for Individual Growth”.

It was a great privilege to pilot closely together, step-by-step, with Khyentse Yeshe such a new (for the Dzogchen Community) cognitive-based teaching context and, consequently, obviously monolingual. It is easy to understand that the organization required all our best efforts.

The Charity Association for Person Centred Medicine

www.medicinacentratasullapersona.org

The Association for Person Centred Medicine is a Registered Charity in Italy founded in Bologna in 2007. Luigi Ottaviani is one of the founding members and Cesare Pilati is the secretary-treasurer.

It aims to promote and protect health through the humanisation and personalisation of medicine. It places the advances and practices of modern medicine in a broader context where the person regains his/her central position both in the diagnostic and therapeutic process. Traditional and Non-Conventional Medical Systems have in common an intrinsically person-centred view of the human being and illness. Their treatments promote innate healing abilities and greater personal responsibility for healthy behaviour. The Charity Association for Person Centred Medicine aims to promote research and implementation of Traditional and Non Conventional Medical Systems into medical education and healthcare practices. It protects, safeguards, promotes, studies, teaches and applies the wealth of knowledge and the culture of both western and oriental anthropological medical systems, respectful of the original integrity and tradition of each paradigm and lineage. ©

MerigarEast



Merigar East

Asociatia Culturala Comunitatea Dzog-Chen

23 August 907005	phone: 0040 746 26 08 61
Constanta	office@dzogchen.ro
Romania	www.dzogchen.ro

Join Merigar East Gakyil!

Throughout the year a number of dedicated people put their time and effort into various tasks required for a Gar to function. Merigar East, one of the younger and still very much developing Gars, is in a need of new candidates to fulfill the role of Gakyil for 2012/2013. We hope that you will be one of them.

Mission:

The Gakyil is realizing Rinpoche’s and Khyentse’s vision in regards to the Gar.

The goals:

- Continue with construction works on the land (such as Stupas, Vajra Dance mandalas) according to the vision of Yeshe Namkhai;
- Run the local office and supervise membership tasks;
- Plan and organize events promoting the aims of the International Dzogchen Community in Romania;
- Keep close contact and collaborate with the Gakyil of Merigar West.

Responsibilities of the Red, Yellow, and Blue Gakyil

- Blue Gakyil:
- Preparing and organizing all activities linked to the spreading of the teach-

- ings, retreats and collective practices in Merigar East and Romania;
- Preparing and supervising all related materials linked to PR activities in the Gar and Romania;
- Collaborating with Shang Shung Institute;

Yellow Gakyil:

- Taking care of the financial and legal administration of Merigar East including membership;
 - Running the office at Merigar East;
- Red Gakyil:
- Supervising the development process at the Gar, as well as maintaining it;
 - Organizing karma yoga and work exchange activities;

Time spend and meetings:

We meet on Skype, once every two weeks. More often if needed. Once every two/three months we travel to ME and meet there in person. The travel expenses are reimbursed for those who can’t pay for their tickets. Depending on the task that needs to be done, we spend time on it accordingly.

Expectations:

Working knowledge of English language, computer literate. Preferably a member of the Community for three years.

Benefits:

Priceless possibility to experience and work directly within the transmission.

Should you be interested, please apply by submitting a short letter with information about you, and your motivation to office@dzogchen.ro The Gakyil election will take place during the summer retreat in August.

Even though the actual election takes place in a while, you could be involved a bit earlier, and gain some experience working alongside the current Gakyil.

Looking forward to receiving your application, Merigar East Gakyil ©

Merigar East

Update on Fundraising for Merigar East Construction Projects

The Merigar East Gonpa is soon going to bloom like the flowers from the surrounding fields. Our dear Geko, Anatolie Carp, is working hard to get everything ready before mid-July when the painting team for the Gonpa arrives. Thanks to the big donation from Rinpoche (from the funds collected during the auction of the Garuda thangka painted by Migmar last year at Merigar West) fund raising for the Gonpa painting project has been completed.



Likewise, the Stupa project, which will be carried out over the next two years, is off to a good start thanks to one big donation. Our biggest fund raising project, the Multifunctional Dormitory, has received only one donation so far, but already one thousandth of the target has been reached! You can find some more information and the designs of the dormitory on our project page.

The situation of the Sang Khang project is not so good: there are no donations so far. This project has the smallest target amount, but a great significance, as the Sang Khangs work as a support for the practice of Sang, important for

improving the conditions at the Gar, so we urgently invite you to participate in this project. Your participation can bear fruits quickly as we intend to complete the project by the end of this summer if we manage to collect the funds.

For more information on our projects, go to www.dzogchen.ro and click “Support M.E. Projects!” in the top right corner.

There is still room for more funds in all projects and lots of merits to be gained in return. Your participation is welcome! ©

Estonia

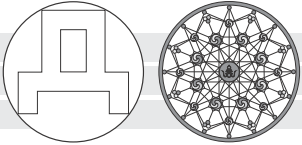
New Ling

Dear Community members!

We are happy to let you know that there was a new Ling born in Estonia today. Rinpoche gave our Ling the name **Tashiling**. The birthday is 11th of June 2012.

With many Tashi Delegs!
Elerin
Yellow gakyil
Tashiling Estonia
www.dzogchen.ee

KunsangarNorth



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

Stupa of Perfect Victory

With the blessings of our precious Master Chögyal Namkhai Norbu and many other teachers who have visited Kunsangar North, a 14 meter high stupa will be built there this year!

The place for this stupa was chosen 5 years ago by Palden Sherab Rinpoche and Tsewang Dongyal Rinpoche; last year Chögyal Namkhai Norbu confirmed that this place is perfect and determined the type of stupa – The Stupa of Perfect Victory.

Precious relics from Buddha Shakya-muni and also from Yeshe Tsogyal, Longchenpa and other great Buddhist masters will be put into this stupa. The relics were given by the head of the

Nyingma school, H.H. Taklung Tsetrul Rinpoche, by the head of the Sakya school, H.H. Sakya Trizin, by H.E. Kyabje Namkha Drimed Rabjam Rinpoche and by other important Teachers.

Besides the Dzogchen Community, there are also 13 different Buddhist sanghas involved in this project, which have regularly conducted their retreats at Kunphenling over the last several years. For us it is an obvious manifestation of their great respect of and trust in our Teachers and our Community.

We have already obtained all necessary permissions from the local authorities. We also have most of the things that are needed to put inside – we only need some more texts and zungs (tightly rolled mantras). In May Karma Puntso Rinpoche arrived and over several

weeks did different rituals, like Damsi Nenpa (suppression of Damsi Demons), and other rituals that are necessary to do before the stupa construction. In June we started the construction, with a strong professional team. You can also have a unique opportunity to help us with building this precious stupa with your donations and offerings! Sarva Mangalam!

Construction Stages:

May–June 2012: stupa project and execution of work permission; visit of Lama Karma Puntsog and necessary rituals, buying missing texts and other relics for filling the stupa in Nepal.

June–July: preparing the place, laying of the foundation, construction starts, ordering the steeple.

October–January: construction ends, finishing and painting the interior, creating exposition of the most valuable relics inside the stupa.

Stupa Team Contacts:

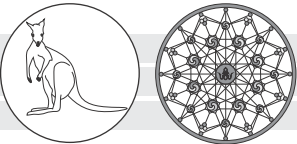
Nikolai Gavrilyuk +7 495 6469928,
6469928@mail.ru
Diana Akopyan +7 926 1656687,
kunzang_dekyi@mail.ru
Julia Golbina +7 916 3730021,
golbina@ya.ru
Group in Facebook www.facebook.com/groups/302357539844324/

Donations:

YandexMoney: 410011402727196
QIWI: 9175204844
WebMoney: 192087926789

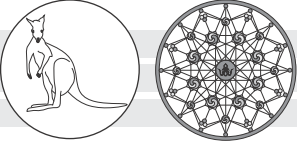


Namgyalgar North



Namgyalgar Dzogchen Community in Australia	206 Glass House-Woodford Rd,	Phone: 07. 5438 7696
	Glasshouse Mountains, Qld., 4518	nnth_geko@dzogchen.org.au
	P.O. Box 307, Glasshouse Mountains, Qld., 4518	

Namgyalgar South



Namgyalgar Dzogchen Community in Australia	PO Box 214 Central Tilba	secretary@dzogchen.org.au
	NSW 2546	www.dzogchen.org.au
	Phone/Fax: 61 02 4473 7668	

Namgyalgar Gakyils North and South

Namgyalgar North Gakyil
Yellow: Maree Ploetz, Lucy Winstanley
Red: (vacancy) Damien Pascoe
Blue: James Bailey, Cosimo Di Maggio
Gekö: Jakub Augustinsky

Namgyalgar South Gakyil
Yellow: Ian Drummond, Matthew Smith
Red: Lisa Kempster, Vanessa Johnstone
Blue: Barbara Robertson, Emily Coleing
Gekö: Naomi Tsubaki

Namgyalgar Gakyil
(representatives from NN & NS Gakyil's)
Yellow: Ian Drummond (Treasurer from 1st July) + Maree Ploetz (Vice President)
Red: Lisa Kempster (& NN Red vacancy)
Blue: Barbara Robertson (President) + Cosimo Di Maggio

Melbourne

Samyasling

The Dzogchen Community in Melbourne are most pleased to announce the official naming of a Ling in Melbourne, Victoria, Australia by our Master Chögyal Namkhai Norbu!

Rinpoche named Samyasling on Friday 11th May, 2012.

May we all rejoice in this most fortunate of circumstances!

Kindest regards,
Samyasling Gakyil
Quinn Stokes – yellow
Sam Pearson – blue
Bruno Irmici – red
Oceania Reile – red
melbourne@dzogchen.org.au

New Zealand

New Gakyil

Blue: Paora Te Oti Takarangi Joseph & Kattia Wong
Red: Jonathan Schaeffer
Yellow: Oni McKinstry
NZ Gakyil info@dzogchen.org.nz



J. Crow's®
Mulling Spice Folk Medicine
Tibetan Medicine
SpicedCider.com
fax or phone: 1 800 878 1965 603 878 1965
jcrow@jcrow.mv.com

TashigarNorte



Tashigar North/Finca Tashigar	Prolongación de la Calle Bolívar	Tel: 0058 0295 2580332
	Valle de Pedro González	secretary@tashigarnorte.org
	Isla de Margarita	www.tashigarnorte.org

Tashigar North Development Projects

Last December in a meeting with the Gakyil, Rinpoche approved the principle of developing a project that involves working with the children of Margarita’s schools. The project has two aspects: “Integral well-being activities” and “Permaculture”.

Integral well-being activities are linked with some yoga and meditation workshops.

Permaculture aspect is directly linked with Tashigar Norte’s focus on “Agro tourism”, according to the project obtained by Maria Angelica Gomez. In order to create a base on that particular aspect, Saviana Parodi gave us an introductory course last March. After that we had some pilot experiences with Pedro Gonzalez schools kids and finally one month ago we started to receive kids from the various schools in the island on a paid basis. Two visits a week are currently offered and all the weeks are full until midJuly (end of classes).

In this first stage our offer addressed to the island schools, is a guided visit



called “Interactive visit” in which we apply 4 workshops with the kids: Playing with energy, Ecological Path, The Elements and Yoga. “Playing with energy” is based on some games that familiarize kids with the energy level through enjoyment. “Ecological Path” is a walk around the plantation of the Gar, starting with the lower part where we have the fruits and finishing behind the Gonpa where we have an ornamental garden. Those plantations where cultivated under Permaculture Principles by Alix and Saviana since 2005. “The Ele-

ments” is a workshop in which we try to communicate some aspects on how the elements work, their particularities and main characteristics. We finish this section with a planting practice close to our nursery. In the yoga workshop we teach Kumar Kumari (when Dina is available here) or other kind of yoga according to their capacity and age.

A very important thing is that we are creating a lot of connections with Margarita’s inhabitants through their children, but also with the Teachings through a ñondrol inside the drinks we

offer to the kids and through a rapid visit to the Gonpa and its Tibetan art (Vajrapani Korlo Thadrol).

The project is based on collaboration: Community people work as facilitators doing karmayoga, generating a direct income for the Gar to support our finances. We expect to cover 30 % of the basic yearly budget. All visits days start with a meeting of the whole TashiPark team and a thun practice with guard-

ians, just to be sure we never forget why we are involved in that activity.

All the positive fruits of this project come from the blessing of our masters Chögyal Namkhai Norbu and Khyentse Yeshe Namkhai. To them our infinite gratitude to let us work together and discover the amazing feeling of collaboration. Do Evolution! ©

Tashipark Team



First Meeting on Tibetan Culture held in Mérida, Venezuela

(April 23 through 28, 2012)

by Mayda Hočevár

With the institutional and financial support of the Research Center of African and Asian Studies, the Office of Scientific Exchange and the Office of Cultural Affairs of the University of Los Andes, the Dzogchen Community organized the First Meeting on Tibetan Culture in Mérida, Venezuela, which was the first University-sponsored event of its kind in the country. The event started with the opening of a Tibetan thanka exhibition in Casa Bosset (a governmental art institution having its seat in a colonial house); Marialejandra Campos explained technical, philosophical and religious aspects of the paintings; a documentary film on the making of thankas was shown; and a handmade book with poems by Elías Capriles and illustrations of Tibetan art was presented. Thanks to Tashigar North, Tibetan handicrafts, drums, bells, damarus, silk shawls, malas, incense and books were exhibited and sold. Even though the event’s inauguration coincided with heavy rains that caused the Albarregas – one of the main rivers going through Mérida – to overflow for the first time in 60 years, disrupting traffic and bringing the city to a halt, lots of people from all ages attended, enthusiastically looking at the thankas (a type of art that most had never seen before in this lifetime) and taking pictures of themselves with those traditional works of art. Professor H. Lucena, head of the University’s Study Center on Africa and Asia, gave a speech introducing the event and detailing the program to the audience.

During the week I offered a demonstration of Yantra Yoga, and Carmen Rivas led a Vajra Dance exhibition. She led new and old practitioners from Mérida and Tashigar North through the steps of the Dance of the Six Spaces of Samantabhadra at the Cesar Rengifo Theater in downtown Merida, and ex-



plained the dance to the many people who attended – with 50 of them expressing an interest in learning it.

Also at the Cesar Rengifo Theater the film My Reincarnation was shown; tickets rapidly sold out, and at the end the bulk of the audience clapped enthusiastically – a fantastically great success!

Five conferences took place in four days – four at the Faculty of Humanities and Education, and one at the School of Music, Faculty of Arts: Elías Capriles discoursed on Tibetan Buddhism and Dzogchen and Steven Landsberg on the Importance of Tibetan Culture Today; Rowena Hill offered an account of her impressions during her two trips to Tibet; Alejandro Pulido, director of the

Music Department, Faculty of Arts, explained Tibetan Religious Music; and finally postgraduate student Azania Lucena offered an Introduction to Tibetan Language. The five conferences were attended by a big number of people, arousing great interest on Tibetan Culture and History, as well as on Buddhist Studies.

A masterful raga/percussion concert with Steve Landsberg at the sitar and Sergio Gallardo at the drums closed the program, marking the end of an event that by far surpassed our expectations as to the number of participants and

interest aroused. Two local newspaper articles covered the event in detail, and the University’s TV station filmed and broadcasted a detailed report, which it aired several times and is currently posted at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fxIXedi1FOs> (other videos of the event soon at: <http://www.humana.ula.ve/ceaa/videos/index.php>).

Thanks so much to Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, our inspiration, and to the people and institutions who participated and collaborated to make this event come true. ©



New Look Website

The Mirror staff is very happy to announce the launch of our new website at **melong.com**. The website has a fresh clean look, is easier to read and offers Chögyal Namkhai Norbu’s full program as well as regular news updates from the International DC on the homepage (using a coloured vertical sliding tab) while still offering all the services of the previous website, such as access to the complete archive, subscription to online and paper issues through paypal and donations. We hope that you will find melong.com more user friendly and simpler to navigate. Remember to check our website for the latest news update from the worldwide DC!

Be our Correspondent

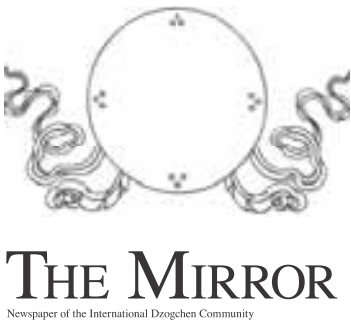
One of the innovations of the website is that it will now be open to the participation of ‘correspondents’ from different parts of the Dzogchen Community who will be able to post their own news, programmes and reports. If you are a Gakyil member or working in close contact with your local Gakyil and would like to become our ‘correspondent’, please write to **liz@melong.com** or **mirror@tsegyalgar.org** in order to give you access and simple directions on how to put up your news.

Advertise Online or in Print

We offer very reasonable prices for advertising in our online paper, the printed version or both. You can see all the details in our “Advertising” section at the bottom of our homepage. Let people know about your service or product and help to support our Community newspaper at the same time!

Thank you for your continued support of The Mirror!

Best wishes,
The Mirror Staff
www.melong.com



THE MIRROR
Newspaper of the International Dzogchen Community



Courses

Merigar West



Workshop on Public Speaking

By Rahul Ballarin

We all know how important it is to be as clear and precise as possible when we talk about the Dzogchen Community, especially in front of people who do not know the teaching. At the same time we must try to be faithful to what we have the good fortune to know and pass on the information clearly without confusing it with our opinions about it. This aspect has even more importance when we have to speak about the Community in front of a wider audience and on official occasions. In these cases we are the representatives of the Community and the words we speak will be associated with all those who are part of it.

On the advice of our precious master, Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, who pointed out the need to train people who know how to manage in these type of situations, on June 2–3 we organized

the first Workshop on Public Speaking at Merigar West. The course was a great success with the participants and was held in the form of Karma Yoga by Andrea Calbucci. Andrea is a practitioner at West Merigar who usually works as a Private Coach with politicians, artists and people with official roles in several different countries of the world. It was a pleasure to work with him and test the capabilities of each of us in dealing with these situations.

We all had the opportunity to understand the importance of studying in order to master as much as possible the topic we will be presenting. Think of the speech, define the idea of the message clearly, the words and modify them according to the location and objective. We understood what it means to use the body during a speech, how to direct the voice and interact with the public to make the message more effective. All this took place in a wonderful atmosphere of collaboration between all participants, and we all look forward to working more

in depth on these themes together with Andrea or other specialists in the future. Since the subject was very complex, it was essential that all participants spoke the same language, so for this first “experiment” only a few representatives of the Italian Lings and Vajra Dance and Yantra Yoga teachers were invited. In the future we would like every European Ling to have at least one representative prepared to present the Community to the outside.

As I said the participants responded very favourably to the course and even more people had asked to take part in this Workshop. Unfortunately for this kind of work we could not be more than 20 people but we hope to continue this group and possibly create another to fulfill Rinpoche’s advice and present the Community at all times and in a way that may make our Teacher as happy as possible with what we are doing. ©



Vajra Dance Teachers Training with Prima Mai April 13–18, 2012.

Photo: H. Schindler

France >> Karmaling



Ku Nye course at Karmaling with Aldo Oneto, May 21–28.

France >> Dejamling



Yantra Yoga course with Zhenya Rud, May 2012, at Dejamling.

France, Paris



Course on Primordial Knowledge with Jim Valby in Paris 2012.

Germany



Song of the Vajra part 1 with Lenka Kroh under supervision by Prima Mai at Dargyaling, Cologne April, 2012. Photo: S. Arslan



Song of the Vajra part 2 with Lenka Kroh and Elisha Koppensteiner under supervision by Prima Mai at Höfen May 1–6, 2012. Photo: D. Payne

Italy



Vajra Dance course with Rita Renzi at Namdeling, Naples.

Italy

Rome Yoga Festival, fifth edition

by Sergio Quaranta

We had decided not to participate in the Rome Yoga Festival this time. After four years in which we set up our table, took turns sitting and giving information to the people that stopped by for long hours for the three days of the festival, it seemed a bit much to do, after a very intense year of activities at Zhenphenling. Then the organizers contacted us. They seemed to be very interested in

having Yantra Yoga. They had probably seen the different articles and interviews published in the last year and were keen on having our Master, or at least one of our senior teachers. We considered their offer, and decided we would accept if they gave us a significant space. We proposed a program based on the presentation performed for the Thirtieth Anniversary of Merigar. We would show both the Vajra Dance and Yantra Yoga, then offer a class led by Laura Evengelisti. Our program was accepted, so we were

given space in the huge “sala1”, among the “special events”. Two hours during which Daniela welcomed the people and explained what these two practices given by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu are. Then Adriana said a few more words about the Dance of the Six Lokas, after which the Dance itself was shown. People watched in silence, and clapped at the end. While the dancers left the mandala, the yogis entered and placed their mats in formation. Francesco Paolo introduced Laura and Yantra briefly, then the yantra demon-

stration started: condensed, precise, and commented by Francesco Paolo and by Laura herself in the most significant points. About sixty people watched; twenty of them stayed on for the paid lesson (the demonstration was free). Considering that in the same moment Italy was playing its opening game at the European Football Championship versus Spain, it was a good result! On the occasion Laura and Tiziana were also able to have a meeting with the director of Yoga Journal in Italy, and with the directress of the Festival, very

interesting contacts for future collaboration and the spreading of Yantra Yoga. Thank you to the Gakyil and the Dzogchen Community in Rome, to the large contingent of Namdeling and that of Merigar, and to our beloved Rinpoche!

Italy



Participants in the in-depth course of the Dances of the Six Spaces and the Three Vajras (irregular form) with Adriana Dal Borgo at Gyamtsholing, Venice, May 19–20. Two very intense days, during which there was also a time of particular contemplation when, at the end of Gomadevi short Tun, after having danced the Song of the Vajra, we recited the invocation to Samanthabhadra together: it was a day of eclipse and the earth had just been shaken by the earthquake. A warm thank you to everyone present, especially to our talented and kind teacher.

By Chiara Carraro

Spain



Chöd Retreat with Costantino Albini in Balitx d’Avall June, 2012.

Sweden



The Vajra Dance of the Six Spaces of Samantabhadra led by Alar Kukk (authorized Vajra Dance teacher since 2011) held in Sweden for the first time, May 18–20 at the Studiefamjandets Dansstudio, Portalgatan 2 Uppsala. Organized by the Dzogchen Community group in Sweden and Ayse Telatar.

UK



Clarity through rain clouds. Longsal SalTong retreat at Kunselling with Elio Guarisco

Kunselling, set high in the rolling Welsh hills, was the venue for a few days of teaching and prac-

tice with Elio Guarisco. Beginning the retreat, displaying to us that we are like pots containing poison and with broken bases, Elio proceeded, with his softly textured voice and piercing intellect, to deconstruct our entrenched thought patterns and confused ideas about do-

ing practice and receiving teachings. Gazes, visualisations and breathing techniques he interspersed with explanations and anecdotes, whilst we increasingly relished the experience of time to do structured practice together. It was a joyful experience to meditate formally in silence, in our beautiful comfortable Gompa-barn, while wind and rain scoured the hills outside. Using SalTong methods from Rinpoche’s Longsal cycle of teachings we each gained insights into our self-created mind patterns and obstructions, allowing us rest in our natural state. As Peter, who organised the retreat said at the end, thank you to Rinpoche firstly, and then Elio for his expert guidance, and to Thomas for his fantastic cooking! Emaho!!

©



Photo: P. Garczynski

The Primordial State: a Retreat with Jakob Winkler

by Mandarava Bricaire

In the second half of May, fifteen people from the Dzogchen Community met to participate in a course led by the SMS teacher Jakob Winkler. The retreat was aimed at clarifying the most important aspects of the study and practice of the base of the Santi Maha Sangha. The group met in the wonderful location of Kunselling, <http://dzogchencommunity.org/kunselling>, our community retreat centre in south Wales, near Hay-on-Wye. Situated in the middle of bright green hills with happily roaming sheep and surrounded by far-distant mountains, we were blessed by some beautiful sunny days that made this retreat even more enjoyable and fruitful for our studies.

Jakob’s way of teaching, as someone commented during the retreat, was “precise and relaxed” at the same time. His knowledge of the material and his personal experience helped the group relate the contents of the book ‘The Precious Vase’ to their daily life, with humour and lightness. The sessions of theory and practice of Semzins and Rushens were alternated with regular Yantra Yoga and Vajra Dance sessions in between. Many thanks to Jakob for his great generosity and openness that included every person in the group, not letting anyone be excluded from the dialogue and exchange; and thanks to the local organisers that made it possible and who did their best to ensure that all activities flowed smoothly.

©

Merigar East



Chod Retreat at Merigar East with Nina Robinson May 23–27.

Czech Republic



Dance of the Song of the Vajra for advanced with Adriana Dal Borgo in Prague April 10–12, 2012.



Six spaces of Samantabhadra course with Pavel Sobek supervised by Adriana Dal Borgo in Prague April 13–15, 2012.



Yantra Yoga for beginners with Fijalka Turzikova in Tábor June 8–10, 2012.

Estonia



7th Lojong retreat and public talks with Oliver Leick in Tallinn April 13–15, 2012.

Poland



Vajra Dance instructor Iwana Zagroba giving an explanation during the Six Spaces of Samantabhadra Course for Beginners in Lodz, May 25–27 2012.

SMS Base Level Retreat in Belgrade

We were blessed with a second visit of our wonderful Vajra brother and SMS Teacher Oliver Leick in Belgrade, Serbia from May 16th–20th 2012. He brought us sunshine, quite literally, because the spring has been rainy and cold until he arrived. The Retreat was based on the Teachings and Instructions of Santi Maha Sangha Base Level of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche. We were also very happy to welcome our Vajra brother Alexander Gruber from the Austrian Dzogchen Community who came for our Retreat.

Our little Community of approximately 10 to 13 practitioners gathered for this auspicious event at the Yoga Center where we meet on a regular basis for Yantra Yoga and the collective practices. The Retreat started in the evening with Guru Yoga. Then Oliver taught us through giving examples of the limitations concerning body, voice and mind in a direct, clear, and picturesque way and advice on how to overcome them by integration in our own nature.

Oliver clearly outlined how to follow the practices correctly, coordinating breathing, singing and recitation of mantras. He led us deeply into the details of various Guru Yoga practices,

Refuge and Bodhicitta in Sutra, Tantra and Dzogchen, Lojongs, 7 mind trainings, Paramitas, the Rushen of the purification of the causes of 6 lokas, vividly explaining the details of each loka and the characteristic of the suffering of various beings.

It was inspiring to listen to Oliver’s vivid explanations, to experience his vast and profound knowledge and to practice together the 25 thigles and the Purification of the causes of the Six lokas.

The last day was dedicated to advice on how to apply the practice

Serbia



SMS Base Level Retreat in Belgrade.

in a daily life. Focusing on different methods of working with our behavior was detailed, clear and lively and we enjoyed many illustrations Oliver gave through stories of his own experiences. Oliver emphasized the importance of the state of presence and awareness both during waking state and in dreams thorough the Practice of the Night. The retreat ended with Ganapuja. All enjoyed it as it brought about relaxation and happiness. The practitioners who were new to the SMS were also able to have an insight into the “Precious vase” and were given the opportunity to gain benefit from the study of it in future.

We are infinitely grateful to our precious Teacher, Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

Rinpoche, who though distant in space is ever present in our hearts.

We offer our thanks to Oliver Leick who was kind enough to come and teach us how to follow the path to liberation. However, liberation depends on us so we should carry on with diligence and welcome every opportunity to deepen our knowledge, to study together, to practice and relax in the state of the mirror.

We’ll do our best for the benefit of all sentient beings.

We are looking forward to welcoming Oliver again to teach us and spend his precious time with us.

**May all be auspicious!
Long Live the Masters, the Teachings and the Community!** ©

Serbia



Yantra Yoga in Serbia

Kostic Vesna, Belgrade Yoga Center

So far we have had two Yantra Yoga courses in Belgrade. The first one was with Oliver Leick in 2009, and the second one was with Zsolt Somogyvary in 2011. We assembled a Yantra Yoga practice group immediately after the first course. After the second course more practitioners joined our group so it was possible to have regular weekly practice in Belgrade Yoga Center. We have been practicing the first level of YY, warm-ups, Tsijong, Lungsang, Tsandul and 1st series of Yantra.

We are also planning another course in October 2012 with Zsolt Somogyvary,

in two parts, the first for newcomers, and the second for an advanced level. Until then we don’t have a qualified Yantra Yoga instructor in Belgrade and we will do our best to overcome this obstacle in order to raise the quality of our common practice of Yantra Yoga as soon as possible.

Thanks to our Yellow Gakyil Lale we have a video channel Yantra Yoga Serbia online www.live-e.TV/yantra-yoga

Eternal thanks to our dear Oliver and dear Zsolt for their precious time, commitment and perseverance, and we hope to meet again in the near future.

May the lotus feet of our Glorious Masters remain firmly upon the Earth!

Kunsangar South



Gomadevi Retreat with Enzo Terzano
May 23–27

By Mariya Stepanyk

The Gonpa of Kunsangar South is almost ready to welcome Our Master with his Precious Teaching Man-ngag Tag-drol Gyud, gterma of Rigdzin Changchub Dorje.

All who gathered at the end of May in a fresh, still not painted Gonpa where preparations were under way, felt being very fortunate. 33 participants from different parts of Ukraine and Russia had a rare and precious opportunity to learn and deepen Gomadevi practice under

the guidance of qualified instructor Enzo Terzano.

We listened to detailed and profound explanations, based on the precious instructions and commentaries of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu on Gomadevi Practice, that Enzo had collected over many years of work, combined with personal practice. Explanations of the practice repeated every time with more and more aspects, and all together by the end of the retreat we had learned the Short, Medium and Long Thun that are combined with the Dance of the Song of Vajra.

Though not all the participants knew the Dance of the Song of Vajra and there

was no learning during the retreat, by the end of the course many people felt its taste on the Mandala and integrated with the Song and Dance of Vajra.

The retreat finished with a Ganapuja together with Rinpoche by webcast, and this enjoyment continued with a group excursion to Bakhchisaray to visit the ancient monasteries and caves there. Enzo in his warm and open manner inspired us not only to deepen the practice but also to conquer the rocks.

Crimea is the place where Rinpoche first taught Longsal Thutrig of Jnana Dakini and we hope that the Longsal Teaching will flourish here for the future. ©



Russia
Ku Nye course with Aldo Oneto at Dorjeling, St. Petersburg, April 1–8, 2012.



Australia, Melbourne
Yantra Yoga Public course level1 in Melbourne with Emily Coleing.



Namgyalgar North
Dance of the 6 Spaces with Nikki Elliott at Namgyalgar North May 19–20, 2012
Photo: D. Marsh



Tashigar Norte
First part of Vajra Dance from May 11 to May 16, 2012 with Bodhi Krause.



The second part of the Vajra Dance from May 25 to June 1, 2012 with Bodhi Krause.



Tashigar Sur
Mandarava Retreat with Chudlen and Tsalung practice.
Instructors: Marisa Alonso and Ricky Sued May 19 and 20, 2012.



Brazil
Enjoying Jim Valby in Buenos Aires
By Griselda Gálmez

Jim Valby visited Buenos Aires to lead a Retreat about “The Primordial Knowledge of Dzogchen: Theory and Practice” from June 2 to 6. He remained with us for 7 days, and what days for all of us! The older practitioners felt a great joy to see and listen once more to our dear Jim. Really, we have always enjoyed his funny explanations, his nice way to receive each of us, his personal way to provoke, to move... And we love this style because we know the effects on our own knowledge. His words go deeper and deeper and just the essential meaning remains.

The new practitioners awaited him with expectation because they knew, through the older, the singularity of this American teacher of Santi Maha Sangha. Jim did not disappoint them, on contrary, now he has more grateful listeners.

For the new Gakyil of Buenos Aires (a very recent new Gakyil) the organization and the responsibility of this retreat was a difficult test. But they found a very comfortable place for the teachings, The Forum of the Sciences and Arts. Summing up, when the people who assisted in the retreat tried to explain something about it, it’s frequent to hear: “I do know it was very strong, it was like staying in front of a powerful light, seen and not seen at the same time ...”. No one doubted of one thing: our understanding. It can be said it exists before and after our dear Vajra brother, Jim Valby. ©



Jim Valby Dzogchen Retreat
by Eduardo Joaquim Cintra Mauro

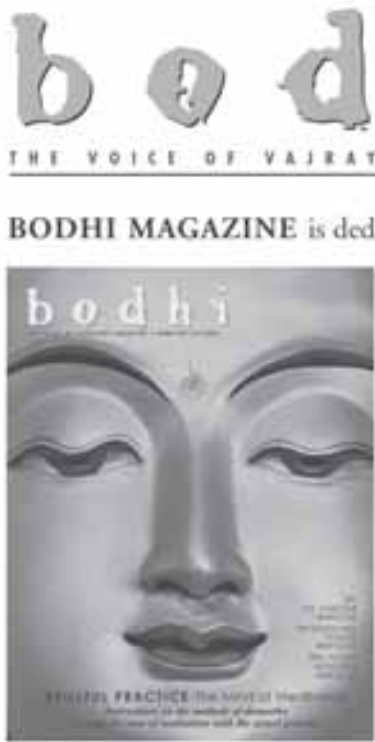
Our last retreat with Jim Valby to study Dzogchen Teaching was – as a retreat of this kind always is – incredible. Jim’s knowledge of the teaching and ancient texts is deep and vast, and he is able to present it with ease both by being very direct and by leaving no space for fantasies about the studies to develop.

This is the second retreat with Jim Valby that we had at Lhundrubling, in São Paulo. This time we studied the meaning of direct introduction and its methods, along with detailed instructions on the Semdzins. We did a lot of practice between the explanations, and that helped everyone to build confidence and familiarity. We learned to use the practices most suited to us, focusing on the Guru Yoga, and also studied the secret method of applying all vehicles with the knowledge of dzogchen – something which, given Jim’s experience with other non-Buddhist vehicles, permitted practitioners coming from religious backgrounds to untangle old concepts and be comfortable. And we learned a lot about samaya. Finally, we did Ganapuja with explanations and commentary about the practices we do in it. That took a long time. By taking long it brought the group together, so that we were able to have a better understanding of the aspects of the practices therein and very good group dynamics.

On the last day we did a second Ganapuja to mark the end of the retreat. This time Jim added the Marme Mönlän. He talked about the practice before we started, and the beauty of it was evident. At a precise moment, he asked our Vajra brother Antonio to get the first candle and to light the next one in line. Then,

each practitioner would set alight the next practitioner’s candle and, one by one, everybody held the candles up and sang together with a round, turning melody. We were really merry to be able to work with the teaching in this way, instilled with awareness of the rarity of such knowledge and methods passed in an unbroken and direct line to Rinpoche. And then to us. ©

The Primordial State and Dzogchen Knowledge with Jim Valby, with a focus on the 21 Semdzins. From May 25 to May 31 in Lhundrubling, São Paulo, Brazil.



bodhi
THE VOICE OF VAJRAYANA BUDDHISM

BODHI MAGAZINE is dedicated to providing genuinely **practical teachings & practice instruction** from a **Kagyü Nyingma Vajrayana Buddhist** perspective. It is published under the direction of The **Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche**.

Profound, Challenging and Rewarding.

SUBSCRIBE or GIVE A GIFT
subscriptions@nalandabodhi.org

Programs

Merigar West

Summer 2012 at Merigar West

June 28–July 1st
Course of the Long Life Practice of Mandarava and Yantra Yoga
with Nina Robinson and Tiziana Gottardi

July 5–8
In-depth Course and practice of the Dance of the Song of the Vajra
led by Rita Renzi

July 13–15 (in collaboration with l’Istituto Shang Shung)
Learn Tibetan Traditional Dances and Songs
with Topgyal Gontse and Tsering Dolker

July 14–15 (in collaboration with the Shang Shung Institute)
Tibetan language: the correct pronunciation of the texts of practices
with Fabian Sanders

July 16–August 15 (in collaboration with the Shang Shung Institute)
Course of Tibetan language and training for translators from Tibetan
with Fabian Sanders
Course in three levels:
base – intermediate – advanced.
For information please refer to info@shangshunginstitute.org

July 16–22
Week of Yoga Holidays for adults and children
with Laura Evangelisti and Tiziana Gottardi, Fabio Risolo, Raffaella Blasi, Cesare Torricelli

July 20–25
Course about namkha
with Liane Gräf

July 23–25
Ritiro di pratica di Danza del Vajra (Tun completo)

July 26–29
Retreat of explanation and practice of Tara
with Costantino Albini

August 3–9
Retreat of the practice of the Purification of the Six Lokas combined with the Dance of the Six Spaces of Samanta-bhadra

August 10–16
Retreat of the Long Life Practice of Mandarava
(details in the next newsletter)

August 17–23
Retreat of Shine and Lhagthong in the Dzogchen Teaching
with Fabio Risolo
(details in the next newsletter)

August 24–28
Advanced Yantra Yoga Course
with Laura Evangelisti
This is a course to learn the 5 basic yantras, the pranayama of the fifth series and the yantras of the first and second series in order to develop capacities and to progress.

August 31–September 6
Retreat with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu Longsal Atii Gongpa Gojed – The Opening of the Gate to the State of Ati

September 7–9
SMS Level 1 Exams
September 10–16
Training for SMS Level 2 with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

September 21–27
Retreat with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu Shitro Khorde Rangdrol: Terma Teaching of Rigdzin Changchub Dorje

France >> Dejamling

Dejamling

We invite all the Lings, especially from the cities, to come, as a Ling or group to practice at Dejamling. You can enjoy practicing in the French countryside, and also integrate with the elements at Dejamling!
The airport of Montpellier and train station is an hour and a half away, with buses and car, we will welcome you with joy!
For any information write to dejamlingfr@gmail.com and see some images on our website: <http://association.dzogchen.free.fr/>

Santi Maha Sangha Base Level
From the 13th to the 17th of April, about fifteen of us gathered at Dejamling to hear teachings on the Base Level of Santi Maha Sangha with Jim Valby.
Outside, it is springtime – nature is awakening! The Cevenol mountains are tinted with green, the lilacs with purple, the heather with white. The sun dances with the rain. On the mandala we sketch a few dance steps. Inside, Jim awakens us. His words are direct, concrete, colorful, sharp, sweet. To our delight, the translator reproduces Jim’s voice, his gestures, even his mimics. At meals, the cook rouses our tastebuds with inspired dishes, spicy and delicate. Like the sap rising in the trees, a new, joyous energy fills us. The Ganapuja is a party. We come away from our retreat enchanted, connected as if by a precious secret.

Retreat Places
Longde cabin, Dark retreat cabin, Mandala, Little retreat house, Dejamling a retreat place, A Ling of Infinite Bliss.
This summer is special in Dejamling, the stream coming from the source is sounding: water flows!
The place is simple, its environment is a particular mixture of wild nature, and, at the same time a more delicate side, showing many shades of purple, yellow and many shaped flowers, bees, dragon- and butterflies, lavender flowers.
We enjoy space sitting in the Longde cabin, with our feet just above the top

of the many trees of all kinds, in spring seasons offering their fruits.
Our Mandala is in the Vajra tent, sometimes less comfortable, chilly, even wet if rain is too generously giving our land prosperity to grow more easily. But in summer, quite hot, we open the tent and dance between trees and all animals that fly and others come dancing with us on the mandala, attracted to the colored (especially the red) thigles.
In the little retreat house a huge window leaves space to see nature, or relax in space, all senses, presence, also instant presence, and practice easily and strongly any of the precious practices of our Master.
In the Dark retreat cabin, you better discover by yourself, the practice of Yangti, if you were fortunate to have that transmission from the Master. It offers everything you need: shower, toilet, aired, heated in winter. We try to help and arrange that someone is there to come and feed you and be there for you if needed.

Dejamling is evolving and more and more collaboration and participation of the different practitioners is manifesting. After years of practice and working intensively with all the different circumstances (not always that easy) we find more and more that transmission is strongly alive to discover our real nature.
This summer we have an intensive program, Dejamling’s Summer Program: 108 practices in Dejamling:
108 Vajra Dances (June 24–August 17)
108 hours of Karma Yoga (July 20–August 26)
108 Chöds (August 17–26) woven around all practice moments, starting with:
25–30 June: **Mandarava retreat with Françoise Casabianca**
29 June–1 July: **Chögyal Namkhai Norbu webcast teaching – Dzogchen Nallug**
3 July–2 August: **108 Vajra Dances with all practitioners singing or/and dancing any of the 3 Vajra dances.**

4–10 July **Chögyal Namkhai Norbu webcast teaching: Yeshe Khandroí Thugthig (Jnanadhakini)**
11–13 July: **Children creative expression in nature**
12–23 July: **Vajra Dance in depth course with Stoffelina Verdonk**
20 July–26 August: **108 hours of Karma Yoga**
25–29 July: **Chögyal Namkhai Norbu webcast teaching: Dark Blue Garuda Worldwide Transmission of anniversary of Guru Padmasambhava**
28–30 July: **Vajra Dance and Yantra Yoga retreat with Jesus Martines and Stoffelina Verdonk**
3–9 August: **Chögyal Namkhai Norbu webcast teaching: Man-ngag Tag-drol Gyud**
3–17 August: **personal or “Ling” retreats**
17–23 August: **Chögyal Namkhai Norbu webcast teaching : Longsal Atíí Nadzer**
17–26 August: **108 Chöds with Cvetko Jovanovic**

Karma Yoga
As Rinpoche has explained, Karmayoga is an important practice, not only for those engaged in the Santi Maha Sangha program, but for all of us!
“108 hours of Karma Yoga” will take place at Dejamling from July 21 to August 2, to mutually inspire each other and do this Yoga together.
We are inviting groups from local villages, and all interested practitioners, as well as international and local Lings that wish to do Karma Yoga, to gather and to meet each other. We will discover the manifestations of the “108 Hours”, accumulated together, for ourselves, our community, and for Dejamling, Ling of infinite beatitude!
On the menu for this Karma Yoga, there are quite a few light yogas, inside and outside of the house:
· sewing, organising clutter, cleaning Dejamling, painting, etc.
· installing small furniture, sorting through books, linens/material, etc.
· cleaning the Vajra tent, taking care of all the green and other spaces, sprucing up the garden of memory of practitioners who have died,

· making small walls, gathering and chopping wood,
· beautifying, taking care of, innovating, making piles, diminishing piles, throwing out,
· having fun like when at home but as a group in order to improve our living space
In exchange for 3 or 4 hours of Karma Yoga each day, the Dzogchen Community is offering free housing at Dejamling.
For example, 3 hours in the morning and one hour in the evening when it is cool if the work is progressing rapidly... according to the situation.
This schedule leaves lots of time and space to do other practices or rest, or go for a walk.
Dejamling is a good, beautiful place to discover the natural elements. In the hottest hours, one can enjoy a refreshing dip in a little river, dive from small and large rocks, even do some swimming strokes (to the bottom of Valbonne), or simply take a nap in a hammock, under the chestnut trees, lime trees and butterfly bushes.
Please contact us at dejamlingfr@gmail.com to tell us your wishes and your arrival to do this Karma Yoga, so we can organise housing and meals.

Housing:
with Karma Yoga (3–4 hours per day): free
without Karma yoga: 8 euros per day + 1 euro for sheets during your stay.
All information at <http://association.dzogchen.free.fr/dejamling.htm>

Welcome to your ling!
Heartfelt Thanks
The Gakyil

NB:
There is also some heavier Karma Yoga to do, to fix up the bottom of the small house. For this particular task we need at least 2 people with experience in construction. This job is more intensive, and could be done also at other times during the year. If you are interested in doing this heavy karma yoga, thanks in advance for contacting the Gakyil, dejamlingfr@gmail.com in order to

exchange information about the work that needs doing and the conditions.
Articles prepared by Carole Georges, Gabriela Arnon, Stoffelina Verdonk, Catherine Duez (and Yantra Yoga by Lorraine).

108 Vajra Dances retreat
June 24 – August 17

Dejamling is very happy to invite all practitioners from anywhere on our globe to come and participate in this retreat at Dejamling, in the hills of Cevennes, in the south of France.

We will start this internationally oriented Vajra Dance retreat on the anniversary of Khyentse Yeshe, July 3, an international Vajra Dance day. On that day we can wear the Vajra Dance costume.

You are all invited to come and participate in the Dance of the Vajra during the retreat. During the retreat there will also be other possibilities to integrate in Dance, Life and all!

We will dance before, during or after the hours of a course, around any activity at Dejamling, around webcasts, around the anniversaries of the Masters, around the world Transmission day of the Guru Yoga of Guru Padmasambhava, from our Master Chögyal Namkhai Norbu.

Come and meet, dance with your fellow practitioners, come with your Ling, your Gar, dance with your Vajra brothers and sisters on the Dzogchen Mandala. You can also dance alone, in the presence of hundreds of thousands of Dakinis in the early or late hours of this month long retreat.

General overview of the activities during the 108 Vajra Dances retreat:
June 24: 4 pm opening of the 108 Vajra Dances at Dejamling

France >> Dejamling

>> continued from previous page
July 3: opening of the retreat with Inter-national Vajra Dance day, Anniversary of Khyentse Yeshe

July 4–10: Everyone is invited to come and see/listen to the Webcast of the Yeshe Khandro Thugthig retreat with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

July 12–23: intensive Vajra Dance retreat, all 3 Vajra Dances.

July 23–August 2: continuation of the Vajra Dance retreat, combined, on different days, with Yantra Yoga (July 28–30), Karma yoga, webcast teaching of Dark Garuda and the Worldwide Transmission of Guru Padmasambhava’s anniversary.

August 2: Final Ganapuja of retreat, with extensive Guardian practice.

August 3–9: Chögyal Namkhai Norbu webcast teaching

August 3–17: Vajra Dance and personal retreats.

August 17: Final Ganapuja of 108 Vajra Dances at Dejamling.

Dejamling is in the south of France, a simple Dzogchen Community place in the countryside of the “hilly mountains of Cevennes”, but a strong place for discovering all our Master teachings. Possibility to also do Dark retreat, Longde practice, and other practices in our specific retreat cabins, “the little” house. There is a little canyon for diving, swimming in cold fresh water not far from our Ling. It is a beautiful place for walks, or just to have a siesta in a hammock, under the trees.

Prices:
the Vajra Dance retreat: donation
Vajra Dance in-depth course: 210 euro with the usual reduction for members.
Yantra Yoga and Vajra Dance: donation

Accommodation:
8 euro per night/person,
children for free
5 euro camping

Enrolment (especially for housing) and information: dejamlingfr@gmail.com

You are most welcome in Dejamling!!
Hope to see you soon! ☺

Germany

Upcoming Courses

Vajra Dance, Six Spaces of Samanthabhadra
with Karin Heinemann
June 30–July 1 at Dargyaling, Cologne
Registration: Rico Aurich
Tel.: 0049 177-159 36 03
rico.aurich@dzogchen.de

Vajra Dance Day
with Karin Heinemann
July 3 at Dargyaling, Cologne
Registration: ling@dzogchen.de

Dzogchen practice holiday week
open to all practitioners
July 13–22 in Höfen
Registration: Rico Aurich
Tel.: 0049 177-159 36 03
rico.aurich@dzogchen.de

Vajra Dance, Song of the Vajra Part 2
with Karin Heinemann
Dec. 1–3, 14–16 at Dargyaling, Cologne
Registration: Rico Aurich
Tel.: 0049 177-159 36 03
rico.aurich@dzogchen.de

Greece

Greece hosting Tibet

The Shang Shung Institute Austria and the Greek Dzogchen Community are pleased to invite you all to the upcoming Tibetan cultural event at the end of September 2012. Prior to our beloved Master’s precious Teaching Longsal Ati Lamgyi Ngöndro from 3rd–7th October 2012 in Athens, we are looking forward to also welcome all of you for the “**Exhibition of Traditional Tibetan Art**”, where pictures of immeasurable historical & cultural value of the ancient cave city Khyung lung dngul mkhar, literally the “Silver Palace in the Garuda Valley”, will be shown. The statues like Samantabhadra Yab Yum, Vajrasattva, Majig Mala, Yutog Yontan Gonpo, Dorje Yudronma or Gomadevi and precious Tibetan thankas complement each other harmoniously thus offering us a precious tool for self liberation while looking at them. As Dzogchen embraces all buddhist traditions, we are also inviting other sanghas in Greece to participate in this exhibition and thus enriching the flavor of our exhibition.

Parallel to the exhibition, public talks like “Introduction to Dzogchen” “Introduction to Tibetan Medicine” and “Ancient Wisdom for our modern society” will be presented by Elio Guarisco and Oliver Leick. Aldo Oneto will introduce us to Ku Nye massage and Laura Evangelisti to Yantra Yoga. Both Ku Nye and Yantra Yoga we will also have the opportunity to learn while practicing at the same time. These ancient, very special and effective techniques for restoring the natural condition of our energy will be complemented by the Dance of Vajra, introduced to all of us either by Prima Mai or Adriana Dal Borgo. In 2011 Vajra Dance, which is a precious means to integrate oneself into the state of contemplation, has been recognized by UNESCO as a humanity wordly heritage.

Our event will take place in a beautiful building close to the centre of the old city of Athens. Stepping out of the doors of this building with its neoclassicist structure, one finds oneself standing opposite the Acropolis, also known as the “Sacred Rock”, from which the Parthenon temple majestically looks down on us. In this area numerous important ancient sites are waiting for you to be explored. Walk the paths and sit under the shades of the olive trees, the same trees that Socrates, Plato, Diogenes, Democritus, Pythagoras, Aristophanes and Hippocrates had leaned on when



teaching their students. Philosophy, physics, mathematics, music, theatre and medicine could thus survive and form the spine of contemporary western civilisation. In the ancient Agora (market) Democracy was born and practiced in daily life. The eldest and most important theatre of Athens, the Theatre of Dionysus, where once the Festival of the Great Dionysia was celebrated, reminds us, how the ancient Greek people spontaneously knew how to integrate and express the visions of the senses in a religious and creative way.

The Temple of Poseidon in Cape Sounion, the southernmost spot of Attica, is an architectural monument from at least 600 BC. It’s imposing seize welcomes us to sit beside its cool marble columns, experiencing a most impressive, colorful sunset over the Aegean sea. Athens and Attica is surrounded by sea, it’s deep blue or green blue depths inviting us to take a refreshing swim, sunbathing afterwards at the endless beaches or rocks in the reviving autumn sun. From Piraeus, the biggest harbour of Attica, modern, comfortable boats take us to Greece’s charming unique islands in the Aegean, the Saronic Sea, the Ionian Sea ...

Dear brothers and sisters, the beauties of Greece are unique and countless. It is our deepest wish to share these natural gifts and the experience of our Tibetan Cultural event with you, joining our energies to help a country that in these days needs the support of every one of us.

Let’s witness together the rare opportunity and collaborating and joining in the dance of two ancient cultures melting into each other under the endless Mediterranean sky ...

With joyful anticipation
The Greek Dzogchen Community ☺

Merigar East

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu
Dzogchen Retreat

and
The Official Gonpa Inauguration Ceremony
August 17–23, 2012
Merigar East, Romania

Merigar East is honoured to welcome Chögyal Namkhai Norbu again this summer for the teachings on Longsal Ati Nadzer. This year the occasion is even more joyous because we are going to receive Rinpoche and all of you in the newly painted Gonpa.

Come and celebrate with us at the Official Gonpa Inauguration Ceremony on the sunny shore of the Black Sea!

For more information about the retreat fees, accommodation and travelling to Merigar East visit
<http://dzogchen.ro/dzogchen-retreat-in-romania-2012>

Looking forward seeing you all at Merigar East!
ME Gakyil



Kunsangar North

Vajra Dance 1st Level Teachers’ Training
With Adriana Dal Borgo
July 19–24, 2012

The training will include the Dances of the Six Spaces of Samantabhadra the Three Vajras.

To participate you need to have the transmission of the Dzogchen Teaching from Chögyal Namkhai Norbu or Khyentse Yeshe and be a member of the Dzogchen Community. Both practitioners who have the potential to become Vajra Dance teachers in the future

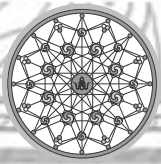
and those who would like to deepen their understanding and develop their personal practice of Vajra Dance can participate. Participants should be ready to show and explain the steps of the Dances especially those who have the intention to hold and spread the transmission of the Vajra Dance in the future. Candidates have to know both the male and female parts of the Dances “Six Spaces of Samantabhadra” and “Three Vajras” (regular and irregular versions) well.
To take part in the retreat you need to register in advance.

The number of participants is limited, so please, register as soon as possible!
The deadline for registration is 25 June 2012.
You can fully (active) participate in this retreat but it is also possible to take part as an observer. The cost of the participation:
· for active participants 280 EUR
· for observers 100 EUR
There are no discounts for the cost of participation in this case.

Schedule:
19 July we start at 17:00
20–23 July two sessions per day 10:00-12:00 and 17:00-19:00
24 July we practice only in the morning, maybe a bit longer than usual.
If you have any questions concerning the course, please write to the coordinator Slava Potapenko at:
slava.potapenko@gmail.com
or call +7-985-998-98-90

With best regards,
Kunsangar North Gakyil ☺





Kunsangar North

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu
Dark-Blue Garuda
Teaching
25–29 July 2012

We are happy to announce the retreat with our precious teacher Chögyal Namkhai Norbu at Kunsangar North (Moscow) on 25–29 July 2012. It will be Terma teaching of Rigdzin Jangchub Dorje, the Circle of Lama Zabdon’s “Khyung-nag” – the Dark-Blue Garuda, with all related action mantras.

Visa: to get an invitation for making a visa please contact Slava Potapenko +7 985 9989890, slava.potapenko@gmail.com

Pre-Register: from June 20th till July 20th you can pre-register and pre-pay with a 10% discount. Please contact your local Gakyil or Yanina Bekshibaeva reg.north@kunsangar.org.

Retreat Fees (normal/pre-payment):
Non-members: 100€/90€
Ordinary membership: 85€/75€
Sustaining membership: 40€/35€
Reduced membership: 50€/45€

Meritorious membership and children under 14: free
One day ticket: 20€ (prepayment not available)

CD/DVD: if you leave right after the retreat and need the disk urgently – please pre-pay it when you pre-register, and you will get it within 2–3 hours after the last session. For a normal order you can pay for disk during the retreat and get it within 1 week.

Accommodation
Dormitory at Kunsangar North: 12€/a bed per day in a 4-bed room, 17€/a

bed per day in a 2-bed room. For booking please contact Larisa Kortunova larisa6996564@yandex.ru. Be aware that the number of beds is limited, so first we’ll give them to the retreat team and to participants with limited mobility (disabled people, parents with little children etc). If you have any special reasons to be housed on the gar territory – please specify them in your message.
Camping at Kunsangar North: indicative cost 10€/a tent for the whole retreat + 5€/a person per day. Number of camping places is limited. Contacts for booking and more details will be available later.

Alternative accommodation (village, hotels etc). For booking please contact Lyudmila Vasilyeva: +7 926 320 335, mirrorlight@gmail.com

Other questions concerning the retreat: please contact Philippe Khomenok gday2k@gmail.com, +7 926 6995729

Retreat website:
<http://retreat.kunsangar.org/en/kunsangar-north/about/>

More info about Russian-speaking Dzogchen Community:
<http://kunsangar.org/en/> ©

New Zealand



Oni McKinstry – Yantra Yoga
news from New Zealand
(www.dzogchen.org.nz/index.php/yantra-yoga) and
Yantra Yoga Vacation Retreat
for Oceania-Daku Resort,
Fiji, March 9–16, 2013.

After living in the USA for most of the last decade, I have returned to New Zealand to live in Christchurch. There is as yet no other Dzogchen community members here to my knowledge, but there are many in Auckland, Wellington and Warrington (near Dunedin). I have started to look for studio spaces to teach Yantra Yoga but due to the frequent earthquakes, there are few studios reopening in the city.

In the meantime, Emily Coleing from Australia and I have planned a 6-day Yantra Yoga retreat at a really lovely resort in Fiji for March 9–16, 2013! We will teach the Level I from the beginning Nine Purification Breathing to the Third

Group of Yantra, intended for the public and those who wish to refresh their practice.

Daku Resort is in Savusavu, Fiji, it offers a beautiful location for yoga and relaxation. The proposed fee will include 7-night accommodation with twin share, all meals, two yoga sessions daily, one free half-hour massage and all excursions in the free time. To keep it affordable, we have priced it at \$1550 per person, excluding international airfares and transfers from Nadi to Savusavu. Please contact the resort directly to book your Yantra Yoga Retreat! www.yogainfiji.com

Please tell all your friends and family, come and enjoy a Yantra Yoga holiday in the Pacific with Emily and Oni!

Please also visit my little blog for some photos and Yoga news from New Zealand – www.oniyogini.com

Ka kite! See you soon! ©

Tsegyalgar East



August Dzogchen Community
Practice Retreat on Khandroling
August 11–17, 2012
Khandroling, Buckland MA

This retreat will be self-directed by participants who decide the schedule based on interests of those who attend. There will be Yantra Yoga, Vajra Dance and various collective practices on Khandroling as well as adequate time for personal practice.

There is no fee but each participant will be expected to engage in a karma yoga task. There will be the usual member fee for camping on the land.

For more information contact:
secretary@tsegyalgar.org
or call 413 369 4153

New !!! Three Month Summer
Practice and Karma Yoga
Encampment on Khandroling
May 25–September 1, 2012

Generations of Dzogchen practitioners have gathered together in seasonal encampments to practice, work and live together in a community dedicated to cultivating one’s awareness. This summer Tsegyalgar East will host for the first time a three month Encampment from Memorial to Labor Day, in what we hope will become an annual event. Especially open to beginners.

By application only with a limit of 12 participants. Apply at the Tsegyalgar East website, <http://Tsegyalgar.org/localcenters/tsegyalgareast/newsletter/>.

Shorter periods of Karma Yoga are also available and include administrative work, housekeeping, parking and support before, during and after the July retreats with Chogyal Namkhai Norbu.

Tsegyalgar East is still looking to sign up many summer retreat team members. Contact the geko@tsegyalgar.com if you would like to offer your skills and energy.

For SMS Karma Yoga requirements, contact the SMS liaisons Robyn Kinsey at rkinsey145@gmail.com and Lori Leff at lorileff@yahoo.com ©

Tsegyalgar West

Rinpoche is Coming to Baja Ca
Sur in May 2013!

Tentative Schedule Planned:
Yantra Yoga
October, November 2012
TBA, Carolina Mingola

Foundational Dzogchen
Jim Valby Teaching
December 18 to 23, 2012
confirmed dates

Group Holiday Week Retreat
December 26 to January 1st

Vajra Dance
January through May 2013
Anya Neyman, TBA

Jan/Feb/March
TBA, DZC Instructors:
Nina Robinson – **Ritual practices**
Micheal Katz – **Dream Yoga**
Prima Mai – **Song of the Vajra Dance**
Marisa Alonso, TBA

March/April
Constantino Albini, TBA



Chögyal Namkhai Norbu
Rinpoche
Dzogchen Teachings

May 8 to 12, 2013
BCS
Confirmed!
with Fabio Andrico, Yantra Yoga

For updates and info please check:
www.tsegyalgarwest.org
<http://bajagar.blogspot.com>

THE MIRROR



Newspaper of the International
Dzogchen Community of
Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

Main Office: PO Box 479, Conway, MA 01341, USA * Tel: 413 369 4208 * Fax: 413 369 4473 * mirror@tsegyalgar.org * * **European Office:** The Mirror, Istituto Shang Shung, Merigar 1, GR 58031 Arcidosso, Italy * Tel: 39 3298865292 * Skype: lizmirror * liz@melong.com * * **Editorial Staff:** Naomi Zeitz, Tsegyalgar, Conway, MA, USA * Liz Granger, Istituto Shang Shung, Arcidosso, Italy * * **Literary Editor:** John Shane * * **Advisors:** Adriano Clemente, Jim Valby * * **International Blue Gakyil Advisor:** Fabio Andrico, International Publications Committee * * **English Language Advisor:** Liz Granger * * **Design & Layout:** Thomas Eifler * * **Printer:** Turley Publications, Palmer, MA, USA * * **Distribution:** Tsegyalgar at Conway, MA, USA * * **Subscription Rate/6 Issues:** \$35 US available through Tsegyalgar; 27€ through SSI * * **Visa and Master card welcome** * * **Online Mirror:** www.melong.com * * All material © 2012 by The Mirror * * **Reprint by permission only** * * We reserve the right to edit all submissions.

Passages

Died

Austria



The photo shows Monica reading one of her poems in the Gonpa at Merigar in 2001.

Oliver Leick
on behalf of the Dzogchen Community
Austria Regions

Monica Wittib

With great sorrow we inform you, that our beloved Vajra Sister, Monica Wittib, from Innsbruck in Austria, passed away after 3 years of severe illness on May 1, 2012 at 7.55 pm in Innsbruck.

Monica, born in 1951, was a very active member of the Dzogchen Community since 1998 and offered her collaboration as a Gakyil member for 6 years.

Please include her in your practice.

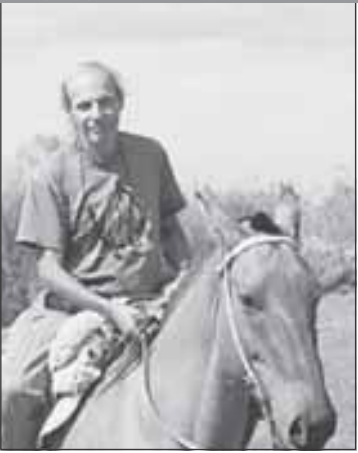
Switzerland



Cristina Fessler (1944–2012)

Cristina Fessler, a frequent traveler, expressed her life power as an artist, always capturing different dimensions and layers and searching for possible answers in a continuous process of an unfolding universe. She expressed her love as a mother, grandmother, partner and friend. Cristina Fessler passed away on Tuesday morning June 5th, 2012 in Zurich, Switzerland. We will miss her never ending commitment to care and compassion.

Tsegyalgar West



Elad Ophir

On May 23, 2012 at 10 p.m. our Vajra brother Elad Ophir died in a hospice in California of liver cancer. I met Elad in 1997 when he managed to get me angry, stalking me as a Norbunet moderator. He then told me he was really hurt by my strong reply. I felt sorry and we established a profound and loving Dharma relationship and correspondence over the years. He visited our house in 1999.

Elad surely did not have an easy life. Yet Elad also had some happy moments and he considered this a result of blessings. Especially in Tashigar South, where he lived for 6 years, he started building his house and his dream came through when he managed to buy his beloved horse, Layla. Unfortunately, because of lack of money, the house was never finished.

Elad was a sincere Dharma practitioner and was deeply devoted to our Master and to his great hero, Longchenpa. In Tashigar he established a friendly relationship with Glen Eddy for whom he built a memorial web site (www.freewebs.com/sattva1/).

Master and Disciple’s Float

Poem by Elad Ophir

My Master flies thru skies for all to teach
Trying to keep no one beyond his reach
But behold, I need not the teaching of each
He is my Mind even floating on the beach

A History of the Tibetan Empire

Drawn from the Dunhuang Manuscripts

By H.H. the Drikung Kyabgon Chetsang

Translated by Meghan Howard with Tsultrim Nakchu

Songtsen Library, Center for Tibetan and Himalayan Studies, Dehra Dun, India. 2011. pp. 651. USD 65

Originally published as Bod btsan po'i rgyal rabs: Tun hong bod kyi yig rnying las byung ba © Songtsen Library, Dehra Dun, India 2010.

Giorgio Dallorto

At a recent conference held by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu at the School of Oriental Studies in London and organised by the Shang Shung Institute UK, he reminded his listeners about the importance of the historical study of ancient Tibet. On that occasion, Namkhai Norbu, author of two important works dedicated to Tibetan history, *Drung, Deu and Bön, Narrations, Symbolic Languages and the Bön Tradition in Ancient Tibet* and *The Light of Kailash*, expressed his wish that the new generation of historians would continue to write about it in order to carry ahead the work that he began in the 1980s.

Spurred by his commitment to the preservation and understanding of authentic Tibetan history, in 2010, H.H. the Drikung Kyabgon Chetsang, the 37th throne holder of the Drikung Kagyu or-



der of Tibetan Buddhism, born in Tibet in 1946 into the aristocratic Tsarong family, published an exhaustive work on the Tibetan Empire entitled *Bod btsan po'i rgyal rabs*. He wanted to present to his people an accessible and authentic testimony of their famous past based on sources discovered in Dunhuang.

In 2011, thanks to the translation by Meghan Howard, a long time translator from the Tibetan, together with Tsultrim Nakchu, editor for Drikung Kagyu Publications, the first English edition of the book was published under the title *A History of the Tibetan Empire – Drawn from the Dunhuang Manuscripts*, thus making the work of Chetsang Rinpoche available to an international readership.

In his text, Chetsang Rinpoche presents in both traditional and modern style the history of ancient Tibet covering a period from the founding of the first scattered kingdoms up to the period of the last king of Tibet, Udum Tsenpo, better known as Lang Darma.

In his magnum opus, to which the author dedicated three years of work, Chetsang Rinpoche introduces the reader to the fascinating world of the royal history of Tibet, touching on a vast array

of topics such as the matriarchal social structure, funerary practices, court intrigues and military and administrative matters.

Up to today, this work is the most complete narrative history of the Tibetan state starting from its legendary origins, with the first king, Nyathri Tsenpo in the 4th century B.C., passing to the foundation of the empire at the time of Namri Songtsen and Songtsen Gampo, up to the time of the last regent, Udum Tsenpo.

As is indicated in the title, this work places the chronology of all the kings and various lineages in a modern context, putting them in an appropriate historical context.

For a long time, Chetsang Rinpoche, a knowledgeable polyglot, has long been interested in the wealth of materials discovered at Dunhuang. After careful study of the manuscripts, he undertook a translation of them from the archaic Tibetan language of that time to modern Tibetan in order to make this ancient literary Tibetan treasure accessible to the contemporary reader.

In his studies of the history of the Tibetan Empire, Chetsang Rinpoche makes particular use of two important ancient literary sources discovered at Dunhuang, the *Old Tibetan Annals* and the *Old Tibetan Chronicle*, enriching them with excerpts from various other manuscripts from the same ancient library and from ancient inscriptions taken from pillars and various rocks. Not only does he make mention of ancient sources but also takes into consideration all the modern historical work that has been carried out more recently starting with *The White Annals* by Gendun Chöphel, passing to Khetsun Sangpo's *A Nectar for the Ear: An Early History of Tibet*, the most extensive work

in Tibetan on the history of the Tibetan Empire up to the publication of this work, and finally the work of Professor Namkhai Norbu, *Zhang bod lo rgyus ti se'i 'od* (*The Light of Kailash: A History of Zhang Zhung and Tibet*), published in 1996 in Tibetan and the first volume in English in 2009. In the chapter dedicated to *The Eighteen Golden Eagle-Crowned World-Kings of Zhangzhung*, the author chose to quote a complete passage from the English version of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu's work translated by Prof. Donatella Rossi.

A History of the Tibetan Empire reveals some aspects that are almost completely unknown to the Western reader, to mention a few, a long digression on the swords and the armour used at the time of Drigum Tsenpo with his famous crystal sword, in the chapter dedicated to the seven Thri (throne), or the practically unknown kingdoms of women that existed in western and eastern Tibet from the end of the 4th century to the 6th century AD during the Tang dynasty. The kingdom of women in east Tibet was situated in an area corresponding to present day Yunnan and Sichuan. Referring to the *Tang Annals* and the *History of the Sui Dynasty*, Gendun Chöphel in his writings says,

“Wealthy women have many servant-husbands. They serve her by braiding her hair and applying black pigment to her face. The men are named after their mothers.”

In the long chapter on the 39th Pugyal, Dharma King, Thrisong Detsen, at the time in which “the wise and brave were venerated, and the bad and base were managed with skill”, we discover that during his reign a great number of learned translators and scholars such as Kawa Paltsek were

invited from China and India to translate many Buddhist scriptures. At that time, the *Denkar Catalog*, Tibet's first Buddhist catalogue was created and the three baskets of the Buddhist canon were translated into Tibetan. The same king is listed as the author of *Nail of the Middle Way, Sign Language of the Tathāgata*. Moreover, Thrisong Detsen possessed skill in the evaluation of horses and was expert in classifying their breeds and it was at that time that horses began to be classified into five breeds corresponding to the five elements.

The book is furnished with numerous appendices with a rich bibliography of publications in English and other Western languages, Chinese and Tibetan, hence providing a complete resource to all those interested in Tibetan history. In addition, this volume contains entire pages with colour photos of manuscripts with the author's translation and commentary in an English that is easy to understand. There is a great richness and rarity of the iconographic material in the volume, which includes both beautiful colour illustrations of the emperors and drawings and photos taken from archaeological findings. The book is truly, as the ancient Tibetan sages would say, “a feast for the eyes” and is an indispensable tool for all those interested in the comprehension of the culture and history of Tibet.

Finally for those fortunate few who are able to read Tibetan, I highly recommend getting the book in its original Tibetan since the graphics and the quality of the paper are superior to the English edition: strange but true in today's world of books.

How I Met Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

Ken Bradford

In the fall of 1979, I was sitting a 3 month silent vipassana retreat minding my own business when a spacious, cognizant lucidity came over me, and persisted. During a previous vipassana retreat, I had an initial glimpse of the suchness of being, but that moment, arresting as it was, was fleeting. My teacher, at that time, Ruth Denison, was generous enough to sit up into the wee hours of the morning with me while I struggled with an especially terrified state of mind. In the dim light of a British Columbia barn turned meditation hall, the two of us sitting eyes closed facing each other, my panic broke into the blissful no mind of mindfulness. So when non-dual awareness graced me again during the 3 months, I wasn't surprised to rediscover it, but was struck that it was effortlessly continuing. When I reported this good news to one of my teachers, it worried him and he admonished me to "watch it" in good mindfulness style. He didn't seem to understand that "watching it" made no sense, there being neither a separate "it" nor a "watcher". This left me at a loss, having to face the situation that I was now in an important way without an adequate teacher.

Coming out of that retreat, I returned to Berkeley where I was engaged in a Buddhist Studies M.A. program at the Nyingma Institute, founded by Tarthang Tulku, who I hoped would be able to help me cultivate this elusive presence. However, by 1980, he was no longer doing much public teaching and was giving few private interviews which were difficult to arrange, and which frankly, I was too shy to push for. Fortunately, at the Institute there were a couple gifted young Buddhist scholars, Kennard Lipman and Steven Goodman,

who I fell in with. Kennard had just met Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche on his initial visit to the U.S. while I was in retreat, and upon hearing about his Dzogchen teaching, I felt strongly compelled to meet this Master and attend his first North American retreat that summer. The retreat turned out to be on *sems-sde*, which segued nicely with my *shamata-vipassana* practice, presenting a clear and sophisticated path for the nondual awareness I had no path for cultivating. But it was the direct introduction of the mind transmission that I would say marked my "meeting with the teaching." I felt simultaneously at home, disoriented, inspired, threatened, and turned upside down by it all. Not only was this my introduction to Dzogchen, the retreat was my first exposure to the Tibetan-Italian Vajrayana hurricane of the Norbu mandala, which was especially wild in those early days. Of course, this is the Chögyal Namkhai Norbu dimension in general, but nowhere was it more rambunctious than in the New Age spiritual feeding frenzy of circa 1980 California.

For someone like me, who came to the Dharma out of desperation rather than as an optional form of personal growth, seeking a way to reduce the acute suffering of my mental confusion and emotional turmoil, the calm and protectively structured practice of Buddhist meditation was a lifeline to which I clung for dear life. It is fair to say that as a young man I "converted" to Buddhism from a religion of hedonistic chaos. At the time, I had an iron grip on the Hinayana idea of what "retreat" meant (renunciant, silent, austere, strict). So, I listened with rapt attention to Rinpoche's morning talks, hanging on his every word, marveling at his clarity, captivated in wonderment, and excitedly taking many notes.



But after lunch, when he and everyone else would go down to the river for a refreshing dip during the sweltering afternoon heat, I retired to a small, dusty cabin for disciplined sessions of sitting and walking meditation, *vipassana*-style. Around 40°C (100°F) outside, in the stuffy cabin it was probably a good 50°C (110°F). For two weeks, I sealed myself up in that little cabin miserably sweating my ass off when the happy bathers would return in the late afternoon with a bounce in their step and lightness in their heart. I would hear their laughter and suspect that something was very wrong, but I wasn't sure if it was me or them. I proudly thought, "while they were wasting their time enjoying the river, I was making some real spiritual progress in this hell hole." But I also began to suspect that perhaps I was the fool, especially as I was always very eager to leave that cabin to hear the remarkable late afternoon teachings. In those days, Rinpoche would teach twice during the day as well as conduct a thundering rite in the evening, often with additional teaching. This was like nothing I had ever experienced before. Or since. I repeatedly found myself in vibrant instant presence in the Master's company. Nevertheless, being the diligent-rigid yogi that I was, it was difficult for me to tolerate the wild, wide openness of the Dzogchen re-

treat style, so I left early to go to a hermit shack in the redwoods to do a "proper" retreat during the limited time I had that summer for formal practice. I even called my girlfriend at the time, Margaret, saying, "Norbu is simply incredible, a true Master, really wonderful, and his teachings are just fantastic... but this retreat is no retreat!"

However, once I began a "real" retreat in my tiny hermitage, I felt ineluctably drawn to upgrade my *vipassana* meditation to both the *Dzogchen* practice and tantric rites I had just learned. The only problem was that I practiced them with the intense zeal of the "head on fire" Hinayana meditator, and managed to nearly scare myself to death. So, I left that retreat hut early too, feeling like a spiritual washout. I immediately went to visit Rinpoche to confess my failure and seek his guidance, and was shocked that he saw my fear and defeat as a good thing. I guess he saw it as an indication that my practice was somehow vital and that I was a sincere practitioner. For my part, I knew I had found a remarkable teacher well-able to guide me on the path beyond dualistic suffering that – like writing on water – is no path. ©

SIDDHI ENERGETICS

ALL-NATURAL TIBETAN FORMULAS
IMPORTED FROM KATHMANDU.



**Bimala · Semde
Chulen · Agar 35**


SiddhiEnergetics.com

720.937.4875

FREEING THE HEART AND MIND

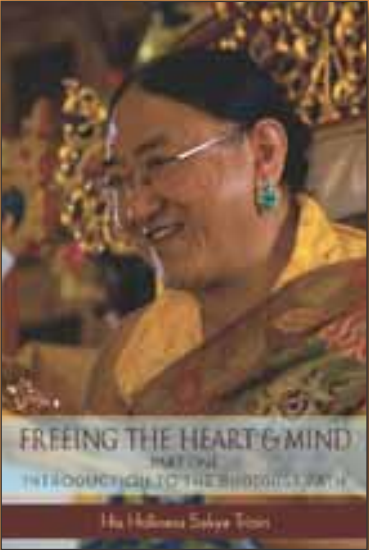
PART ONE: INTRODUCTION TO THE BUDDHIST PATH
His Holiness Sakya Trizin
ISBN 9780861716388, 184 pages, \$15.95
eBook ISBN 9780861716142

His Holiness Sakya Trizin presents the timeless wisdom of the Buddhist path—from the Four Noble Truths to developing a heart of true compassion. *Freeing the Heart and Mind* is a beautiful introduction to Buddhism from one of Tibet's most renowned figures.



Freeing the Heart and Mind also includes a full-color photo insert of Sakya lineage masters, biography of the Indian saint and Sakya forefather Virupa, as well as the classic Sakya teaching on "parting from the four attachments."

Sachen Kunga Nyinpo, Sonam Tsemo, Dragpa Gyaltzen, and Sakya Pandita,
the first four of the five founders of the Sakya school.
Collection of Shelley and Donald Rubin. Himalayan Art Resources 203.



Wisdom Publications
wisdompubs.org

