

# THE MIRROR

Newspaper of the International Dzogchen Community

No. 117  
July, August 2012

## Upcoming Retreats with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu



### 2012

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

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

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

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

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

**November 23–29**  
Longsal Longde Teaching Retreat

**November 23–29**  
Longsal Longde Teaching Retreat

**December 7–13**  
Chöd Teaching and Practice Retreat

**December 26–January 1**  
Guru Dragphur Teaching  
and Practice Retreat

### 2013

**January 6–16**  
Tibetan Cultural Event

**February 11–13**  
Tibetan Losar Ceremony

**February 15–25**  
Mandarava Chudlen Retreat

**Venezuela**  
March 8–15  
Tashigar Norte Retreat



Rinpoche, his wife Rosa and the Gonpa painting team with Migmar.

Photo: E. Umerenko

## Summer Retreat at Merigar East

Daiva Razmarataite

This year Merigar East welcomed Chögyal Namkhai Norbu and all the guests for the retreat in the newly painted Gonpa. We started our activities on the auspicious day of August 16th with the consecration of two stupas and a few hours of Tibetan songs. Most of the people arrived on the 17th when Rinpoche started teachings on Longsal Atii Nadzer. We were all very fortunate to receive seven days of profound teachings on the *tawa* (view), *gompa* (meditation) and *chöpa* (behavior) of Dzogchen.

This year the retreat program was very tight. Among the usual activities like Yantra Yoga, Vajra Dance and practice explanations we had many evenings of Tibetan songs and dances. Almost every night people would practice the dances, which was a very good work out in the intense heat of the Romanian summer. We would contin-

ue long into the night and the Tibetan disco would become a twist party. At the beginning some of us had difficulties understanding why we were even learning those songs and dances, but by the end of the retreat we had learned from our experience that there is a lot to it: it is not only that we are learning about traditional Tibetan culture but Rinpoche is also transmitting some experiential teachings to us. We were also very happy that the lottery tickets sold out very fast and the prizes that Rinpoche had prepared went to many different countries. Thank you all for your participation! It is a great support for Merigar East!

The retreat concluded with the Official Gonpa Inauguration Ceremony to which many officials were invited but few showed up. The press conference, the presentation of the Shang Shung Institute and ASIA and the performance of traditional Tibetan

dances and songs (this time by Tibetans) drew a lot of attention from the press and some local people. The event concluded with Yantra Yoga and Vajra Dance presentations and a buffet with lots of momos (traditional Tibetan dumplings). After all that food and drink we could also watch the screening of *My Reincarnation* by Jennifer Fox.

The Merigar East Gakyil would like to thank Adriana Dal Borgo for her tireless dances; Sasha Pubants for his practice explanations and clarifications of teachings; Fijalka Turzikova for the Yantra Yoga sessions; Pavel Filimonov and Elena Bobylskaya for the smooth Lottery; all the karma yogis for their tireless work and especially Rinpoche for His teachings and presence. We hope to see you all soon on the mandala of Merigar East! ©

### Teaching



Chögyal Namkhai Norbu  
Dzogchen – The Indispensable Teaching for all Sentient Beings

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### Focus



Santi Maha Sangha

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Kunsangar South, Tsegyalgar East

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Photo: R. Kogel

Excerpt from Teaching Merigar East Ati Nedzer (A TI'I GNAD GZER) Retreat  
August 17, 2012

# Dzogchen – The Indispensible Teaching for all Sentient Beings

Good day to everybody everywhere. Now here we are at Merigar East and our retreat is starting today. I have already informed you that there will be a teaching of dzogchen upadesha related with the Ati Nedzer, the series of longsal teaching. It is important that you remember not to go after the titles of teachings, but into the essence. When you learn the essence you should integrate it in yourself, otherwise it seems you are attending a conference. If you want to pursue the teachings in that way, it is better you don't move from your house and read a book. That can be sufficient. But when you go to a retreat, it means you receive transmission and with this you learn something and you integrate. Then even if you learn only a few things, it becomes something useful in your life. So this is the purpose of the teaching.

We try to do our best. In general I give dzogchen teaching – all teachings are not dzogchen, particularly in the tradition of Buddhism, like vajrayana in Tibetan Buddhism. In vajrayana there is sutra, tantra and all kinds of teachings, but not dzogchen. I give dzogchen teachings in general because, in my experience, when we are searching for a teaching for realization, and also to realize something in our lifetime and not only for the future, the dzogchen teaching is something which is the most essential of all. For that reason, I follow and apply dzogchen.

People follow teachings, mainly in Tibet, based on how the person is related to the traditions. If you are related to one

of the four schools in your region, your family, etc, then you follow that. I should have followed the Sakyapa tradition if I followed that way. Also when I was growing up, I learned and studied many things of the Sakyapa tradition because my place and family belong to that tradition. But I understand we follow the teaching to have realization, and also in this short lifetime, it has benefit for living in our society. After many years of studying philosophy and Buddhist tradition, I discovered that the dzogchen teaching is the most essential. For that reason I follow the dzogchen teaching, and not only for myself, but when I started to teach in the Western world, I knew that people were interested to have some realization and benefit for themselves.

Basically, based on my personal experience, I started to teach dzogchen and this is the reason for all my life, so when I teach, I mainly teach dzogchen. I don't know if most of you who are following this teaching know that dzogchen teaching is the most essential teaching or not, or you just happened to come to this teaching. I can say that if you just happened to be in this teaching, you are very fortunate. Even without knowing that dzogchen teaching is the most important and most essential, this is your fortune, so you should know that and try and understand what dzogchen teaching is.

There are many ways we learn dzogchen teachings and go to the final goal of the teaching. The final goal of the teachings, which all teachers present, is that there is a kind of

realization. Also if you are going in the essence then you can understand what realization means. But most of the time you cannot receive that information or knowledge. So most people have no precise idea what realization means.

We have this famous idea that we can become “illuminated”. Some people think that illumination means you become luminous or something different. Illumination does not mean that. It means if we are living or being in a dark room and we cannot see anything that is there, even our own condition. Dark is dark. But then in this dark there is a light and suddenly you can see how everything is. Illumination means something like that.

We discover our real nature. It does not mean there is something we did not have before, and we progress and become something different. We are ignorant from the beginning, just like the dark, missing our knowledge, our understanding. For that reason we try to follow some teaching and different kinds of teachings give different kinds of advice. We are learning just a little. But it is very difficult that we can seriously get in our real nature. For that reason we also have so many different kinds of methods, traditions, etc.

In the dzogchen teaching, from the beginning, we are making dzogchen understood. You see many people think dzogchen means a kind of tradition, or a religion, or a philosophy. In our lives we have so many kinds of these limitations. Some people think dzogchen means a kind of a book and in this book it explains something. Dzogchen does not mean any of this.

Dzogchen is a name in Tibetan. This name is in the original language of Oddiyana because the origin of the dzogchen teachings is from Oddiyana – not from Tibet. The teacher of dzogchen is a kind of emanation of Buddha Shakyamuni, the famous founder of Buddhism. But it does not mean that immediately after Buddha manifested his pairanirvana, the manifestation of death, there was the emanation of Guru Garab Dorje. He was some 300 years later. Garab Dorje's birthplace was Oddiyana. The teaching that Garab Dorje taught is called dzogchen. He taught and spread the teaching in Oddiyana. In ancient time, in that period, Oddiyana was the western part of India. Today Oddiyana is in Pakistan. You see in Pakistan there is no Dzogchen teaching and not only is there no Dzogchen teaching, but all of central Asia was invaded by Islamic Turkey and all of these places became Moslem. For example, in Western China, there is an autonomous region called Xinjiang, and in that region is Turkistan. This region was a very rich Buddhist country, and then later Turkistan invaded it and it became Moslem. That is true for all central Asian countries. For example Afghanistan, Pakistan and Xinjiang, all became Moslem.

Guru Padmasambhava fortunately later transmitted the teaching of dzogchen taught by Garab Dorje. Guru Padmasambhava went to Tibet and started to teach vajrayana teaching; the essence of the teaching of vajrayana is the dzogchen teaching. He transmitted it in Tibet and told his students that later they should go to Oddiyana to translate original dzogchen books into Tibetan. Then there were many translators like Vairocana, famous translators, going from India to Oddiyana to translate dzogchen texts into Tibetan. Since that time until today, the teaching of dzogchen and vajrayana developed. Not only books but also transmission and teaching, everything is alive. If this teaching did not exist in Tibet, it would have completely disappeared from this globe. So this is the origin of the dzogchen teaching.

So in the Oddiyana language dzogchen it is called santi maha. It is just a little similar to Sanskrit but they are not the same because in Oddiyana language all adjectives are used after the name, like in Tibetan. In Sanskrit adjectives are used before the name. Tibetan and Oddiyana language use adjectives after name. So when we say santi maha, santi that means dzog, perfected, maha means great or total, so that means the real nature of dzogchen and when we translate it into Tibetan, we say dzogchen. In Oddiyana language we say santi maha. That is how the real condition is, not only of human beings but any kind of sentient beings. Their real nature is dzogchen. That is called santi maha in Oddiyana language. It means the perfected condition since the beginning. Everyone has that nature or condition; we have that nature from the beginning and now we are in samsara in the ignorance of that condition.

Dzogchen means our real nature but we are not living in our real nature. We are living in our mind. Mind is judging





and thinking; mind is the level of dualistic vision. This is the source and the problem from the beginning. Even if from the beginning we have the perfected state, the perfected state has its infinite potentiality; this is explained in the dzogchen teaching since the beginning. For example, if we want to know how dzogchen is, which means our real nature, we try to understand a little intellectually. Someone explains to you and you are thinking and judging and you think, “Oh yes, now I understand.” It does not mean you have *really* understood, but it means that you understood something intellectual. So in this case when we explain, we say dzogchen, how the real nature of dzogchen is - the non-dual nature of khadag and lhundrub. These names khadag and lhundrub are Tibetan words and you should learn the meaning of khadag and lhundrub. Khadag means pure since the beginning - emptiness. If you are going to do any kind of research what you finally find is that everything’s nature is emptiness.

For example, everything that is an intellectual idea is related to our mind. Mind is thinking, judging, establishing – we know mind is something like the source. Now we discover how the mind is. We ask you to research the mind, and you do this research through the mind. Mind has thoughts; this is the manifestation of mind. Otherwise you cannot find anything in the mind. When thoughts arise you look where mind is, where thoughts come from, you observe that. You cannot find anything when you are observing, the thoughts disappear and what remains has also disappeared. There is only emptiness. There is nothing you can point to and say, “Oh there is something”, but not all thought disappears, immediately another thought arises, you are thinking you did research but did not find anything, this is another thought, now you observe this thought, and it also disappears. You cannot find anything. So you can do this observation by yourself.

You do not need to believe anything just because the teacher said it. This is not good. Then you are constructing something false, not real. Maybe you believe what the teacher said today and tomorrow you discover it does not correspond. Now you can change your idea so belief has no value. Discovering has value, you need to discover, not believe, and so you need to observe yourself. When thoughts arise you examine from where they come, in that moment where the thought is, and when the thought disappears how it disappears, and to where it disappears? You observe and you discover there is nothing. So now you do not only believe what the teacher said, you are really discovering there is nothing. So you see when any kind of thought arises, hundreds and thousands of thoughts, and you cannot find anything. That is emptiness. This is how our real nature is.

Emptiness is called kadag in Tibetan. The meaning of the word kadag in Tibetan, when broken down, ka means since the beginning. In the Tibetan alphabet we start with ka. It is not like the Western alphabet. Also the Japanese alphabet starts with ka. The starting point is represented by ka. That means how it started from the beginning. Ka means pure. Pure means there is nothing concrete we can confirm – since the beginning it is emptiness in the real sense. So this is called kadag. Lhundrub means “self-perfected qualification”. We don’t need to create something or develop something, it means self-perfected since the beginning – all its qualifications. That means our real nature is not only emptiness, but it has infinite qualifications of self-perfection. This is called lhundrub, and it is non-dual which means not two things. This is how our real nature is. It is very important that we know this.

If you are following Buddhist teaching in sutra style, when we explain how our real nature is, we say our real nature is just like the seed of the Buddha or Buddha nature. That is a consideration and that means if you are following the teaching and applying, you have the possibility to have that realization because you have that nature.

Dzogchen presents the real nature differently. Even if we have all of these qualifications in our real nature, when the qualifications manifest there are some secondary causes for manifesting in the moment of manifestation – you are just being in your real nature, you are not following a dualistic vision like subject and object. That is called Ati Buddha, which means Buddha, primordial Buddha, never falling into dualistic vision, being in that kind of state since the beginning. When there are secondary causes and manifestations, most beings easily fall into dualistic vision. Dualistic vision means if you have a nice mani-

festation, even if that manifestation is your qualification, you are ignorant of that and you think how nice there is this manifestation. That means you are falling in dualistic vision. That means you see something interesting and you like it, then you accept it. You develop attachment. If you do not succeed to get that and someone else gets it, now you are also jealous. You also have anger because you couldn’t get it and someone else did. You develop all kinds of emotions. So you see how our dualistic vision develops.

When we fall into dualistic vision of accepting and rejecting, of course we produce negative karma. And that negative karma creates potentiality and creates more and more negative karma and we have also its karmic vision. For example, now in this moment we are human. All human beings have the same vision, because we have that karmic potentiality and as long as we have that potentiality we are being in a human condition. But it does not mean all sentient beings have the same vision as human beings. Many different kinds of sentient beings have different vision because visions are related to our potentiality of karma. You remember in our real nature there is emptiness and nothing concrete exists. This is our real nature. For that reason, if there is something concrete outside, then all sentient beings should see the same way. But that does not exist and why it is called the production of the karma.

Karma means with our actions, good and bad actions, we produce fruit. Maybe in the Western world they are not used to using the word karma, because karma is a Sanskrit word. The meaning of karma is action. You also have action in the Western world, you have good action and bad action, and that is called karma in Sanskrit. Some people say, “I produced negative karma”, you can also say I produced negative action. Any kind of action you apply can produce its fruit. That is called karma and it is very important then that we know how the state of dzogchen is.

Why are we following dzogchen teachings? Because we are discovering first of all what dzogchen is. When we are discovering that dzogchen is our real nature, what should we do? It doesn’t mean we discover an idea and think, “Oh yes, good idea, I know that dzogchen means our real nature.” That is called intellectual understanding. It doesn’t help very much.

For example, if there is a nice mirror on the wall and it is very hot weather and you feel very hot and you want to eat a very good ice cream and you see a very nice ice cream in the mirror, that is a reflection, and you do not go to the mirror to take that ice cream. You know very well that there is an ice cream somewhere reflected in the mirror. Immediately you try to find that ice cream, so it means you have that knowledge and you see only that the reflection is unreal. This is intellectual understanding. It does not help very much because you still have concrete attachment to that ice cream. Even if you know that in the dzogchen teaching it says, my real nature is dzogchen. This is intellectual understanding, just like reflections. You know reflections are unreal, there is not very much to do. But then you need to do something with that reflected object. In this case you are not remaining only in an intellectual way, now you have something to do in the real sense. You need to discover that real nature. You know intellectually we have that real nature. Not just believing because the teacher said we have the real nature that is dzogchen. It doesn’t help, even if you believe the teacher, you should discover that.

What should you do to discover your real nature? Of course now you need a teacher and the teaching of Dzogchen. The teaching of Dzogchen is to discover that. Firstly, dzogchen teaching means discovering your real nature, now dzogchen teaching means you should discover that, not only knowing intellectually that you have that qualification. For discovering what do you need? You need transmission, a teacher, and the dzogchen teaching method. Once you have received that, then there is a possibility to discover your real nature. In the dzogchen teaching the teacher introduces you to your real nature. It is called direct introduction. Because the original teacher of dzogchen teaching is Garab Dorje, and he taught all Dzogchen teachings, at the end of his teaching, the conclusion of all his teachings, he gave the three statements of the dzogchen teaching. That is the conclusion of all Dzogchen teachings. These three statements of Garab Dorje indicate how to learn Dzogchen teachings: if you receive dzogchen teachings, how should you receive them, if there is a dzogchen teacher, how does he/she transmit that Dzogchen knowledge to the student, and when you have that knowledge maybe you discover your real nature.

How do you apply that method for having total realization? Everything is related to those three statements. In these three statements the number one is direct introduction and that means the teacher directly introduces how the state of dzogchen is, what our real condition is. This is called direct introduction. Some people feel direct introduction is something very secret. Particularly vajrayana teachers, many of them say you should apply vajrayana methods for a long time and at the end you can follow the dzogchen teaching. It is some very special method. Many people have this kind of idea, but dzogchen teaching is not that way. Dzogchen teaching is a complete path. Just like any kind of vajrayana or sutra teaching. Each of these teachings is complete. You can start your realization with these teachings and you can finish.

Of course, all teachings are not the same because there are so many different kinds of capacity of an individual. Teachings are related to the individual’s capacity and that is why a teacher like Buddha Shakyamuni gave different kinds of methods. Otherwise it is very simple and a teacher like Buddha Shakyamuni could give a universal teaching saying this is very good, you learn this and apply. It is much easier we learn a teaching and apply that way. But teaching does not work that way; the teaching is just like medicine. If you are going to a doctor because you do not know which kind of problem you have, you have some illness, then you go to a doctor thinking the doctor is an expert, but when you arrive to the doctor he asks you what you did, what kind of attitude you have these days, which kind of diet you eat and drink, and all this information, checking pulse and urine and doing an exam, then at the end of all of these examinations the doctor discovers which kind of illness you have. Then the doctor can give medicine and advice, etc. If there was a unique, universal medicine, you would not even need to go to a doctor, you can just use this medicine and you are satisfied.

But this medicine does not exist and in the same way this kind of teaching does not exist. The teaching is related to the condition of the individual. For that reason, for people with less capacity, the teaching is more related to the physical level. On the physical level we can understand more easily. If we go a little more to the energy level it is more difficult, and if we go to the mental level it is much more complicated. So you see what the capacity of the individual means. So the dzogchen teaching is a complete teaching.

Some people say the dzogchen teaching is too high and it is better to do sutra practice or vajrayana teaching. This means you do not know that all teachings are autonomous and they have complete methods. So you don’t worry when you do not have sufficient capacity. In general with dzogchen teaching we say we need high capacity. High capacity does not mean we are like the mahasiddhas going to Oddiyana to receive the transmission of sambhogakaya. It does not mean that. Buddha Shakyamuni explained capacity in sutra teaching. It is sufficient you remember that.

There are five explanations Buddha gave related to the capacity to follow teachings. It is called tepa tsondu trenpa tingdzin sherab (*dad pa, brtson ‘grus, dran pa, ting nge ‘dzin, shes rab*). It means first of all you have that faith, your participation, your interest; this is one of the highest capacities. You see, for example, a teaching like dzogchen is a very important teaching for all sentient beings, and particularly all human beings, because it means how we can understand our real nature.

For example, if you observe our human dimension a little. Only in this globe you observe how many continents we have, how many countries we have, how many nations we have, and in each of these nations how many problems there are, which kinds of problems, problems of religion, problems of politics, called right and left, and they are fighting for years and years. Problems of country and country, of group and group, even problems of person and person, all sorts of problems are related with that kind of limitation. Which is the universal medicine for overcoming this kind of problem? The unique medicine we have is the dzogchen teaching. Dzogchen teachings go beyond limitations and make us understand that limitations are the source of all problems. You should learn that – this is the essence of the teaching of dzogchen. You see how precious the dzogchen teaching is; for all sentient beings it is indispensable. ✽

Transcribed and edited by Naomi Zeitz



Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

Global Gar

Dear World Wide Dzogchen Community.

As you already know, there is the project of creating a Global Gar in Tenerife.

The Global Gar should be a base for how our Community can evolve and be stable in the future. How to better open to the world and become more active and responsible in maintaining the Teachings and the Community alive in the future.

We have always been saying how the Gars should not be seen as limited to the place where they are, but being just part of the world wide community, but in practice there has never being a real integration, never we could really manifest all the potentiality of our Dzogchen Community.

The Global Gar should become where all this can be coordinated and made real.

A place where communication and collaboration become very concrete.

A place, where all the Gars of the Community can have a base, same as for SSI and ASIA, all should be able to work together and enrich each other with different experiences and knowledge, we can develop different projects that can be realized together and become an example that can be then applied in different places by different people but with the same knowledge and principle of the teaching, simply adapted to the different circumstances.

Different activities also to create an economical base for the future of the Community, a capacity of working together of creating different activities open to everyone who might be interested, not to condition but to create an opportunity for knowledge and collaboration.

We can finally really see the potentiality of our Community maturing and become more concrete.

The capacity to listen, to collaborate and open our minds will lead to better understanding and it is a real and only way to achieve mutual respect, tolerance and concrete peace.

This is something very important for the future and future generations, not only for the Community but for the entire world. \*



From the International Gakyil

Dear Gars and Lings and all Gakyils of the Dzogchen Community,

As you all know our Master Chögyal Namkhai Norbu has found Tenerife Island to be a very nice place, very good for health and suitable for creating something for the future of our Community. But not only our Master found Tenerife Island to be really a wonderful place. Most of the people who came to Tenerife from all over the world for the various retreats found it to be a truly wonderful place. For all these reasons our Master considered it to be the perfect place to develop an important project for our worldwide Community, a new Gar, a Global Gar.

The idea of the Global Gar is to have a place symbolizing and putting into practice how the Community can and should evolve into the future. A place where all Gars will have their own place, Shang Shung Institute and ASIA all will have a place to help coordinate all activities of the Community into the future.

To find a place where to start developing this new project, a group of people willing and able to dedicate time and effort to

make it concrete has to be constituted. A very generous donation for the acquisition of a piece of land and buildings has already been offered to our Master.

The newly found “Board for Tenerife” has asked the International Gakyil for collaboration in communicating how the projects stands now.

An area of the Island of Tenerife has been identified as ideal for the “Global Gar”. It is in the South of Tenerife Island where the weather is mild and stable all year around. Some persons of the “Board” have visited the south of Tenerife lately, to evaluate some of the properties for sale there.

The findings have been presented to our Master and we have now three possible choices that should be thoroughly evaluated. All this is done without wasting time since, as our Master always says, “Time is precious”.

Because of the scope and importance of the project it is right and necessary for all the Community, especially the Gars, to collaborate with the best resources they can provide.

In this phase, obviously, a phase of fundraising would be extremely welcome and needed. The cost of the properties identified currently exceeds the amount of donations.

This can be done either directly by the Gars or by finding some Sponsor, like the one who already made the first donation, interest-

ed in helping realizing this great project. More precise information about the project and how to financially contribute to it will follow.

For further information please refer to the following members of the Board:

Giovanni Boni  
bonig1950@gmail.com  
Mark Farrington  
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For now it is important to start becoming active. We can and should start right away to make it happen!!!!! ©

Direct donations can be made to the following bank account:

Catalunya Caixa  
C/ Equador, 4-6  
08029 Barcelona  
Spain

IBAN:  
ES-84-2013-0834-06-020361749  
SWIFT: CESCESBBXXX

(From Spain:  
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Beneficiary:  
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Calle Océano 6  
38240 La Punta del Hidalgo  
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Chögyal Namkhai Norbu  
Schedule 2013

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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 31-June 2  
New York City Retreat

June 7-12  
Tsegyalgar East Retreat

June 13-15  
Santi Maha Sangha Level I Exam  
June 16-23  
Santi Maha Sangha Level II  
Training

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





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info@asia-ngo.de  
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## The Manasarovar School Has Been Saved

Dear Friends,  
We have managed to do it.

We are very happy and proud to inform you that the Manasarovar School has been saved. Thank you everybody.

Reaching this important goal has encouraged us to move forward with courage and determination and with confidence in your support and participation. The Manasarovar school can finally count on their ownership of the building, and future generations of young Tibetans in exile will be able to continue their studies while maintaining their cultural identity. In a moment that is so difficult for us and so harsh for the Tibetan people, this is wonderful news and a great result that we have achieved together, each with his or her possibilities and capabilities.

Very best wishes from all of us  
at ASIA

PS: We would like to share with you all the letter that the school headteachers wrote to all those who participated in the campaign.

Dear Sir/Madam,  
In 2009 we appealed to your kind generosity to help Manasarovar Academy out of a most critical situation. Back then, the landlord of the building our school was renting for its daily activities decided to sell his property in order to achieve his great dream of building the largest statue of Guru Rinpoche in North India. We saw the future of our school being threatened and important decisions had to be made urgently. The school building's owner made us the generous offer of purchasing the building at well below the market price but, unfortunately, this sum surpassed everything that we could afford at the time. We searched and searched for alternatives that would allow us to keep the school's activities going. We considered relocating but found many obstacles in our way. On the one hand, the properties in the vicinity of the school were not suitable for the activities of an institution which numbered at the time 300 children and over 20 members of staff. On the other hand, relocating much further away would have meant increased transport costs, and so, an additional strain on our children's parents.

The moment came when we felt the despair of having exhausted all our options. Knowing we lacked the necessary funds to purchase the building, we were sure that we had to close down our school. The feelings we experienced at the time are hard to express into words. It was painful to



contemplate the closure of an institution into which so much effort and kindness had been invested since its establishment in 1999. From the very beginning, Manasarovar Academy has been more than a school for all its members, students or staff. For our children it has been a constant source of shelter, opportunity and community. Most of our students come from families of Tibetan refugees and some children are sent by their parents from remote regions of the Himalayas to the Kathmandu Valley in search of a good education and a different, better life. Our school aims to infuse these extraordinarily resilient children with the strong moral and cultural values of their Tibetan background. Similarly, for our teachers and other members of staff, Manasarovar Academy is an institution through which they themselves contribute to the preservation of the Tibetan culture and see that its fundamental aspects are being passed on to future generations.

With so much to lose, we placed our last remaining hopes in the hands of a number of charitable organisations. We thought that only a strong collective effort could accomplish the difficult task of saving Manasarovar Academy. The promise of a successful fundraising campaign persuaded our landlord to give our school a period of one year and a half to complete the purchase of the building. Help was forthcoming in significant amounts, especially from wonderful individuals such as Cadel Evans. The hands of many private donors did join in support of our school but by July 2011,

as our deadline was approaching, we were still far from reaching our target. It was then that the wonderful organisations that are ASIA-ONLUS, SoL-Himal, Graines D'Avenir and KULIKA placed their full weight behind our efforts to fundraise. The incredibly hard work of the members on their teams brought together a large number of donors who believed in our common cause; they were eager to take a stand for the preservation of the Tibetan culture and the right of all children to a good, fulfilling education.

Today we are happy to share with you the news that our struggle to save Manasarovar Academy from closure has finally come to an end. Your continuous support has taken away the cloud of imminent closure that was looming over our institution and has given us back our sense of security in facing tomorrow. The gratitude that we, whose lives have been touched in some form or another by this institution, have for your actions stems from the bottom of all our hearts.

Extending your help to our school has the significance of extending to us your trust. We will do our best to remain true to our purpose: providing a solid education to the children of our Tibetan exile community, an education that looks to the future but which does not allow the loss of our Tibetan cultural legacy. We take great pleasure in watching our pupils grow and achieve the dreams that their parents would have never thought possible before they came to us. We have you, the kind organisers and donors of this campaign, to thank for whatever

we have achieved so far and for all our future accomplishments. On behalf of our 360 students and 30 members of staff, as well as their dreams and aspirations, we send you a heartfelt thank you.

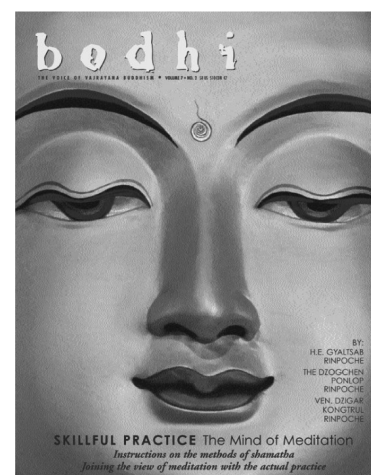
Yours faithfully

Ms Tseltrim Sangmo &  
Ms Bijaya Khanal  
Headmistresses and Founders of  
Manasarovar Academy

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## Tibetan Translators' Course

Oliver B

The recent Tibetan Translators' Course taught by Fabian Sanders and held at Merigar West July 14 to August 15 started with an introduction to Draljor during a weekend course. The main translators' course that followed was divided into three groups: beginners, intermediate and advanced. It is the tenth year that the course has been held.

Draljor is the transcription of Tibetan and Sanskrit into the Roman alphabet and the course, which was attended by many people from the Dzogchen Community, focused on the pronunciation of some practice texts that are used in the Community.

After the weekend, the main course, which was divided into three sections, began. The begin-

ners' course which took place in the mornings gave an introduction about how to write the Tibetan letters, then went on to teach the composition of Tibetan syllables and, in the last two weeks, the basic structure of Tibetan grammar.

The Tibetan language is a monosyllabic language with nearly no inflection and the different parts of the sentence are linked by particles. The fact that it has no inflection brings it closest in structure to the English language.

In the intermediate course we translated two texts – one by Sakya Pandita and the other by Longchenpa. In this group we started to try to translate the texts on our own and then compared our results. Twice a day we discussed our results with Fabian and the advanced students.

The advanced group worked together with Fabian translating a *terma* text discovered by Dorje Lingpa. In turn, each student



Photo: L. Granger

translated a different passage and the whole group discussed the different ways it could be translated. In this way, all the students worked as a group. There was even a skype connection with a student who was working on the same text in Nepal!

As a participant in the intermediate course, it was the first time I had ever participated in this particular training course. In the past I had looked for a similar course in Germany but had found nothing comparable, there were only courses for beginners. The thing I found most

effective about the course was its approach to learning. I felt that I was able to have a more complete overview of the structure of a Tibetan sentence and consequently made a lot of progress in my ability to translate longer sentences.

The atmosphere during the course was very friendly and we cooperated on the translations. We were also able to spend time together during the course breaks and some evenings.

Now that the course is finished there are still more pages from the texts remaining to be translated and we will be doing this work on our own and then will compare our results together by email and possibly by skype conference. In this way we will continue to deepen our knowledge of the Tibetan language and its translation as well as maintaining the connection between teacher and students. ©

## Shang Shung Institute Austria

We are very happy to inform you that for the first time the Shang Shung Institute Austria is offering a weekend-seminar on Draljor, the phonetic transcription system for a correct pronunciation of Tibetan practice texts used within the Dzogchen Community.

Dr. Fabian Sanders will lead the seminar.

Date: October 13th–14th 2012  
Location: Shang Shung Institute Austria  
Cost: 50 Euro  
Contact: Oliver Leick

More information is available at:  
<http://www.yeselling.at/images/pdf/draljor-ssiat-1012.pdf>

Very best wishes,  
Oliver Leick  
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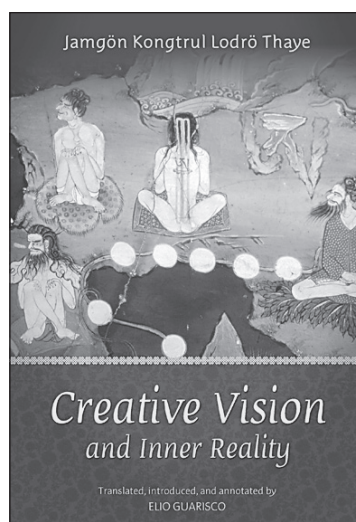
## Creative Vision and Inner Reality

Creative Vision And Inner Reality is a translation of *Easing the Beginner's Way: the Essential Points of Creation and Completion*, written in verse at the age of twenty-seven by the amazing nineteenth century realized master and profound scholar Jamgon Kongtrul Lodro Thaye.

Born in 1813 in Kham in eastern Tibet, Kongtrul offered this advice based on his own experiential understanding of these two basic methods in Tibetan Buddhist tantric meditation.

The aspiring practitioner's way is eased by clear and extremely practical explanations of firstly, the phase of "creation," referring to the gradual imaginative process of recreating, with the aid of mantra and mudra, one's self as the deity and the environment as the mandala, while maintaining the awareness of the lack of real existence of these and all appearances; and secondly, the phase of "completion," referring to the dissolution of the visualization until the mind rests in its natural condition, the inseparability of bliss and emptiness, a state accomplished by, among other methods, concentration on one's so-called vajra body and its channels, winds, and vital essences. Thus, in the first phase of this aspect of Vajrayana teaching the goal is imagined, and in the second it is directly experienced.

In reality those who have some familiarity with Mahamudra and Dzogchen, the two sys-



tems that represent the ultimate sense and final goal of all teachings, will find in the text a subtle guide to deeper knowledge.

This volume contains a second text, Jamgon Kongtrul's *Advice to Lhawang Trashi*, in which the neophyte meditator is instructed in an inspiring and direct manner on how to recognize the landmarks and pitfalls that may be encountered along the path.

An Introduction and substantive notes by the translator are included in this useful and beautiful book.

The translator Elio Guarisco is a founding member of the International Shang Shung Institute of Tibetan Studies whose goal is to preserve and deepen the knowledge and understanding of Tibetan cultural traditions and has translated many works by the Institute's founder, guide, and inspiration, Chögyal Namkhai Norbu.

Available from 5 September from [www.shangshungstore.org](http://www.shangshungstore.org)

## Shang Shung Institute in Russia



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# Shang Shung Institute School of Tibetan Medicine Celebrates 2012 Graduation

Adam Okerblom

On Wednesday, July 4th 2012, the Shang Shung Institute School of Tibetan Medicine celebrated the graduation of the 2011 and 2012 classes of its Four-Year Advanced Tibetan Medicine Program. The ceremony took place at the Alumni Hall of Amherst College, in Amherst Massachusetts, close to Tsegyalgar East and the sacred land of Khandroling. Just a few days prior to the ceremony, 12 students returned from their three-month clinical internship in Tibet, at the Tso Ngon University of Qinghai, in the traditional Tibetan region of Amdo. The students completed four years of theoretical training in Traditional Tibetan Medicine at the Shang Shung Institute, before embarking on the clinical internship. All students successfully completed their final examinations, after receiving much training and experience with the renowned phy-



Graduation with Rinpoche and Dr Phuntsog Wangmo.

Photo: P. Barry

Rinpoche. Rinpoche, as founder of the International Shang Shung Institute, the USA School of Tibetan Medicine, and of course the International Dzogchen Community, is a light of inspiration for all Shang Shung students without exception; without his vision none of us would have been gathered for a ceremony that day. After thanking Rinpoche, the teachers, students, and welcom-

less work, through many challenges, to complete the training of this group of students before her now. For the occasion, graduate student of the 2012 class, Todd Marek, prepared a power point presentation to fill the audience in about our recently completed internship in Tibet. His images and detailed descriptions showed the important aspects of the in-

powered thanka of the Medicine Buddha from Rinpoche. Then the students presented gifts to Rinpoche and Dr. Wangmo. To Rinpoche, we presented a thanka of the long-life yidam, Guru Amityus. To Dr. Wangmo, they presented a thanka of another long life deity, White Tara. Thus the students honored their fantastic teachers, and wished them long life, health and happiness. It was a beautiful day, a ceremony marking many years of work and study for my classmates and I. We looked forward to spending more time with Rinpoche at the upcoming retreat. As for the future of our work to develop the amazing practice of Tibetan Medicine here in the west, there is still a lifetime of work ahead. But as Dr. Wangmo said to me, “a lamb with a white head should have a white tail.” So with this auspicious and joyful beginning of our path as Tibetan Medicine practitioners, and with the continued support of our great teachers and friends, I have every confidence in many auspicious and joyful fruits of this work to come. ©




Graduation in Tibet with Dr Phuntsog Wangmo.

sicians and teachers of the Tso Ngon University. On this day, there was much cause for celebration. The ceremony commenced with a welcoming address by Dr. Paola Zamperini, President of the Board of the Shang Shung Institute School of Tibetan Medicine, and Chair of the Amherst College Department of Asian Languages and Civilizations. Paola took the opportunity to welcome and thank our Precious Master, Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

ing the families, friends, supporters and alumni of the Shang Shung School, Dr. Zamperini turned the podium over to the esteemed and beloved Academic Director of our school, Dr. Phuntsog Wangmo. Dr. Wangmo addressed the students, reminding us of our ongoing relationship as practitioners together, and the need to collaborate towards the future of Tibetan Medicine in our western countries. For Dr. Wangmo, this ceremony represented the fruition of five years of tire-

ternship such as our clinical practice, external therapies, and training in medicine preparation and field identification. Todd conveyed the enthusiasm and appreciation our class held for this unique fantastic program, and for the opportunity to learn from some of the most highly acclaimed and renowned physicians and practitioners in Tibet. We were all indeed extremely fortunate. Then our Precious Master, Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, ad-

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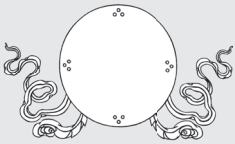
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## THE MIRROR



Newspaper of the International Dzogchen Community of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

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# Building a Solid Base

The Knowledge of the True Condition of the Individual can arise

The following Teachings were given by Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche during the 1992 Easter retreat on “the Base of Santi Maha Sangha” given at Merigar.

## Wednesday 15th April Afternoon

**T**his specific Easter Retreat we want to dedicate to a Teaching that I myself have prepared which is connected to the basis of the practice and the knowledge which one has to have in order to continue with the Teachings.

If a person wants to follow the Dzogchen Teachings that person doesn’t need to be limited to two words – Dzog-chen. They need to have a wider, global idea of the Teachings and its characteristics. They need to understand the essence of all the various Teachings and how one can find oneself integrated in their essence. If one doesn’t find this it won’t become that which is called Dzogchen. Dzog means perfected, all perfected. Chen means totally perfected. This perfection has to be found in our condition, our potentiality. Thus with regard to all the methods of the various aspects of practice and various types of traditions, they all have to be perfected.

To talk of this in a simple, condensed way, I have prepared a book in which I have tried to deepen this. So I want to dedicate this retreat principally to that. The book is called “Santi Maha Sangha”. “Santi Maha” is another name for Dzogchen in the language of Oddiyana. “Sangha” means community. By community I don’t mean an organization. Community means all those who find themselves in the same boat. We are travelling in a boat towards realization. I am like one of the rowers and you are in the boat. Of course you can row, too.

Certainly we’ve got to realize where we want to go. All those who find themselves in this boat are called “Sangha”. It’s not just a matter of an organization or a limited closed group. This “Sangha” is linked to the transmission and knowledge of the Dzogchen Teachings.

## Continuing for the future

So I’ve prepared this book about how one can develop knowledge, and above all how one can continue for the future.

What do we mean by continuing the Teachings for the future? By that we also mean the transmission of the Teachings. It is not enough for us just to wait for some master to come. We have to be careful when we use the word “Master”. We live in such a limited society, a society that is so materialistically inclined, where money is all important. The Teachings can also be brought to that level.

Many people want to be masters and to be recognized as masters and are pointing towards that materialistic level otherwise why would they want that. If we just passively wait for the arrival of a master one day, we don’t know what master will come because to throw out a couple of words isn’t all that difficult.

Just to say what the Base is, what the Fruit is, what the Path is can be simply reciting the words just like a parrot.

That’s not the real Teaching. The real Teaching is pointed to working with this in a living way. So there is a danger there. It’s not as if I’m discovering some danger today or yesterday. Right from the beginning when I decided to teach I was aware of this.

When I received the Teaching I knew there was also the responsibility to maintain the transmission. If one becomes a practitioner of Dzogchen, above all one who has a real state of knowledge, who feels responsibility to maintain the transmission, how should that person maintain and continue the transmission?

Only those who have real knowledge, not only knowledge in theory but also in practice, can do this. In that case such people must be qualified. When we say qualified, it’s not just a matter of receiving a certificate.

Being qualified means through the application of study and practice. For years and years there is this experience



Photo: Modonesi & Namkhai

and then finally capacity develops. This is the way of maintaining and continuing the Teachings.

But I am aware that in the Western world people don’t understand this, because by teaching and by giving Teachings people only understand the talking, the chatting.

If I give an academic lecture, people think of that as a Teaching. In such a situation one could also help someone to really understand something.

## Transmission

There are three transmissions which go together and there is no being which does not have these three existences of Body, Voice and Mind. In the pure dimension there are also Dharmakaya, Sambogakaya and Nirmanakaya. Linked to these are oral, symbolic and direct transmissions and one uses these to transmit it in some way.

So it’s not a matter of just chattering about something. If we are just talking or giving a lecture to maintain the Dzogchen Teachings it means we are ignorant of the transmission and we wish to bring it to an end. I don’t want that so I am preparing a way in which one can continue the transmission.

So I have prepared a training of the practice where there will be a 1st, 2nd, 3rd level and so on.

These levels are not for bureaucratic reasons but according to the capacity and how the capacity of the individual develops both at the level of intellectual knowledge and, above all, of practice. So a person who has certain realizations, certain capacities is capable of transmitting, and perhaps, after a certain number of years, if people have trained seriously, they will be capable of transmitting.

Then that transmission which has been placed in them can then have a function. The function of transmission is to realize oneself. If there isn’t that function what is the purpose of transmitting?

If it were just a matter of some kind of permission I could give it to you right now and say, “Go and teach”. But it wouldn’t work. I have doubts about myself many times as to whether certain things function or not.

If I myself feel at that level how can I give you permission? As it is said in the Tibetan proverb, “The person who wants to help someone with a broken head has a twisted neck”. First of all the one who wants to help others has to have at least a decent head on his shoulders without even considering that that person is beyond limitations and confusion. If you are not outside confusion how can you help anyone else to get beyond confusion? The transmission has to be something serious. It’s very important that we work on this level. Doing something serious means having a precise basis.

## Realization

Even if someone is not interested in teaching anyone else, they certainly have an interest in becoming realized, otherwise they wouldn’t follow the Teachings. And if one wants to realize oneself one needs a precise basis. If there isn’t a precise basis one can get lost in intellectual fantasy and

then the Teachings just remain at the level of temple ornaments.

When one goes into the temple there are many ornaments hanging there made of different colored silks, umbrellas and so on. You can see how beautiful they are. Their only function is to move a little in the wind until finally they wear out. They have no other realization. That’s how we spend our lives chattering about beautiful things, not realizing ourselves. That really mustn’t happen.

Each of us has to remember that time passes between one retreat and another. Especially when we meet again, for example, after a year, we notice that we have aged a little. If we talk about children we say, “Ah, you’ve grown”. But when we see somebody else we don’t say, “Look how much older you’ve got”. We only judge those who are growing. But if we look in our mirror we can notice that time is passing. It’s useful to notice this so that we don’t waste time.

Then when we do something like a retreat we can try to do something in a concrete way. That which we have understood we can try to use in our daily life.

At least so that it becomes something that helps us to relax and diminish a little the terrible confusion we have every day. If we achieve such a result the Teaching becomes more concrete.

## Thursday 16th April Morning

As I said yesterday, we will devote this retreat mainly to a text I have prepared as a base. It is not the base in the sense of the base, the path and the fruit that we talk about in the Dzogchen teachings, because there the base means the presentation of our knowledge of the state. This base is what I call the base of the practice, the base of the teaching. For example, if a person follows a Teaching, how is one to follow it? And what is the purpose of the Teaching? Because certainly when you do something there is always a purpose for it. So to follow a path it always has its purpose and the purpose, the aim, is realization. That is foremost

Sometimes we don’t notice that, and in a moment when you are depressed or have a lot of problems, you might think, “I am interested in the Teachings to solve this problem”. This means you consider the Teachings a bit like an aspirin. Or someone might say, “I want to learn the Teachings because I want to teach”, because they consider the Teachings like a job, something to make a living. But if you learn the Teachings in order to teach, that is mistaken. The motivation is wrong.

## Motivation

First of all the motivation must be for realization. If each individual cannot get realization, then it cannot work at all for others. Certainly if you have realization and certain knowledge, this is necessary in order for you to teach. So you must see that the motivation for following the Teaching is realization. You must remember that.

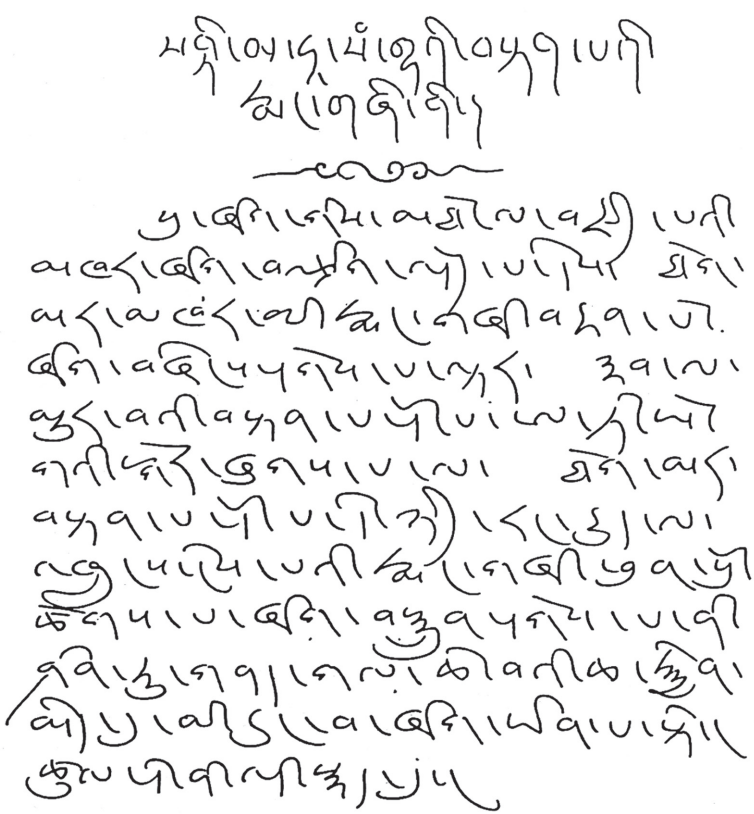
Why must we get realized? Let’s consider a smaller matter such as a problem that we have to face. Someone who is



uptight and very confused might think, “Ah, the Teaching may help me resolve this problem”. And it is very possible that with the Teaching they can resolve it. But there is the temporary way of resolving it and the definitive way of resolving it, and the purpose of the Teaching is to resolve the problem definitively, finally – not to resolve it only temporarily. The temporary solution is relative.

For example, if we see someone who is suffering from hunger, who has not got any food to eat, then to give them a piece of bread or offer them a meal is useful but it is temporary. It does not resolve that person’s problem finally, definitively, because that person is living in time and they are suffering hunger now in this moment. But they will still have their stomach tomorrow and if they don’t find a solution they will continue to suffer for years and years until they die because they have a physical body, and the physical body has to live with the material elements.

So you don’t resolve the problem resolving it just for one moment. To resolve the problem definitively means to have knowledge of the real state, and to overcome all the limits and problems and attachments that we have. If we reach that level that is what is called being realized. Until we have total realization there is no way of definitively solving all problems.



From The Precious Vase  
Instructions on the Base of Santi Maha Sangha  
By Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

Just as a person who wishes to build a tall majestic palace must first of all lay stable foundations, in order to enter the swift and deep teaching of Atiyoga it is indispensable first of all to build a perfect base that will enable the meaning of the teachings to arise with certainty within ourselves.

That is why one of the main things in the Teaching is that it is considered a definitive realization, and also then there are many secondary things which it is not necessary to renounce. That is the aim, the purpose of the Teaching. If a master teaches a Teaching he is aiming for the person to realize that in some way. And that is what someone who is interested in the Teaching is trying to understand.

The base means to understand all of these things a little. In reality, all the Teachings, particularly the Buddhist Teachings, from the Sutra Teachings right up to the Dzogchen Teachings, are for a person’s realization. Realization is what has been communicated, what we have discovered, which is the real condition. We have not only discovered it in an intellectual way, but it corresponds and it becomes real.

Intellectually we can understand that good and bad are the same thing, because they have the same principle. But it does not correspond. We can say that good and bad are the same but we are so conditioned and have such great attachment for good and great renunciation for bad that you see we are not realized. When you are realized you really find yourself in that condition, that knowledge, and at least it will diminish our tensions and our problems. So you have to understand that the meaning and sense of the Teaching is like that

**True sense**

This is why I say that the main thing is not just saying a prayer, reciting a mantra or visualizing something. I am not saying that these are not important. They can be important in a certain moment but these aren’t the real sense of the Teaching. The sense of the Teaching is to know our condition and find ourselves in that. When we know that then we can see that all the various forms of the Teachings are all aimed at that. Then instead of creating a lot of conflict we should try and understand this, and try to find the true Teachings of the Sutra Teaching, Tantra Teaching and Dzogchen Teachings.

When we talk about the Tibetan Buddhist Teachings you may have heard of the so-called Rime school. Rime means non-sectarian but it is considered almost as a school although in truth it is not a school. It is a kind of Teaching or method of applying the Teaching by teachers who are not in limits. Those who are still limited consider them a bit different from the others and call them Rime. One can have the true meaning of Rime if one has the true meaning of the Teaching. It is completely meaningless to say, “I am Rime, we are Rime”. This means absolutely nothing because that is already limiting. Rather one should already understand a sense of the Teaching,

because then one can find oneself in the central meaning of all the Teaching.

To understand this better the base is explained this way in this book so now we will look at the text.

**The Text**

I have written two texts on the base, one of which is a bit longer than this one. At the moment we are transcribing it and we have almost finished.

Those who are interested can study and learn it. But maybe there are too many words which is the reason I have also written this more concentrated version.

I have called this text the “Rinchen Pumzang” because in general to know what text we are talking about we have to give it a name. “Rinchen” means precious. “Pumzang” means vase. So precious vase. What is a vase? It is something that contains something inside it.

Remember when we do the initiation in tantrism, the first initiation is the vase initiation. In that case the vase represents our vajra body, and that vajra body contains our bodhicitta, our primordial state, our potentiality, our energy, everything. To enable us to understand that we have this vajra body that contains everything, there is this initiation of the vase. So a vase is something that contains and this book contains what is necessary as a base for someone who follows the Teaching. That is more or less the idea and that is the title of the text. \*

# Santi Maha Sangha<sup>1</sup>

Published in issue 10, 2010, of the Merigar Letter

Santi Maha Sangha is not a title or simply the name of a book. In the Oddiyana language Santi Maha means Dzogchen, and thus refers to our own true condition; Sangha is formed by those who participate and practice together.

First of all the aim of those who participate in the Santi Maha Sangha is their own realization, and this means to be truly in the knowledge of Dzogchen.

Those who discover their own true condition try and collaborate in order to definitely realize their own state, and this itself is the meaning of Santi Maha Sangha.

**The Mandala of the Dzogchen Community**

In the centre there is a sky-blue base, representing the primordial base of the condition of original purity. Inside this dimension there is the ‘unique golden syllable’,<sup>2</sup> symbolizing the absolute condition. It represents the Rigdzins of the Longchen Odsel Nyingthig, the Rigdzins of the direct, oral and symbolic transmissions, the master of the whole Dzogchen Community, whoever he may be, the vital spirit of the Ati teaching. The relationship between the single members of the Dzogchen Community and the Gakyils of the different countries or of the central places (Gars)<sup>3</sup> are represented here.

**The Dzogchen Community and Santi Maha Sangha**

The Dzogchen Community is a broad association of people brought together by a common interest in the teaching of Dzogchen Ati, who follow it under the guidance of a master possessing authentic knowledge of the state of Dzogchen, who study and practice, each according to his (or her) own capacity, the Tantras, the Lungs and the Upadeshas, and who further the circumstances necessary for these activities.

They, maintaining, continuing and developing the precious teaching of the ‘mind of Samantabhadra’ in the appropriate way, should favor the circumstances for the continuation of the spread of the teachings until the end of the world. To realize this goal they have to complete the various stages to realization of knowledge, both ordinary and special as fully described in the text Santi Maha Sangha and its commentaries (and in the texts of different levels).

The unique base or root of the Dzogchen Community is the understanding of the primordial state (Ati) in its own real condition and the application of this knowledge in life as the path.

**Preserving the Teaching, a responsibility for all practitioners**

For many years I have transmitted this teaching, and for many years many of you have been following this teaching and we collaborate with each other. We are still developing and therefore there is no consideration of an end or limitation, because samsara continues infinitely. So we must continue to transmit the understanding and knowledge of this teaching. This is the responsibility of all of us.

First of all I have this responsibility because I transmit this teaching to you. You also have a responsibility, and then we share this responsibility. We must keep the transmission in the correct way, and in order to do this we should not mix it with something else. We should not modify, change or create problems in the transmission. If we learn in the correct way then we can continue the transmission. We all need to accept this responsibility.

So, after many years I decided to organize this Santi Maha Sangha<sup>4</sup> training. Still now some people think Santi Maha Sangha is like studying at University in an academic style. I am not interested in this.

On the contrary, this knowledge must be completely integrated into each individual’s condition.

I have constructed this to help people have a very precise knowledge of the Dzogchen teachings and to have qualified people who can teach, help and continue the transmission which they have received in a correct way. This is a way of producing qualified people.

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Moreover, by practicing year after year, we should be able to discover how precious the Dzogchen teaching is and how it is really the essence of all teachings. How very difficult it is to understand the real sense of that teaching. Fortunately I have sufficient knowledge of the teaching by the grace of my teacher, and with my experience I can communicate this to other people who are interested.

I prepared the Santi Maha Sangha and made sacrifices in order that the teaching can be carried on in the future. I hope that it is a kind of guarantee that in the future there will be some continuation of the teaching. There is really the danger that the teaching will become only a form. Many people are dealing more with worldly situations; people are interested in power, position, money. If we are going ahead day after day in that way we completely lose the sense of the teaching. We know that and we try to take our responsibility. Taking responsibility means we should do the Santi Maha Sangha and make some really qualified teachers who can carry on the teaching in an alive way.

You already know that Santi Maha Sangha is very important for me in my work and even in my dreams. When I had leukemia and they informed me, I thought that my life was finished. I was not worried for the Dzogchen Community, my family or myself. I was only sorry that I could not go on with Santi Maha Sangha because I know that the Dzogchen teaching is very, very important. What I have understood I communicated to my students and I wish this knowledge to continue in the future. If people continue this teaching I am convinced there will be some kind of evolution. Teaching really helps all beings, particularly human beings.

Among people who follow Santi Maha Sangha Training there are some who are not doing things in a correct way and still they want to go ahead. But in this case what benefit can we have? It is very simple to understand. For example at each retreat I say that if you receive a teaching, it is related with transmission. That is why we must take care



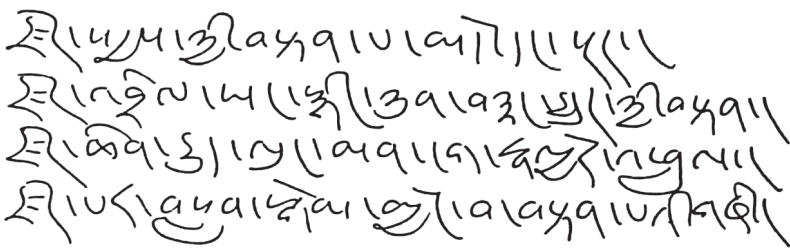
everything becomes very difficult when one puts the personal element or the personal problem in the foreground.

For example, there are people who, after having received transmission and attended retreats, think that they can do without other practitioners. That is not a correct idea, because we must remember that the path is just like a boat. In a boat someone is coordinating and taking responsibility, and the others in the boat need to collaborate until they arrive. Similarly, everyone is in the boat of the Dzogchen teaching. We are travelling in order to have to-

When we practice or learn the teaching, we know very well that the aspects of body, voice and mind exist, as well as *tawa*, *gompa* and *chöpa*. Which way of seeing and which knowledge do we have, including our intellectual comprehension? For example in the Santi Maha Sangha Base we have a book to study. But the book is not all, it is only part of the *tawa*. Which practices have you done? What capacity of practice do you have? How do you integrate it in yourself? Which manifestations of the practice have you noticed in yourself? This is not difficult to understand.

*Tawa*, the view, is related more to intellectual studies, what we learn. *Gompa* means being in the knowledge and dealing with it in one's existence. *Chöpa* means attitude; if one is too limited, doing something wrong and creating problems between students, then your *chöpa* is not good. You can check all of these aspects for yourself, above all those who want to participate in the Teachers' Training.

The Base of Santi Maha Sangha is to transmit the global basic knowledge of the nine vehicles, so in this case we should first learn and train ourselves, do the practice and become familiar with it. It is not sufficient only to read the words found in the book of the Base. In particular, one has to practice and have the experiences of the different practices, because one needs to have this knowledge. If we do not enter this knowledge with our experience, then we cannot communicate. ✱



From The Precious Vase  
Instructions on the Base of Santi Maha Sangha  
By Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

The base of the teaching consists in studying, meditating and experiencing perfectly  
The Buddha's perfect teaching contained in the sutras and tantras  
And the perfectly connected method and their essence, that is the teaching of the Mind of Samantabhadra,  
By means of the tantras, lungs and upadeshas of Total Perfection and of Yantra Yoga.

of the Dzogchen Community. I have not only the responsibility of giving the teaching, but also of taking care of that transmission. I cannot leave my transmission in the street. We do not know what will happen. For that reason we also need a Dzogchen Community and a Sangha that work and collaborate, taking care of this transmission. There is no way I can do it all by myself.

**Integrating Tawa, Gompa and Chöpa. Collaboration and karma yoga**

According to the Santi Maha Sangha Base examination, for people who are interested and participate in Santi Maha Sangha, first of all they must be interested in the Dzogchen Community. The training of Santi Maha Sangha is not only something learned in an intellectual way. This knowledge should be totally integrated into one's condition. If someone is not interested on the Dzogchen Community, there is no way they can be totally integrated.

From the beginning when we said the Community, we mean the Community of those who are linked together spiritually. Where there is a spiritual relationship, you find yourselves all in one boat. We are travelling by boat in order to arrive beyond a very big river and until we arrive beyond that river we should be interested in that boat. Therefore, we can understand how important the Dzogchen Community is for a trainee.

If there is a genuine spirit of collaboration, you can do everything, and everybody can participate. With a real spirit of mutual aid and collaboration, even something that seems extremely difficult to accomplish can be done. But

tal realization. Therefore it is important to collaborate and not create problems in the Community between practitioners. That is also one of our main practices: to be aware and know how to work with the circumstances. So, it is very important to communicate with each other and collaborate.

If people are interested in any kind of karma Yoga activity related to the Dzogchen Community it means those people are interested in the Dzogchen Community. For example, if someone is a member of a family then that person is interested in everything related to that family. In the same way, if there is something to do for the Dzogchen Community, one who is interested in the Dzogchen Community is always ready to participate.

The main subject of examination for the Santi Maha Sangha Base is not only the ten questions; they are only one of the Three Main Subjects. As we know very well, we have Three Gates, and these Gates are body, voice and mind, so we also have Three Main Subjects of the examination related with these Three Gates.

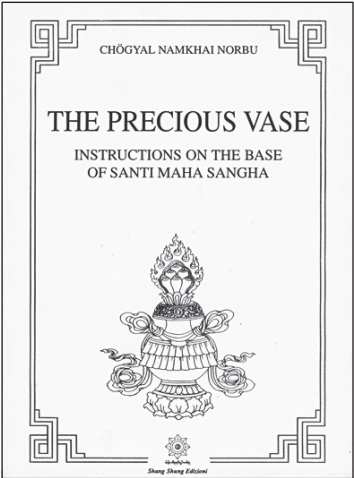
Relative to the body, we should contribute physically to any kind of Karma Yoga activity related to the Dzogchen Community. One who participates in Karma Yoga for the Dzogchen Community indicates or shows clearly his or her interest in the Dzogchen Community in a concrete way. According to the voice, one should learn the book of Santi Maha Sangha Base, and during the examination one should reply correctly to the ten questions. According to the mind, one should apply all the practices which are indicated in the book of Santi Maha Sangha Base.

1 This text has been assembled by Fabio Maria Risolo. All quotations are by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, taken from: "The Dzogchen Community" and "Teachings at the Teacher's Training".

2 Until today nine volumes related to the Longsal cycle (or the Luminous Clarity of the Universe, Intimate Essence of the Dakinis) have been published. They contain the teachings re-discovered by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu in his dreams of clarity.

3 For a detailed description of the mandala of the Dzogchen Community, in which the various Gars and Gakyils are symbolically represented, see the text "The Dzogchen Community".

4 This happened in 1993. Before, the Master had published a root text called "Santi Maha Sangha", a small poem composed of 36 quatrains. The cryptic indications contained there have been developed in the texts related to the various levels of the Santi Maha Sangha Training. Besides the Base level the Master thought out nine more levels for progressively deepening the Santi Maha Sangha (three for the Semde, three for the Longde and three for the Upadesha). Up to now they have been taught up to the Training for the fourth level.





# The Experience of Translating

An Interview with Adriano Clemente Merigar, March 2010

By the Merigar Letter editorial staff  
Transcription by Edith Casadei  
Translation by Nina Robinson

Published courtesy of the Merigar Letter

**Merigar Letter:** Dear Adriano, we would like to ask you about your experiences as a translator, in particular about the various volumes of Santi Maha Sangha you have worked on.

**Adriano:** It's a very interesting experience. I began to translate the Santi Maha Sangha books in 1993 and the first text I translated was the one of the Base. There were two versions: the longer one was called "The Precious Vase" and the shorter version was called "The Wish Fulfilling Vase". I translated the second version, "The Wish Fulfilling Vase", which was published with a blue cover, while the other, which had been transcribed by several people, was only produced as bound photocopies. At that time there was only an oral recording of the translation of the Base. In fact Rinpoche used to translate orally and record the translations onto audio cassettes, which were then given to various practitioners who transcribed them. The Base of the Santi Maha Sangha was done like that. The same system was used for the transcription of the translation of the book of the Dance of the Vajra, which Rinpoche also translated orally onto cassettes: an incredible work that took hours and hours. He did it mainly when he was in retreat in his cabin.

I started by translating the abbreviated version of the book of the Base and then went on to do the First level, the Second, and then the Third. I did them all one after the other fairly quickly. In 1994 we started doing Santi Maha Sangha here in Merigar. The Base level exams took place here for the first time, and then, from 1994 to 1998, Rinpoche did four levels, one after the other. So I translated the relative texts rather quickly, one every year, except for the last one, the text of the Fourth Level, which I translated later more slowly. It has not yet been published. After 1998 there was a pause until 2008, when Rinpoche again gave the Fourth Level Training.

Later I retranslated the book of the Base of the Santi Maha Sangha in a completed version under the title The Precious Vase; and then recently I also finished the new complete version of the First Level. It was an important work, comparable to that of the Drung Deu and Bon, which took me about four or five years. This too was a very difficult job.



**ML:** Was it because of the difficulty of the Tibetan texts?

**Adriano:** Yes, it was. In general my work is not just translating what is written, but also checking all the sources and quotations. As you certainly already know, these Santi Maha Sangha books don't contain only the words of Rinpoche from start to finish. He also presents the main points of the way of seeing, the meditation and the behavior, on the basis of quotations from different texts. They are from texts written at various times between the tenth century and the nineteenth century. In that range of time there can be many different styles so we can't speak of one type or style in the Santi Maha Sangha books. Some of the texts are simple and others are difficult, some are in verse in poetic style and others in more philosophical style; it depends. Anyway, my work isn't just translating; it's also studying the background and verifying the sources word for word.

**ML:** When you translate verse do you try to keep the verse form or do you sometimes render it in prose?

**Adriano:** It depends. In general I try not to translate into verse form if it is not poetry. Tibetan texts are often written in verse, not because they are poetry but because it is a traditional way of writing, probably because in ancient times it was easier to memorize texts written in verse.

**ML:** So there is a meter?  
**Adriano:** Yes. For example the Tantra, "Kungye Gyalpo" is in verse form, but it is not necessary to read it in verse. If it were translated into verse form it would be a bit heavy to read. Personally, if it is not poetry, I prefer a clear prose. That is the system I have used for the Longsal. The volumes of the Longsal are all in verse but I have rendered them in prose in small paragraphs that usually correspond to the quatrains. That was my choice. Writing in verse doesn't necessarily mean it is poetry. A very clear example of this is the bi-

ography of Khyentse written by Rinpoche, the one translated by Enrico (Dell'Angelo Ed.), which is soon going to be published. It is written in verse but it is not poetry. Tibetan poetry uses particular terms and expressions by which one can recognize whether it is poetry or is simply written in verse for other reasons.

**ML:** However, the complete works of "Jam Cho" (Rinpoche's sister) are in verse.

**Adriano:** In that case it's really poetry, just like the songs of Rinpoche that have been translated and published, are poetry, so that's a different matter.

**ML:** You said that a good part, I don't know what percentage, of the volumes of the Santi Maha Sangha is composed of quotations.

**Adriano:** Yes. I would say maybe 70–80%.

**ML:** What are the characteristics and the differences between the 30% of the Santi Maha Sangha books composed by Rinpoche and the volumes of the Longsal?

**Adriano:** There's a lot of difference. The Longsal texts are not composed by Rinpoche; they are not his works of art. The Longsal consists of ancient texts, some of them dating back to the time of Padmasambhava; anyway they are *termas*.

**ML:** The Tibetan is completely different?

**Adriano:** It's completely different; archaic expressions are used, which at times have nothing to do with Rinpoche's style. When Rinpoche writes prose he uses modern language, very clear.

**ML:** Simple, let's say.  
**Adriano:** Simple, very simple, very logical and precise. Usually the style of language he writes in is very clear and understandable. Anyway, it is not even a literary style; I would say that it is very modern Tibetan for the most part.

**ML:** But the Tibetan of the Longsal texts is poetic isn't it?  
**Adriano:** It's in verse.

**ML:** So it's poetic in the strictest sense of the word.  
**Adriano:** I don't know if 'poetic' is the right word.

**ML:** It's perhaps much more symbolic, more enigmatic.  
**Adriano:** That, yes; but that's not necessarily poetic. They are cryptic texts; the meaning is not always clear.

**ML:** You explained at the beginning that the vocabulary is different.

**Adriano:** They are texts of teachings of the Dzogchen Upadesha, so very often they are not clear without a commentary. Sometimes Rinpoche himself can find it difficult to interpret a verse. Then maybe at times he receives indications in dreams that explain the meaning; it has happened a number of times. For example, Rinpoche said in the last Mandarava retreats that he thought several of the relative *tsa lung* practices should be done in a certain way until recently, when he had a dream in which a Dakini showed him how to do them. This means that the text was not sufficiently clear. You cannot just read the text and do the practices without someone to interpret it for you. This happens very often with regard to the Longsal teachings.

**ML:** As the translator of the whole Santi Maha Sangha project that is gradually going ahead and has so far reached the Fourth Level, what impressions or thoughts do you have about the overall structure of this endeavour?

**Adriano:** I already spoke about my experience: it's a matter of texts of different types and I always have to study the whole background and understand the subject of each one of them. Tibetan is always like that. If you have to translate a text on astrology you have to study astrology first to be able to do it, because the same term used in the context of philosophy means something else in astrology and something else again in medicine. When I learned Tibetan, when I worked on Drung Deu and Bon, since there are twelve chapters, each very different from all the others, I had to study the traditions, the rituals, the medicine, the astrology, the methods of divination; I had to learn a bit about all the aspects of Tibetan culture and the terminology used in each field. This is a bit true of all Tibetan texts.

**ML:** You are the translator of the Santi Maha Sangha books. I imagine that for you as a practitioner, that is something special.  
**Adriano:** Yes, certainly, and not only the Santi Maha Sangha, whatever text of the teaching I translate I feel as a great responsibility because that which reaches the reader, the practitioner of the Dzogchen Community, any-

way passes through my interpretation. Certainly it is an interpretation that for the most part is based on the explanations of Rinpoche, but sometimes I make mistakes due to misunderstanding. Then I notice and I correct them. It's normal that it should be like that; the work isn't easy or simple, but it is very good, especially in the first phase of the work: the first translation. It is always very inspiring; it is like creating something in that moment, translating.

**ML:** A creation?  
**Adriano:** Yes, there's a strong aspect of creativity, because it is linked to interpretation. It is what you perceive of the meaning.

**ML:** So do you do a research of the language or do you only try to render the meaning?

**Adriano:** To start with I translate from Tibetan to English and English is not my language. My vocabulary is very limited and so I try as much as possible to give a faithful rendering of what the text says so that those who help me with the editing know what is written in Tibetan. So I don't have a personal style; I don't think you can talk about my style. In fact some people say I write rather badly.

**ML:** One more question: can one say that the language Rinpoche uses in the Longsal or in his *termas* is similar in style to the language used in *termas* in general such as the Longchen Nyintig ...

**Adriano:** I am really not able to say. I haven't made a study.

**ML:** But you have translated Longchenpa.

**Adriano:** Yes, I have translated a few quotations of Longchenpa and Jigmed Lingpa. The language is a bit similar to that of *termas* in general when they are in verse. Then there's a Longsal text in prose: the one on Tawa. It is very interesting and seems as if the language is a bit archaic, but it's difficult for me to say, really. The language of the prose is quite clear, while that of the verses, as I already said before, is not easy. However, the stories Rinpoche tells, such as those in the Longsal, are in modern Tibetan, similar to the spoken language, also Rinpoche often prefers and uses the dialogue form and so he writes in very simple modern Tibetan.

**ML:** Like that of the Santi Maha Sangha.

**Adriano:** Yes, let's say it is similar to that of the Santi Maha Sangha, even though it's not that he is telling stories in the Santi Maha Sangha.

**ML:** How do you reconcile the fact of translating an extremely rich Tibetan vocabulary using a relatively restricted English?

**Adriano:** Usually I try to render what the Tibetan says. Often there are many repetitions in Tibetan prose. This is not a

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About Santi Maha Sangha

Interview with Justin Hudgins and Mark Giblin

Conway August 16, 2012

**The Mirror:** Justin, can you tell us a little about yourself?  
**Justin:** I am 22 years old and currently studying for a Bachelor’s degree in East Asian Studies at the University of Chicago. I will enter my 3rd year this fall. I am also doing the online Shang Shung Institute Tibetan Medicine Program with Dr. Phuntsog Wangmo.

**TM:** Can you tell us when and how you first encountered the Dzogchen Teachings and Rinpoche?  
**J:** When I was about 15 or 16 years old I was looking into different spiritual paths because I felt like I was missing out on something, I found a couple of different dharma groups and was meditating with a Zen group for a while. One thing I enjoyed doing was reading Buddhist forums on line, and there was this one guy who seemed to have a lot of experience and knew what he was talking about, and he kept mentioning Chögyal Namkhai Norbu. So I checked it out and listened to a couple of web casts and then kept listening to web casts. I first met Rinpoche at Merigar East in the summer of 2009. It was a 10-day retreat on rushen and semdzin.

**TM:** How was the experience of that retreat and being in Romania?  
**J:** It was fantastic. I had been traveling around Europe already a little bit. One of the things I remember is walking around Bucharest taking pictures – I like going into churches especially in different countries – so I walked into this one church and there was an Eastern Orthodox baptism that I watched and then, close to the end of the retreat, I was at Merigar East and one of the residents of the house across the street from where I was stay-

ing died, and I also got to see what a traditional Romanian funeral was like.  
**TM:** When you were growing up was there any kind of religious or spiritual practice in your family, since you said you felt there was something missing?  
**J:** Not really. Sometimes we went to church with my grandparents on holidays. When I was growing up I was home-schooled for a few years and we were living in the Bible belt around people who were very interested in God and Jesus and all that, and I felt like maybe there was a little something to it and I should look into it.

**TM:** Mark, how old are you and can you tell us a little about your life that led you to the teachings?  
**Mark:** I am 33 years old. I graduated with a degree in economics from the University of Chicago. I got interested in the dharma in general during college and I reached a point where I became dissatisfied with everything. I started to study Western philosophy, Eastern religions and religions of the Middle East, but I was not happy with any of it. I met a Zen roshi, so I went a couple of times and received meditation instruction from him and that was very nice. What happened was I did not want to be in the world anymore and I had saved a little money and ended up going to Greece for a while and then to Jerusalem for a little while. I went to Greece thinking it would be a neutral place and then when I was there I got rid of all my things – so then I just had a blanket, a toothbrush and toothpaste. But I still had money. Then I decided I wanted to get rid of my money as well. I did not want to have any possessions. So in Greece I went to a travel agent and asked where I could travel to get rid of all my money. It ended being Jerusalem. I had the perfect amount of money to make it to Jerusalem. So when I arrived there I had nothing, only a blanket and toothbrush. Some Catholic nuns took me in and I did some meditation while I was there.

I came back to the USA. I came to Massachusetts and that is where I met my first teacher, Kunzang Dechen Lingpa, in Shelburne Falls. Then I worked for a year to save money to go and see Kunzang Dechen Lingpa in India and he died the week before I was to leave for India. Then I decided to go on retreat in Tso Pema and that is where I first heard about Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche. I remember the day I heard about Rinpoche I woke up and thought of Adzom Drukpa and I started to read the biography of Adzom Drukpa. I put the book down and went for lunch in town and ran into someone from New Zealand who was a student of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu. He told me there was a web cast coming up so we rented a space in an Internet café and attended. When I came back from India I listened to web casts and then Rinpoche came here in 2008. I thought the way that Rinpoche presented Dzogchen was unbelievable and then I started to listen to more web casts and get more involved.

**TM:** Justin, what inspired you to participate in Santi Maha Sangha? Do you remember when you first encountered it and what your feeling was, etc?  
**J:** I sort of had this idea to study to Santi Maha Sangha to have a base in the teachings ever since I read the synopsis of *The Precious Vase*. I had had some Tibetan teachings in the past from various lamas but it never all fit together. Rinpoche often mentions how when he got sick in the early go’s and thought he might die, he has said a number of times the reason he wanted to stay alive was to continue the Santi Maha Sangha for the development and continuation of the Dzogchen teachings, to help people realize those teachings and to help people to have foundation in the teachings to be able to help other people in the future. So I figured if Rinpoche said it was important then it must be important. Also I studied abroad at a boarding school for a couple of years in Wales, and around the time I had encountered Rinpoche, I also went to Yeselling in Austria for a Mandarava Tsalung retreat with Elio Guaris-



Saralé, Mark and Justin (left to right). Photo: N. Zeitz

co and that was my first interaction with the Dzogchen Community apart from the world wide transmission. Shortly thereafter Elio was in Vienna for a couple of days when I was there as well. In Vienna he gave a talk on Santi Maha Sangha and its importance. I still think this incident is pretty cool – I got off at the stop near where the center was but I did not know actually where it was, and I was trying to navigate my way around, it was in the evening, and as I was walking around trying to find the place and I thought I was close but I was not sure, and then I see some people coming down the street who seem familiar and it was Elio and his attendant and he recognizes me from a couple of days ago and he said, “Oh hey, want to come with us?”  
I got my first copy of *The Precious Vase* at Yeselling. I read a little of it. I knew I would participate in Santi Maha Sangha at some point in the future, but at that time I was very new.

**TM:** So you have a lot on your plate because you are a university student, studying Tibetan Medicine, you are the secretary of Tsegyalgar West and you spent the summer at the Khandroling encampment. At what point did you decide to take the base level exam and how did you prepare for that?  
**J:** To be completely honest I was not sure I was ready. There is a lot of material covered in *The Precious Vase* and I would not claim to know most of it. There are a lot of practices to do as well. I still was not sure but considering my financial constraints of the moment and how I will have to start going to work in the summers and it will be more difficult to actually find the possibility to go and see Rinpoche and go to retreats, so I decided to go for it and the worst case would be that I studied and practiced some of the base and I would be ready for the next time he comes around. My tendency is toward intellectual study and reading, so how many times I read *The Precious Vase*

versus the amount of practices, I definitely did more reading.  
**TM:** Did you have any other practitioners to study with or help you?  
**J:** I did not do any Santi Maha Sangha retreats, but when I was in Baja, Tsegyalgar West, for the winter break and I spoke with others there who were studying for the base exam. There was also a Skype study group and I was listening to most of those. The Skype groups were helpful in that they were an impetus to study, also helpful for clarifying the answers together and through the discussion individually, and in some of the sessions there were Santi Maha Sangha instructors participating like Sasha Poubants, and he sat with us for three hours one morning and answered people’s questions and was immensely helpful.

**TM:** Mark, how did you decide to enter the Santi Maha Sangha experience?  
**M:** I had been in retreat for 10 months and my friend had mentioned to me a couple of times, you should do Santi Maha Sangha and I said well, I don’t know. I did not have much money and knew you had to pay for the training and you had to stay longer and I was only planning to stay for the main retreat. My friend was insisting a bit that I do the Santi Maha Sangha and I said I could not for lack of funds and then he offered to pay for it. So I got a copy of *The Precious Vase* from another friend during the Jnanadhakini retreat and I studied it, took the exam and then the training. I also had a background in the teachings and dzogchen and had been studying dharma for many years.

**TM:** Now maybe we can ask you both about your experience of the preparation, the taking of the exam, the training and any observations you have about that experience?

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problem for Tibetan but it is for English. Usually I put them all in at first and then sort it out with the editing. So it’s not always the case that Tibetan prose is richer and its wealth is lost in translation; I absolutely don’t believe so. And then we always print the Tibetan text on the facing page; so you can check whether the translation is faithful to the original.  
**ML:** Often in Tibetan texts one finds “said”, “he who said this”...  
**Adriano:** Yes that’s the Tibetan style in fact. Anyway, Rinpoche’s prose is not particularly elaborate; it is a very simple, clear prose with an easily understandable structure. Certainly Rinpoche is also able to write in many dif-

ferent genres. In fact he has also written classical-style poetry and a book entitled “Norbu Doshel”, “Necklace of Jewels”, which is written almost in the language of logic – philosophical style. Do you remember? It seems almost like a debate.  
**ML:** Dialectical.  
**Adriano:** Yes, dialectical: there is one who affirms a theory and another who negates it. It is very interesting. We have been going to publish it for many years; sooner or later it will be done. In other books, like *The Necklace of Zi*, completely written by Rinpoche, there are not many quotations and the language is modern and very simple.

**ML:** That’s good, thank you Adriano for your kindness.  
**Adriano:** Thanks to you. ©



# About Santi Maha Sangha

Interview with Saralé Lizdas

August 14, 2012 Conway

**The Mirror:** When did you meet Rinpoche, how long have you been studying the Dzogchen teachings and why you did you participate in Santi Maha Sangha? **Saralé:** I met Rinpoche on Margarita Island, Venezuela in 2004 and I have been studying and practicing since then. I was embarking on a yearlong travel in South America to record children’s songs. I am a Spanish teacher. I went along with a friend of mine who invited me to join her. She is a student of Rinpoche. My friend went to the retreat and I was doing my own thing, but I was living with my friend near the Gar and I met Rinpoche on the beach. I went to the next retreat after she left.

My plan was to backpack around South America so I only had a backpack and I did not want to carry a lot of stuff. I had jumped into the teachings, into the deep end, and I was asking people if I could buy only one book that tells me about the teachings, what book should I buy? They told me *The Precious Vase*. That was the one book I had and after I read it and had been around a little while, I discovered that that was the book that people used to study and take these exams and things. That was very far from my idea of what I would do, I just wanted something to help me to understand what I had gotten myself into.

**M:** Was the book very helpful? **SL:** At the beginning the book was not very helpful, it was very thick. It was more helpful to hang out with practitioners...I had never heard the word samsara before, so I was clueless. Talking to Community members was helpful, but I also pursued and read the book and was asking people for help. I did not know anyone or anything; I had no filters and I would go up and ask anyone anything and ask, “What does this



Santi Maha Sangha First Level Training at Tsegyalgar East (Saralé directly to Rinpoche’s left).

Photo: N. Zeitz

mean?” and if they did not know they would direct me to someone else. I was fearless. If I had not had this kind of support from other practitioners I would not be here now. It is so important to help and support new people in the Community.

Then at another time I was in Argentina at a retreat and people were studying for the base level exam and it was really inspiring to be around all these people. They would be in small groups in the Gonpa, out under the trees, in the kitchen preparing food and talking about the exam, and I was around all that and it was very inspiring and I thought, I really want to do that some day. These people really know what we are doing.

They would give me their flash cards and have me ask them questions so I got to learn a bit that way. I really liked getting together with other practitioners and studying and knowing deep down what this path and working with this transmission means. It impacted me and inspired me to want to do take the exam one day.

**M:** So when you studied a little, read the book and spoke with

people, did it help you understand more what Rinpoche was talking about in the teachings? **SL:** Not until I more seriously started to study the book later on. It took me a lot of time trying to get through the book, but about a year ago when I decided I would take the exam and studied more in depth, that is when I started to understand Rinpoche so much more. The understanding of the teachings increased a lot.

**M:** Did you have other people you could study with? **SL:** I am completely isolated from other practitioners where I live in Madison, Wisconsin and I would just be by myself. In the past 2 years I was able to attend a couple of Santi Maha Sangha retreats with Jim Valby and Costantino Albini. And then sometimes the sangha in Milwaukee would get together and help me study.

**M:** So then about a year ago you decided to enter and you prepared and you did some of the Santa Maha Sangha practices. How were the practices for you?

**SL:** They were really nice. I liked having a list of the practices you need to complete, it really motivated me and it went along with

my learning style. The practices gave me something to focus on because sometimes there are just so many methods, teachings and practices, it can be overwhelming, so it gave me a really focused way to get in there.

**M:** So then you arrived to the exam. You were here about a month before the exam, participating in the Summer Encampment on Khandroling. Do you want to talk about the exam and preparation time before it? **SL:** When I arrived here I had just finished the school year and I am a teacher, so the end of the school year is very busy. I told myself when I got to Khandroling I would do a lot of studying. But then I came here and I just wanted to practice more than anything. I just felt like where I am is where I am, I made all the progress I could during the year, and now I cannot change any of that. I studied with some people around here on the land, and then I decided it was more important to be relaxed and I was so much into the practices when I got here. I was working on the land and helping to get everything ready for the retreats [see page ? for Saralé’s article on the Summer Encampment on Khandroling], so I was prac-

ticating integration. We would listen to the web casts and that was like studying. Then any points I was not sure of I could ask other people here who were doing the exam. I tried to be really mellow and relaxed and I came to some acceptance of being where I was, until the day before then I started to cram and the hour before the exam I got really nervous.

**M:** And how was the experience of the exam and the training? **SL:** The exam was fine! It was not so brutal, much less so than I imagined. The training was more intense than I thought, than I expected. There was a feeling excitement when Rinpoche was teaching – it was like the opportunity to go more deeply into the teachings. The base is so huge, so it was great to get more focused and go more in depth. I also realized the need to go more into the base so it becomes more stable and that I am not ready to continue on yet – that I have more work to do and I want to finish up those practices before I can go on.

I still go back and read *The Precious Vase*, I have not abandoned it. I still go back and read Chapter 5. [The Views] [Laughter]

**M:** How was the feeling among the participants, was there any kind of camaraderie? **SL:** Oh yes, we would be asking each other when we were taking the exam and when you passed everyone was happy and celebrating for the others. There were lots of parties on Khandroling. People were very happy. It is nice to see people studying together, to participate in that study, to have people supporting each other. It was really community forming as well – the preparation, the taking the exam, the support and the celebrations after. That was really beautiful.

*Saralé is a dual immersion kindergarten teacher in Madison, WI. In 2004 she was traveling in South America, recording children’s songs and photographing them, visiting their schools and meeting them in their neighborhoods.* ©

>> continued from previous page **J:** In terms of the preparation, on top of the intellectual study, which is not easy to understand, there are the many hours of practice, which I needed and still need to complete, and since I am going to college it was not easy to find the time to do everything. I was trying to juggle study and practice of Santi Maha Sangha with finals at college. So the day of exam arrives and I was very nervous. I had spent more time preparing for this exam than any other exam in my life. I had been studying and practicing and had a lot invested in it and because I am a college student I put more pressure on myself, I had to do well on the exam. Everyone was nervous. All of the older students

and people who had already done Santi Maha Sangha said not to worry, relax it will be ok, but of course I thought they were lying, they all studied a lot more than I had and they must have been nervous too. The exam was very nice, very relaxed, Jim was very jovial, exuberant and enthusiastic and seemed genuinely happy that I was in the room. Then I passed the exam and then in another day or two the training started. The training was a great experience. It was intimate and it was the smallest retreat I had ever been to so it was really nice, being 10 or 15 feet from Rinpoche, receiving these instructions and having things explained. In a very real way Santi Maha Sangha is a deepening of a com-

mitment to the teachings and to Rinpoche and the Community and it was nice in that context to be receiving these teachings from Rinpoche. Also it was great to be surrounded by the people in the room whom were also making that commitment and we were all entering it together. It was also nice to do the training with my Vajra Family from Tsegyalgar West, Monica Patino and Anna Couchenal, who are both on the Gakyil. Santi Maha Sangha was extremely valuable, as I said I had studied with other teachers, but Santi Maha Sangha brought together all these bits of knowledge, which was never a clear, into a cohesive whole. *The Precious Vase* helped me pull all the infor-

mation together and understand it. **TM:** Mark, you who only studied for 5 days, how was the exam for you? **M:** My friend Sangye and I decided to take the exam together and we had already been studying dharma for years, accumulating knowledge, so we studied together for these days and tried to determine how much of each category we should know in memory, etc. I even missed my exam the first time because they changed my time and they had emailed me but somehow it did not register. Jim was very relaxed and to me it felt more like a conversation than an exam.

What I started to experience when I started studying and listened to Rinpoche’s teachings, I realized how great an opportunity it is to study semde, longde and upadesha thoroughly and in-depth with Rinpoche. I realized there was probably no other teacher who offered this. ©



## Kunsangar South

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## News from Kunsangar South

Crimea, Ukraine

We are glad to inform you that there was a retreat with the Precious Dzogchen Master, Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, at Kunsangar South, Crimea, from August 2 to 9.

On August 1 the base of the Longsal Stupa was consecrated at Kunsangar South. All practitioners together with Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche made Sang and Sekyem, and then precious objects consecrated by Rinpoche were placed in the foundation of the Stupa and Rinpoche consecrated the foundation.

From now on this Stupa will promote peace and harmony, prosperity and clearance of negativities among all those beings that will come into contact with the Stupa. This Stupa will have very special contents – it will be filled with Longsal texts – the unique Teaching which we received from the modern Dzogchen Master, Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche. The Stupa will be topped by a symbol of that Teaching – the symbol of Longsal.

This Longsal Stupa is one of the first such Stupa. The same Stupa is being constructed in the center of Izhevsk city, Udmurtia (Russia). Therefore the practice and laying of the Stupa's foundation and precious objects were performed by Izhevsk practitioners in Udmurtia simultaneously with the Stupa events at Kunsan-



A joyful moment with Rinpoche at Kunsangar South.

Photo: R. Kogel

clusion of the Mongolian and European traditions, and images of Teaching symbols. Rinpoche's idea was to include all cultures here, and Migmar always follows Rinpoche's instructions when painting a gonpa.

Artists and designers who are Dzogchen practitioners as well as other people from Russia, Ukraine, and Italy who wanted to help came to take part in the painting of the Gonpa under the guidance of Migmar. All participants worked with one accord, having performed great and essential work. They had many positive emotions and a good time.

After the consecration of the Stupa's foundation we celebrated the inauguration of the Gonpa of Kunsangar South. Just imagine, quite recently, in May, 2010,

incarnation was also presented in the Gonpa.

Retreat participants attended and listened to the Teaching every day showing great interest and understanding; they also attended the sessions where SMS teachers explained practices, and

everyone could receive explanations in reply to their questions. In the mornings and evenings we had Yantra Yoga and Vajra Dance sessions. Adriana Dal Borgo taught us the 12 A dance and also a lively Tibetan dance, Trashi Delek. In the evening all interest-

ed people could learn and participate in Chod practice under the guidance of a SMS teacher.

On the next-to-last day of the retreat after the Ganapuja, we held a traditional auction which you could watch and participate in via web-cast. Rinpoche advised us to use the auction money to construct a cafeteria and to make conditions more comfortable at the Gar. When all lots were sold and the auction was completed we all danced the Tibetan dances that we liked!

The young Gar also needs to plant some greenery, therefore we conceived a project where everyone could purchase some plants which would subsequently be planted at the Gar. At the time of the retreat about \$2500 was collected, so many wonderful trees and bushes will be planted this autumn.

Also upon the completion of the retreat the Gakyil of Kunsangar South held a meeting where a new Geko was elected who will take care of the Gar and practitioners during the next year. ©



Migmar and the Gonpa painting team.

gar South on August 1 via Skype. Thus, Rinpoche consecrated two Stupas in two really distant places at the same time!

These two Stupas had been prepared during the whole year in collaboration with Kunsangar South and Izhevsk under the personal guidance of Giovanni Boni and Migmar. Shortly before laying the foundations of the Stupa, Migmar visited Izhevsk and Kunsangar South in order to make the last preparations related to the construction of the Stupa and the painting of the sogshin – the core element of the Stupa.

At the same time, from June 23 to July 18, the Gonpa at Kunsangar South was painted according to Rinpoche's instructions and under the guidance of Migmar. Migmar applied the Tibetan style decorations with in-

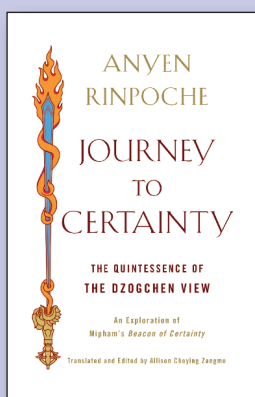
there was only the foundation of the Gonpa and today we and our Precious Master joyfully celebrate the opening of our Gonpa – a place where the transmission of Dzogchen Teaching will be preserved for future generations! During the celebrations we had fruit and chocolate, and a wine buffet and had fun participating in entertaining performances with dance and songs.

The first day of the retreat started on August 2; the Teaching was Man-ngag Tag-drol Gyud, a precious terma of Rigdzin Changchub Dorje. For many people who came here it was the first Dzogchen retreat in their lives where they could be present together with the Master and hear the unique Dzogchen Teaching. On the first day, the film My Re-



Rinpoche consecrates the Longsal Stupa.

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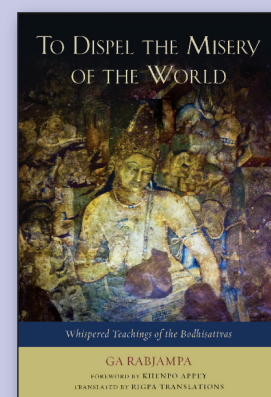
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# Tsegyalgar East Welcomes Chögyal Namkhai Norbu Home

Jacqueline Gens

After a lapse of four years, Tsegyalgar East welcomed Chögyal Namkhai Norbu into his house for the first time, built for him from the ground up on the Pike Farm property now known as Lower Khandroling. Just days before his arrival on July 2, a crew of Community workers finished a swimming pool and deck addition so that Rinpoche could exercise and enjoy the company of his four grandchildren gathered together on this rare occasion to visit their grandparents. It was very moving seeing him and Rosa walk up the path of stones hand-set by Soledad Suarez and Paula Barry just weeks before and decorated with colored auspicious symbols by made by Ellen Halbert with chalk on the morning of their arrival from NYC. A cluster of local Community members met Rinpoche with kadags and many

tion of the Vajra Hall indicating that it would be important for the future. On the morning of the main retreat, he also attended the Shang Shung School of Tibetan Medicine School graduation under the direction of Dr. Phunstog Wangmo whose ceremony was held on the Amherst College campus where he addressed the students wearing traditional Tibetan outfits. Paola Zamperini, a professor in the Department of Asian Studies at Amherst College, as a director of the Institute, conferred the certificate awarded to students upon completion of their studies in Conway, MA. From July 4-10, 2012 Rinpoche taught the Jnanadhakini Thutig from his Longsal cycle. These teachings represent an extremely essential heart essence from his terma cycle relating to the Song of the Vajra. Their unfolding spans decades since his



Rinpoche with singers Rigzin Palmo on the right and Dega on the left. Photo: N. Zeitz

Naturally, from the inside for the Gakyil members and organizational teams of dozens of people who made this retreat happen there were a number of dramatic moments. At one point, when a fire alarm went off in the building as Rinpoche was teaching, hundreds of people were instructed to file outside the building. As Rinpoche was escorted out of the building he mimed in jest a per-

to their students or as hard working. On July 6, during the time of the Jnanadhakini retreat, we stopped to celebrate the birthday of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. We began the celebration with a web cast long life practice of Mandarava and wound things up with wonderful performances of traditional Tibetan songs by

Dega from Boston and Rigzin Palmo from New York City. Following our main retreat, Tsegyalgar East immediately launched into preparations for our second retreat of Santi Maha Sangha level 1 trainings. During the exam period 65 people took and passed the base exam with Jim Valby, assisted by Naomi Zeitz. Of great benefit to the Tsegyalgar East Community was an instruction to support the Shang Shung Institute as part of the Gar. Together the Tsegyalgar East Gakyil and the Shang Shung Institute Board crafted a plan to integrate the Institute's activities better into the Gar. Upon receiving information of this plan, Rinpoche promised to return frequently to Tsegyalgar East to support this promising direction. To this end, the Tsegyalgar East Community invites a warm welcome and wish for everyone to visit us in the summer of 2013 and then again in 2014 for our Vajra Hall inauguration and delayed 30th anniversary celebration. ©



Rinpoche teaching at Mohawk High School.

Photo: N. Zeitz

lungta fluttering in the breeze, including some of the Tibetan medicine students from Shang Shung who had just returned from their three-month optional internship in Tibet following their four-year study program in Conway. Rinpoche was joined by his extended family including Dr. Phuntsog Wangmo, Yeshe Tsomo and Tseyang (Yeshe's daughter) also newly returned from Tibet. In her welcome speech, Paula Barry remarked that it was 30 years to the exact day that Chögyal Namkhai Norbu first taught in Conway on July 2, 1982. Many of those first students are still part of the Dzogchen Community. Immediately upon his arrival, our retreat was set in motion with barely a moment to breathe. Rinpoche launched into a vigorous schedule that included attending the sang and serykem rite with Ganapuja at the Vajra Hall the next day. As it was the first time he saw it in person, he had many praises for the construc-

childhood when his dream clarity first manifested. Approximately 461 people attended the retreat located this year at the nearby Mohawk High School with teachings by Rinpoche in the morning followed by afternoon practices of Yantra Yoga and Vajra Dance on upper Khandroling in the Vajra Hall. There, Prima Mai taught for the second time ever, the extraordinary, Universal Magical Vajradance of the Space (Universe). Practitioners came from all over the world. It was a moment of thrill for our registration table when a lady and her daughter appeared having traveled all the way from Siberia to attend the retreat in our rural area. Young and old, locals and visitors of many nations arrived to enter through the gates of these profound teachings offered so rarely in this dimension. 1800 people also joined our live retreat worldwide through the closed web cast.

son running for their lives as he asked why we were all walking in so orderly a fashion. As there was no fire, everyone reentered the hall and the teachings went on. Generally, in the past I had only observed the retreat from the outside. As part of the Blue Gakyil this year, it was amazing to observe the dynamic coordination efforts required by hundreds of people to host a visit by our master. Furthermore, what proved a revelation to me was how hard Rinpoche himself works during his retreats with many requests for private interviews; making hundreds of protections cords personally empowered by him for the children of our Community; empowering statues filled with precious substances; meetings with community members, not to mention, his usual avalanche of international emails – all this on top of preparing to teach almost daily and his own scholarly work. There is no other Teacher that I know of who is so available

## Khandroling Summer Encampment

Saralé Lidzas

I had the very good fortune to be able to spend 2 months camping on Khandroling this summer, the first summer of Tsegyalgar East's Summer Encampment program. The deal was you get to camp free on the land plus get 2 meals a day and the retreat paid for in exchange

for your labor, or as I put it, in exchange for getting to pour your sweat and presence into the land. The program was led by its director, Joe Zurylo and the hours were flexible; I decided when I wanted to work, as long as I put in at least 4 hours a day. The flexibility was great because it enabled me to create my own practice schedule as well. It was a most blissful summer living on the land and collaborating with the sangha, so I decided to share a little glimpse about how I spent my time.

>> continued on the following page



Dancing in the Vajra Hall.

Photo: P. Barry



# The Dance of the 12 A Kalongdorjika

Merigar West is happy to announce that on 18 September 2012 from 3 pm to 5 pm it will be possible to learn the Dance of the 12 A Kalongdorjika – The Universal Magical Vajra Dance of Space (Universe) in closed webcast from the Merigar West Gonpa led by Prima Mai for everyone who has already knowledge of one or two or all three Vajra Dances we practice so far and are members of the Dzogchen Community with Transmission of Dzogchen Knowledge and Teachings.

This is a quote from Rinpoche talking about this Dance in Tenerife in 2011:

We know that there are three types of dance.

There is the Vajra Dance that we already practice, including the Dance of the Song of Vajra, the Dance of the three Vajras and the Dance of the Six Spaces.

Then there is the Dance with the symbol (note: Longsal Symbol of the Vajra Dance) called Kalong Dorje Kar, and lastly one for which we don't even need a drawing, where there's only one point representing the centre of a mandala or of the dimension, and you move in relation to that. It's very easy.

The text is in Tibetan, it's difficult for me to read and translate directly, but I'll try. I salute Gomadevi, first of all.



Photo: R. Kogel

The Dance must be applied with three intentions. Any dancer, whether male or female, must not remain in the ordinary concept, but males are pawo and females are pamo. We must always have this presence. This is the first intention.

Then when we dance, we must not just think that we are doing something

inside a room, but that everything is self-perfected, with the principle of the central point and the dimension of the mandala.

Lastly, regarding the place where we dance, we must think we're in space, without any support, in the state of integration. We must dance with this presence. These are the three

principles of intention. Those who possess the knowledge of these three principles and apply them can have the realization of total integration. So the principle is total integration. The base we dance upon, automatically, becomes a self-perfected A.

We start facing towards the centre, with the body straight. Then there

are all the explanations, the positions of the feet and the movements of the arms etc. The text in Tibetan is not so long, only ten pages, but it's not explained like a commentary. Sometimes you can understand the text well, but sometimes it's not easy to understand. Chögyal Namkhai Norbu (Tenerife 2011) ©



Saralé (farthest right) and friends in the Vajra Hall, left to right, Claudia Harkan, Eliane Diallo, Soledad Suarez (gekö of Tsegylgar East).

>> continued from previous page

Before a retreat there is so much work to do. I was the second worker to arrive on the land, about a month before the retreat, and the choices of tasks to be done was quite extensive. It was like being at an Indian lunch buffet, so many choices of food to taste, some you like more than others, you begin in one spot and work your way through the buffet table until you are so full and satisfied you have to walk it off or take a nap. That was how it was on Khandroling, tons of small or large tasks to be completed, some you enjoyed and some you prayed others enjoyed more. I picked my favorite tasks first, and worked and worked until I could no more. Screw this 4 hours a day commitment was my attitude, not when it's pre-retreat.

First I chose activities such as cutting the grass, trimming trees and clearing land or roads

to open up the space, anything to be out in the open air on this precious land. Some days I would walk the path connecting upper and lower Khandroling to lend a hand down at the farmhouse in the preparation for the arrival of Rinpoche and his family, cleaning, cutting the grass or working in the gardens. Meanwhile there was lots of work going on in Vajra Hall: roofing, installation of skylights, masonry and brick laying to name a few. Sometimes I would wander up there to lend a hand with small tasks I was entrusted with, until one day when they taught me how to lay pavers, those small bricks that go around the circumference of the Universal Mandala. It was an honor to be bestowed such a task, yet enjoyable as well, for it was like a gigantic jigsaw puzzle trying to make the pieces fit perfectly, of which I was determined to make them fit so. The workers noted

my enthusiasm and let me finish it. I spent 3 entire days completing that task, was thoroughly exhausted and my muscles ached by the end, whereas the regular Vajra Hall workers had probably already spent at least 100 days laying pavers and didn't seem to miss a beat. It was great fun though, really. Everyday I was so grateful for this opportunity, I mean here I was, studying for the SMS base exam, while simultaneously helping build the base of Vajra Hall...what an honor! They even fed me cookies!

As the Jnanadakini retreat approached my work duties transferred to Mohawk High School to help set up, which is where I remained for the duration of the

retreat. Here the other 6 encampment workers and I cleaned up the cafeteria and kitchen after lunch as well as the set up and clean up of the Ganapujas or other Community events. The retreat with Rinpoche was wonderful, the workload lightened up a bit and I still had plenty of time for collective practices and trips to the river. It was a most perfect blend of teachings, practice, work and play.

I stayed on the land about a month after the retreat, this time working only my 4 hours a day more or less up on Vajra Hall. I really felt the passing of time and wanted to dedicate more time to personal practice and to enjoying time with my Vajra family. We

were a much a smaller work crew now, my responsibilities were cleaning and sealing the pavers and the concrete blocks that surround the structure while also continuing to thin out the forest leading uphill. At the end of my stay on Khandroling I rented a retreat cabin for a week, did the best I could, and then flew back to Wisconsin. It was the most perfect summer. Thank you for teaching us Rinpoche and thanks to everyone who came to the retreats this summer for making it such a fantastic event!

If you are interested in participating in the summer encampment program next summer you can contact Joe Zurylo at [jzurylo@yahoo.com](mailto:jzurylo@yahoo.com). See you there! ©



SMS Base 7th Lojong with Steve Landsberg March 25–27 2012 Tsegylgar East.

Photo: J. Gens



## MerigarWest

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### Merigar West News

The 30th anniversary of Merigar celebration held last summer was an important meeting point in the life of our Community. Bringing demonstrations of our practices to the local villages, holding meetings in three important buildings to share experiences of life, and presenting evening performances in the village squares in a spectacular way was a highly interesting and novel experience for the local Amiata community. For our Community it was a moment of opening to the outside world, of exchange, of vital enrichment to a degree that we had never reached before.

In the same vein this year we have been trying to propose projects that somehow follow up on this opening.

In July we organized a week of Yoga holidays. We tried to offer a period of rest different from the usual in a beau-

tiful setting, with activities that are really relaxing. The yoga holiday week was geared towards individuals, but also towards families, offering a full program for children.

There were about fifty participants, most of them not from the Community, people who were looking for a yoga holiday but also something else, who chose Merigar precisely because it is not a lifeless commercial place.

They very much appreciated the simple way we received them, without insisting, without trying to preach. They were all impressed by the “richness” of Merigar and the number of opportunities it offers to live better, more relaxed and in harmony.

Considering the period of general economic difficulty we wanted to keep the prices very low, trying to help those who came with their children. We still had a little profit, and this has made us think that this could be a way to

contribute in the future to the economic livelihood of Merigar.

Another project that will materialize in late August and early September is “Macchie di luce” (Spots of light), workshops for children and educators in the village of Arcidosso in which we are mainly inviting local residents to participate.

Dedicating oneself to the new generations, trying to educate them to respect others, interacting in harmony, is the basis of a process that can lead to real change, to a more relaxed, happy and harmonious society.

We are proposing, therefore, four workshops for children of different ages and three meetings for educators. They will be led by professionals, members of the international Dzogchen Community, with extensive experience in the field of education. Alba Papini, Patricia Ruz, Griselda Golmez and Tiziana Gottardi come from very different backgrounds

than that of Amiata and each of them is specialized in a particular field (sculpture, dance, yoga, fiction), and so it will be very interesting to explore different approaches to education, comparing and growing together.

Finally we are preparing a wonderful evening in the Arcidosso village square called “Merigar Under the Stars”. This will be the first round of dances in a competition involving the global Dzogchen Community. There will be dance troupes participating from the four Gars (Merigar West – west Europe, Merigar East – east Europe, Kunsangar North – Russia, Kunsangar South – Ukraine), with about 100 dancers who will perform dances that they have created themselves. They will also try to involve all the local people in the dances together.

Dancing together is one of the oldest ways to meet people, share an experience, and so respect each other. ©



**For lodging nearby Merigar West and for general information**

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

## MerigarEast

<b>Merigar East</b>	23 August 907005	phone: 0040 746 26 08 61
Asociatia Culturala Comunitatea Dzog-Chen	Constanta	office@dzogchen.ro
Romania		www.dzogchen.ro

### Merigar East Gonpa: Jewel in the Romanian Landscape, the Golden Attraction!

by Ans Swart

Migmar arrives in Merigar East on the 18th of July. He looks at the Gonpa and knows immediately what to do. Together with Geko Anatolie they go to town for the materials, and afterward Migmar sketches the lines on the Gonpa walls using the very old and handy method of pigments and cotton thread. The scaffolds are already set-up in the Gonpa, and the painters begin the work on 20th of July.

With great enthusiasm we begin to paint the first lines. We are with 14 people from 10 different countries: Poland, Czech Republic, Estonia, Ukraine, Russia, Romania, Bulgaria, Italy, Holland and Tibet! This means a lot of Babylonian talks at the table. Some of us stay for one week, others paint for the whole month and stay for the retreat with Rinpoche as well. Merigar East organized our accommodation very well; we get nice food and transport to the Gonpa. Now and then we go to disco’s at the beach or for a short swim after lunch. There is a good atmosphere



with a lot of laughing. Migmar keeps us in a good mood in his relaxed way and we continue our tasks with joy. At lunch and dinner we always have to wait for the last painters who cannot stop... This karma-yoga is for all of us a great and wonderful experience. We get to know each other better and make new friends!

The Gonpa blooms in color and details and we are the lucky ones to observe this step by step. As we begin to paint the outside of the Gonpa, the fresh wind is calming us but the hot

sun is without mercy. We swallow a lot of water and beer for what evaporates. Inside the Gonpa we’ve painted the precious symbols: jewel in the lotus, the Tibetan letter A in the Tigle and the clockwise turning Gakyil. On the outside we write eight times the Mantra Om Pemo Unka Bi Male Hum Pe so that everybody who sees and enters the Gonpa is purified and makes a good cause for the future enlightenment. The Longsal symbol is there as well, and the syllables of the 8 classes.

The last days of the painting are always stressed. We want to finish the Gonpa before Rinpoche sets foot on Romanian land. And indeed, Rinpoche arrives on the 10th of August and wants to see the Gonpa immediately. Although the Gonpa was not yet cleaned, he appreciated the beauty inside and outside very much; Bellissimo! – we hear, our hearts jump with joy.

Merigar East Gonpa looks like a Norbu in the landscape of the Romanian Black sea coast. I’m sure it will attract many sentient beings and benefit them all for many years. ©

### Thank You!

The Merigar East Gakyil would like to thank all our donors who supported the Gonpa Painting Project. Because of your generosity and the dedication of the team of painters, Migmar Tsering’s guidance and, of course, Rinpoche’s and Kyentse Yeshe’s vision, we all can enjoy this beautiful manifestation of the Merigar East Gonpa.

The Gonpa painting and Inauguration projects were completed very successfully, both in terms of budget and schedule. We had sufficient funds for both of these projects, and all remaining funds will be used in the Stupa and Sang Khang projects.

Many thanks to all of you! We hope you will find the opportunity to come and enjoy the results very soon!

Merigar East Gakyil

### Merigar East is Looking for a New Administrator and Red Gakyil Member

For those who were in doubt, or those whose circumstances have changed, we have some very good news. Merigar East is still looking for an administrator. If you would like to help the developing Gar as well as have the time to develop your own practice, please send your CV and motivation letter to [office@dzogchen.ro](mailto:office@dzogchen.ro).

We offer a salary on which you can live comfortably in Romania, as well as good secondary conditions. As the admin you will be dealing a lot with local authorities, therefore good knowledge of Romanian is a prerequisite. Being able to communicate in English and having a drivers permit is compulsory. We are also looking for one more person who would like to join the Red Gakyil.

The tasks are as follows:

- Supervise the development process of the Gar, as well as maintain it;
- Organizing karma yoga and work exchange activities;

The Gakyil meets on Skype once every two weeks. Sometimes more often if needed. Once in 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.

Expectations: working knowledge of English language, computer literate; preferably, member of the community for three years.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate in contacting us at [office@dzogchen.ro](mailto:office@dzogchen.ro). Merigar East Gakyil ©



#### New Gakyil of Merigar East

Blue: Lune Jazudekova (SVK),  
Helga Hegedus (HUN),  
Paula Dziemidowicz (PL)  
[blue@dzogchen.ro](mailto:blue@dzogchen.ro)  
Red:  
Agnieszka Kubiszowska(PL),  
Piotr Marcik (PL)  
[red@dzogchen.ro](mailto:red@dzogchen.ro)  
Yellow:  
Harri Jaalinoja (FIN),  
Yael Rotbard (ISR),  
Mihai Ciobanu (RO)  
[yellow@dzogchen.ro](mailto:yellow@dzogchen.ro)  
Geko and admin:  
Anatolie Carp  
[geko@dzogchen.ro](mailto:geko@dzogchen.ro)  
[office@dzogchen.ro](mailto:office@dzogchen.ro)



KunsangarSouth

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

Logo Contest

Good day, everybody and everywhere!

The Gakyil of Kunsangar South held a contest for the best logo for our Gar among the Dzogchen Community members from April 20 to May 20, 2012. We received more than 100 entries from 36 contest participants. People from all over the world replied to our request of participation – from Switzerland, Argentina, Netherlands, Ukraine, Russian and Hawaii! We selected the works of the best quality and sent them to Rinpoche. And our Rinpoche liked the logo proposed by Igor Pinigin, Kharkov, Ukraine. So, if you need quality design, you know whom to address now.

We would like to thank from the bottom of our hearts all participants of the contest for their work, participation and sincere interest.

So, here is the new logo for Kunsangar South:



“Painting the Gonpa Became One of the Brightest Events in Our Lives...”

This phrase in different variations but with the meaning unchanged was pronounced by all participants of the Gonpa painting project which was implemented under the guidance of Migmar at Kunsangar South this summer.

During the hottest time and the highest point of the seaside holidays season a group of fifteen people painted the walls and the ceiling of the Gonpa with great delight and diligence from 7 o'clock in the morning till 7 o'clock in the evening. At home some of them are professional fresco painters and designers, someone teaches oil painting to students, someone teaches drawing in a kindergarten, someone draws and makes ceramics as an amateur. But here the energy of all those different people unified for a period of time in order to manifest in the form of the beautiful decoration of the Gonpa.

From time to time the work was interrupted, so that the scaffolding could be moved – those were happy periods of rest, when we could go to the sea all together and relax. This way day by day we mixed paints, washed brushes, laughed, joked, listened to Tibetan songs, got to know each other better and learned to be precise and efficient in our movements. We learned a lot from the interaction with Migmar and tried to integrate that understanding with our condition.



Migmar speaks about the ornamentation

“All these drawings are not purely Tibetan. Here the Mongolian and the European elements are mixed together with the Tibetan tradition. For example, there are some similar elements in the Russian buildings. Rinpoche’s idea was to include all cultures here, and I always follow Rinpoche’s instructions when I paint a gonpa. It would be easy if such painting was just in the Tibetan tradition. Those who understand art would never say that this is a purely Tibetan tradition. And those who pretend that they know Tibetan art would say: “Oh, yes. This is Tibetan art”. Of course, the letters and seed syllables are Tibetan. We cannot write European ones. For example, the mantras in the long blue tiges are not written in Tibetan, but in ancient Sanskrit, in other words, we have such a combination of different cultures here. And here on the main wall, behind Rinpoche, this ornament is in traditional Tibetan style. It is like a distinctive umbrella of ornaments

which is always drawn above the Master’s throne. There are also tiges and A therein; it is integrated with our Teaching”.

All those people who enter the Gonpa pay attention to the lotus flower located at the very center of the ceiling and it is quite impressive.

Migmar speaks about the lotus flower

“Inside there are eight symbols of prosperity. And eight petals mean eight directions. Soon a book about the Gonpa will be published and you will be able to read the exact explanation of the purpose, as it was painted at Merigar. Our Master has written a large book about the painting of the Merigar Gonpa. Therefore I always orientate myself to Rinpoche’s book when I paint a gonpa”.

Nataila, project participant

“We watched the energy, accuracy, talent and kindness of Migmar with a keen interest. We learned to interact and adopt methods of work on images”.

Dmitry, project participant

“A very important aspect of this project is team-work with other artists interested in Tibetan culture and the Teaching of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche. It seems that where our life energy and aspirations unify with the engagements of the Community we go through the required Mahayana training on the Path”.

Lev, project participant

“It was a wonderful opportunity to bring some benefit to the Community and ourselves. Thank you all, everything was perfect and very efficient!”

Sasha, Red Gakyil

“Communication and cooperation with Migmar was very lively and useful for us. We thank him for the work that he has done and the wonderful example of cooperation and integration of the Teaching with circumstances. We learned a lot and will be happy to have an opportunity to cooperate in the future!”



Kunsangar South New Gakyil

Blue: Natalia Rogozina, Olga Bondar, Yury Alpeev, kunsangar.blue@gmail.com  
Red: Aleksandr Balyura, Alyona Evsiukova, Ivan Kuzmenkov, kunsangar.red@gmail.com  
Yellow: Vita Adamenko, Natalia Palkina, Nadia Yermakova, kunsangar.yellow@gmail.com  
Geko: Yury Fomichyov, kunsangar.geko@gmail.com  
Secretary: Anastasia Domanova, kunsangar.assistant@gmail.com  
Gakyil Assistants – Blue: Dmitry Yurchenko, Alyona Gamolya, Katya Kovalchuk  
Gakyil Assistants – Red: Vitaly Shestopalov, Edyard Avzalov, Andreas Bogeovichus, Mikhail Ovchinnikov  
Gakyil Assistants – Yellow: Svetlana Molodtsova, Elena Pakhno

KunsangarNorth

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



Kunsangar North New Gakyil

Our precious Masters Chögyal Namkhai Norbu and Khyentse Yeshe led Gakyil elections in Kunsangar North on July 29, 2012.

We are happy to announce the new Gakyil members:  
Blue: Maikova Kristina, Bekshibaeva Yanina, Fed'kov Peter  
Blue Assistant: Zavidkov Nikita  
Red: Herz Elena, Zolotareva Tatiana, Gatsuk Yurii  
Red Assistant: Alexander Cherkashin  
Yellow: Prokopyak Lira, Mitin Andrey, Vlasova Tatiana  
Yellow Assistant: Malinina Elena

Gakyil Contact: kunsangar.north@gmail.com

Photo: F. Andrico Photo: R. Kogel





China >> Samtenling



Opening of a New Center in China

The new center of Samtenling China in Yichun, Jiangxi Province will officially open on Sep. 7th, 2012. Thanks to blessing from the Three Roots, we managed to finish the construction and refurbishing after 7 months of work. It contains about 14 acres of land, and there is a gonpa of similar size as Namgyalgar South, a

3-storey building containing 12 dormitory rooms that can accommodate 80–120 people at the same time for retreats or courses. There is also an office, Geko rooms, and a suite for Rinpoche! There are also plenty of toilets and showers, all equipped with sufficient modern facilities. I feel it could be the one of the most comfortable Lings or Gars of the whole Dzogchen Community.

From now on, China is starting to manifest a solid base for the development of Rinpoche’s Dzogchen teachings. I believe this will be very helpful to realize Rinpoche’s visions about China. We also want to take this opportunity to thank all those people who helped and supported Samtenling. With lots of Tashi Deleks, Wes Guo, on behalf of Samtenling China

Singapore >> Namdrolling

New Gakyil of Namdrolling, the Singapore Community

Red: Michael Foo – [michaelsj11@gmail.com](mailto:michaelsj11@gmail.com)  
Ivy Lim – [blissdzogchen@gmail.com](mailto:blissdzogchen@gmail.com)  
Yellow: Ying (Leong Wai Ying) – [leongwaiying@gmail.com](mailto:leongwaiying@gmail.com)  
Desmond Ho – [desmoho@singnet.com.sg](mailto:desmoho@singnet.com.sg)

Blue: Chee (Wong Chee Meng) – [mail@cheewong.com](mailto:mail@cheewong.com)  
KC Ong – [titadkc@gmail.com](mailto:titadkc@gmail.com)  
  
For general communication with Namdrolling, kindly contact Chee

Namgyalgar South

Namgyalgar Dzogchen Community in Australia	PO Box 214 Central Tilba NSW 2546 Phone/Fax: 61 02 4473 7668	<a href="mailto:secretary@dzogchen.org.au">secretary@dzogchen.org.au</a> <a href="http://www.dzogchen.org.au">www.dzogchen.org.au</a>
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Namgyalgar South Gekö Vacancy

It is possible that the current Gekö of Namgyalgar South, Jakub, will be leaving in early November 2012. Therefore the Namgyalgar South Gakyil is seeking expressions of interest for the position of Gekö to commence handover of responsibilities in early October. Should Jakub be able to stay longer, applications will still be considered for a vacancy in 2013.

**Responsibilities:**  
In general the Gekö is responsible for the day-to-day smooth, warm and friendly running of the Gar, with the support of the local Land Management Committee and the Red Gakyil. Full details of the Gekö role are available.  
  
**Remuneration:**  
The Gekö will receive \$150/week, plus accommodation, some use of phone / internet and use of Gar car (subject to conditions). The Gekö is responsible for

their own ambulance cover, and medical insurance if from overseas.  
  
**Applications:**  
Applicants may be invited to visit the Gar for a weekend to meet Gakyil representatives, the retiring Gekö and members of the local Land Management Committee. International applicants may be invited to join Gakyil members and the outgoing Gekö for a skype meeting.

If you are interested and would like to receive information about the Gekö responsibilities, conditions of service and an application form please contact Barbara Robertson [barbara.robertson3@gmail.com](mailto:barbara.robertson3@gmail.com)

Information about Namgyalgar South is available at: [www.dzogchen.org.au](http://www.dzogchen.org.au)  
  
Namgyalgar South Gakyil

Australia, 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 May 11th, 2012. May we all rejoice in this most fortunate of circumstances!  
  
Kindest regards,  
Samyasling Gakyil  
Quinn Stokes – yellow  
Sam Pearson – blue  
Bruno Irmici, Oceania Reile – red  
[melbourne@dzogchen.org.au](mailto:melbourne@dzogchen.org.au)

Namgyalgar North

Namgyalgar Dzogchen Community in Australia	206 Glass House-Woodford Rd, Glasshouse Mountains, Qld., 4518 P.O. Box 307, Glasshouse Mountains, Qld., 4518	Phone: 07. 5438 7696 <a href="mailto:nnth_geko@dzogchen.org.au">nnth_geko@dzogchen.org.au</a>
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Six Lokas, Six Spaces, Skype and Greymouse – SMS Phone Conferencing Across Australia

by Rosemary Friend

There is a wonderful phenomenon happening in our Namgyalgar community and it is the development of a Greymouse phone conferencing system, which operates in conjunction with skype to increase our capacity for stability, numbers of connection and interaction. At least once a month, our SMS teachers communicate with Dzogchen Community members living at long distances from our Gars and each other. During this month of August and with

The Precious Vase as our base text, we were delighted to provide teaching and collective practice sessions from both Samyasling, with Angie Gilbert and Namgyalgar North, with Elise Stutchbury. Elise traveled almost 1000 miles to visit Namgyalgar North and after beginning with the Base level collective practices, we studied and practiced the Purification of the Six Lokas together, those physically present and those connected by landline. It is extraordinary that some of the participants are living as far as 2000 miles away and are able to ask questions to clarify aspects of the practice and their understanding. One person

wrote: “excellent means of accessing teachings especially if limited options (e.g. distance, finances, health). Excellent to engage in practice as well as teaching: serves to broaden one’s understanding of a practice otherwise mostly by oneself or in a small group.” We are constantly engaging in the challenge of mastering technology, liberating the limitations of distance, experiencing far as near and enjoying the luxury of regular international teaching web casts, global collective Mandarava practices as well as local SMS Base level training teaching and practice opportunities.



Six Lokas Retreat with Elise Stutchbury.

USA

New York City Retreat with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

June 28-30, 2012

Margaret Jasinski

“We aren’t asked to change. We are asked to discover our true nature.”  
  
A gathering of three hundred people congregated at the hall of Saint Vartan’s Church in lower Manhattan to hear the teachings of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu from June 28th to 30th. Many attendees were new to Dzogchen teachings. During

the retreat, Fabio Andrico introduced the practice of Yantra Yoga, Paola Zamperini did a presentation on the activities of the Shang Shung Institute and the Song of the Vajra was danced on Sunday morning where Prima Mai gave a very detailed talk on the origin of the Dance and its meaning. The retreat began on Friday, the day of Guru Padmsambhava, which was observed by an evening Ga-

napuja. That night PBS aired the film ‘My Reincarnation.’ Rinpoche avowed that there are many paths through which practitioners gain capacity and that the four mindfulnesses are integral to cultivating this. We slowly increase clarity by working with the circumstances of the present situation; we do this by accessing presence while paying respect to others and taking responsibility for ourselves. We use knowledge and experience to discover the true nature of the mind. Body (dharmakaya emptiness) speech (sambhogakaya clarity) and mind (nirmanakaya energy) are the three existences that form the path to realization. Our point of view is to observe

our condition, noticing limitations of our dualistic vision and the root of samara with respect to our own experience. We use our relative state to be aware that problems exist only in the mind; this is normal in the state of dualism, where everything is tinged unceasingly by the unreal. Buddha declared that everything is unreal; life is a dream, yet we are conditioned to believe that our ego and the mental concepts that support it are real. When we understand the nature of our problems, and the influence of the mind, then we can relax. By applying Dzogchen methods we build our confidence in knowing that there are no limitations within the three states of existence

(the three kayas). Rinpoche added that circumstance is always relevant to our concept of time where the state of mahasiddha is beyond both time and space. Rinpoche emphasized the practice of Guruyoga through which practitioners allow the teacher to be the mirror that reflects the true nature of mind, the real condition, which is beyond mental formation. In the state of instant presence all visions are self liberated and practitioners are able to relax in mahamudra, which Rinpoche referred to as the “womb of real nature.” Rinpoche explained that the teacher cannot show what is beyond the mind, he can only give introduction. The

>> continued on the following page



USA

>> continued from previous page

teacher cannot make an aspirant realized; this must be done on one's own. The Buddha provides the path; through the empowerment of transmission, we use personal experience, not to create logic, but to understand implicitly the nature of mind. We discover the nature of this and how it relates to the three gates. Through the body, we have the potential for bliss. We notice sensation with the possibility of transforming ignorance into peace, attachment into joy and anger into rightful manifestation. We use our energy to see everything and to coordinate this into vision. Guruyoga supports the four moments: eating, sitting, walking and sleeping. Through the mind we relax and observe our base condition as the state of emptiness rather than going after thoughts. We don't become emptiness, we notice instant presence.

In Dzogchen there are no formal rules, each practitioner



Participants in the NYC Retreat.

Photo: D. Zegunis

decides when and how to apply methods of practice to gain capacity. Rinpoche stated that practitioners should not be preoccupied with "preparing." He said practitioners could waste precious opportunity in preparing rather than in participating.

He said we may die preparing, and after we die we are still preparing. He added that attachment to personal interest is not *bodhicitta*. Wisdom energy, *yeshe*, is transparent, there is no barrier. We learn this through experience and relax in this knowledge. In

our real nature we are not separate. We learn and integrate this into daily life, which as Rinpoche stated is practice. When we are not distracted we come closer to the teachings of Dzogchen, which complements evolution. Every one has primordial state

and in this state all is perfect. Rinpoche reminded the gathering, "When you discover one form of sweet, you discover all sweets." ©

USA, Los Angeles

Los Angeles California Retreat June 2012  
**The Invocation of Samantabhadra**

By Craig Fiels

**O**n the first morning of the retreat I woke to the sounds of birds singing just outside the window of my friend's camper van where I slept. As I looked through the windows I thought to myself, "What a beautiful morning here in Pasadena – a perfect day to begin our retreat with Rinpoche."

Then it struck me – we have so much to do this morning with setting up the venue and getting organized before Rinpoche arrives – we better get started as soon as possible! We quickly readied ourselves and then drove a short distance to the venue to arrive early and meet the key organizers for coffee. With so much planning and preparations taking place for several months before, I felt we would be ready. Indeed, with such a beautiful morning, it seemed like we had the perfect circumstances.

This was how my day started at the beginning of the three-day Los Angeles retreat June 22–24 at the Pasadena Scottish Rite Center. The teaching given by our precious Master would be The Invocation of Samantabhadra.



It was not long before many people began to assemble outside the Center that morning as we waited for the doors to open. We all felt a growing excitement with everyone helping to unload the supplies and preparations from our vehicles. I was beginning to feel anxious not knowing what or how we were going to get everything set up, but I had faith that somehow it would all come together.

All through the day several dozen volunteers joined together to prepare for Rinpoche's arrival. Setting up the decorations, flowers, thankas, an altar, a live video feed and so much more was quite a task. In fact this was a serious

USA, Hawaii



Hawaii Retreat with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu June 13–17, 2102.

Photo: F. Andrico

undertaking. Nevertheless, everyone communicated well and worked diligently. Right before Rinpoche arrived I felt we had created such a positive climate and I was really amazed how well everyone collaborated.

The feeling I had when Rinpoche first walked into the room at the Scottish Rite Center was astounding. The energy instantly shifted and it was apparent that this was not just an ordinary experience, the teaching had begun.

Throughout the retreat Rinpoche continually inspired us with his wisdom and knowledge of the teachings, taking us deeper into our understanding and experience of our real nature.

Nearly 300 people attended the three-day event, mostly from California and other western states. In addition, we were very pleased that we had Vajra Sisters and Brothers come from as far as Mexico, South America and Europe too.

One participant said that their most inspiring moment was when Rinpoche suggested that we might be a Ling. This was a significant moment in the rejuvenation of our community that is challenged by being dispersed across a wide geographical area such as Los Angeles. Indeed it is a big vote of confidence and now we will live up to that and build a strong Dzogchen community in L.A. ©

Peru >> Norbuling

**New Gakyil in Norbuling, Perú for the 2012–2013 period:**

Blue: Charo Verástegui  
[peldarboom@hotmail.com](mailto:peldarboom@hotmail.com)  
Red: Pepo León  
[leonbacigalupo@hotmail.com](mailto:leonbacigalupo@hotmail.com)  
Yellow: Raul Ricci  
[lotopad1@yahoo.com](mailto:lotopad1@yahoo.com)

Our new address in Lima is: Avenida Centenario 114 - A - Barranco.  
Our phone number is: 00 511 477 30 86.  
Our e-mail: [gakyil\\_peru@yahoo.com](mailto:gakyil_peru@yahoo.com)

# Courses

Merigar West



Mandarava Long-Life Practice and Tsalung retreat with Nina Robinson combined with Yantra Yoga with Tiziana Gottardi held at Merigar West August 10–16.  
Photo: S. Quaranta



Participants and instructors at the Yoga Holidays week for adults and children held at Merigar West July 16–22.  
Photo: A. Ambrosio





**Dream Yoga with Michael Katz Paris, June 8–10, 2012.**

## Italy



Dance of the Six Spaces course in Friuli June 29–July 1 with Paola Pillon supervised by Adriana Dal Borgo.

## Netherlands



**Dream Yoga with Michael Katz in Amsterdam June 1–3, 2012.**

## Netherlands



**Santi Maha Sangha First Level Course with Jakob Winkler, Kundusling, July 2012. Photo: A. Luz López**

## UK &gt;&gt; Kunselling



Photo: R. Portas

## Italy, Brescia >> Kunsalling

with Laura Evangelisti  
(3–7 August 2012)

By Carla Castellani

(This is the text of an email sent to a friend. With his permission I am transcribing the account that I wrote to him, because in this description I have expressed the beauty of my experience as a participant in the retreat, which we are happy to share with you.)

Yesterday the Yantra Yoga retreat ended, an experience, outside time and space, 4 days during which my personal perception of time became at least 10. Intense, engaging, enjoyable. We were 11 participants, some of them I knew well, others not at all, others by sight, yet the group was perfectly harmonious in a spontaneous way. Sharing 4 full days together can be a blessing or a nightmare – sleeping practically shoulder to shoulder in the Gonpa-barn, in 11 and 2 children, waking up all together at 7 am to start the day by honoring the local guardians with Sang and Serkyem, and then preparing lunches, breakfasts and dinners together, practicing Yantra intensely for 5 hours a day, eating together, practicing together, and sleeping together... but as the hours passed, the group became more and more harmonious, and after the first night, no one stayed awake tossing and turning and listening to the breathing of their neighbor, who was practically in the same bed. We slept well and woke up better. And the same thing happened to us all. We cooked together, of course, without



Photo: L. Bartoli

## The Effects of Yantra Yoga on Snoring: Five-Day Retreat with Laura Evangelisti at Kunsalling

**A**fter conducting extensive studies at University of Magasa, researchers carried out a five-day experiment at nearby Kunsalling in the mountains of northern Italy and discovered that Yantra Yoga is an infallible method for resolving chronic snoring problems. During the first night in Kunsalling's Gonpa, which doubles as a dormitory at night, the researchers recorded high levels of snoring noise as a result of karmic prana accumulated in the course of ordinary life. After only one day of practicing the movements and pranayamas of Yantra Yoga, a significant reduction of noise levels was noted, and by the fourth night the test subjects slept in total silence.

We look forward to your visit at Kunsalling for further experiments to confirm the results. A big thank you to the Gakyil for their warm and welcoming reception. ©

## Switzerland

## Yantra Yoga in Switzerland

by Patrick Celka  
for the Swiss Gakyl

A 5 day Yantra Yoga retreat took place in the Swiss Alps from the 26th to the 31st of July led by Patrizia Pearl. We were 8 participants coming from Switzerland, France and Germany. The retreat started by a revision of the preliminaries. Patrizia corrected all positions, movements and breathing. The 8 movements were also revised thoroughly, especially the coordination of the movements and breathing phases. Patrizia also used a metronome which proved to be very useful to achieve a better rhythm and synchronization of movement and breathing. The next 3 days teaching was focused on the first to third series Yantras, as well as first and second Pranayamas. Patrizia constantly insisted on the correct ways of breathing and especially the vase breathing as being the fundamental technique for all Yantras and Pranayamas. She also spent a lot of time explaining us the importance of open hold as the foundation for the



**Santi Maha Sangha First Level Course with Jakob Winkler, Kundusling, July 2012. Photo: A. Luz López**

other types of retentions. Meanwhile, some participants wanted a special session devoted to learning and practicing the complete breathing techniques. We would like to thank her for this beautiful retreat, her patience and energy at teaching us these treasures.

We also had a great time with our Community Chef Francois Mozer who devoted his time cooking nice meals while attending the Yoga sessions as he could. We like to thank him for all this work. We also enjoyed time outside the

teaching sessions, walking in the Alps along the streams called 'Bisses' and visiting rock caves with thermal water.

Some of the participants showed interests in continuing the learning of Yantra Yoga to perhaps become qualified teachers.

Patrizia is developing Yantra Yoga and Complete Breathing Courses and Workshops in Switzerland.

For all information, contact the  
Swiss Gakyil [gakyil@dzogchen.ch](mailto:gakyil@dzogchen.ch). ©

## Vajra Dance Retreat, Kunselling

By Naomi Levine

The Welsh hills were alive with the sound of Emakiri this summer where over 22 participants came to Kunselling for the August dance retreat. Our schedule included 8 hours of dance each day for 6 days

together with over an hour of yantra yoga in the morning. A full dance thum with 7 rounds of the Three Vajras in the afternoon added a slight flavour of an Olympic marathon. As the rain clouds eventually turned into an English summer, the mandala bubble came down. Dancers slathered on sun-cream; black sunglasses popped out, and ushered in

a variety of exotic costumes. Mad dogs  
and Englishmen.

With joy and inspiration from this retreat we are moving on to build a raised platform at Kunselling in September; so that when it rains we stay dry, when it shines, we stay cool, and when it blows we keep our feet firmly on the mandala. ☉





Mandarava Tsalungs with Nina Robinson in Phendeling June 15–21, 2012.



Semdzens and Rushens with Constantino Albini in Prague July 11–15, 2012.

Australia, Melbourne >> Samyasling

Dancing with “Cosmico”  
Song of the Vajra Dance course in Samyasling

by Bruno Irmici

We are deeply grateful to Cosimo Di Maggio for having accepted at short notice the Gakyil invitation to lead a course of the Song of the Vajra Dance on the last week of June. It’s the first time that this particular Vajra Dance has been taught in Melbourne and coincides, auspiciously, with the first event after Chögyal Namkhai Norbu gave to the Ling in Melbourne the official name of Samyasling. ‘Sam-yas’ means beyond thought, beyond concept.

Cosimo, whom I more appropriately nicknamed here in Italian “Cosmico” (Cosmic in English) in reference to the vast dimension of the Vajra Dance, is in this moment the only instructor in Australia for the Dance of the Song of the Vajra. He dedicates himself to courses in the different regions and cities. Since his first teaching course one year ago, he told me that he has already lead ten different Vajra Dance courses.

Originally from Manduria in South Italy, land of the ‘Primitivo’ wine, *Cosmico* lived thereafter for long time in Turin, in winter a snowy and beautiful historical city near the Alps. A few years ago he has moved to Cairns, where he lives now with his wife Maree, (actual member of the Namgyalgar North Gakyil) and enjoys tropical warm weather most of the year, not worried to share it with the colonies of local crocodiles! Living today near the beach, he admits with candour that he is not nostalgic at all about his previous Italian life.



Course of the Dance of the Song of the Vajra with Cosimo Di Maggio in Samyasling June 16–24, 2012. Photo: B. Irmici

Melbourne was instead cloudy and rainy with chilly days, day after day. So to counteract the potential impact the cold winter could have had on our guest, Sam Pearson and I brought him to one of the best Italian patisserie in town. Certainly his enjoyment was ‘beyond limits’: shortly after a Sicilian cannolo he quickly ‘integrated’ a Neapolitan baba’ with rum. But was this a mere sweet indulgence? No, no, it was instead, for an Italian migrant, a must to pay homage to a sacred place of the Italian district, which all day long is full of pilgrims and devotees.

The response of people to the course was very good. Twenty people attended Fleming Park Hall, the place where we run the activities of Samyasling. We were happy with this interest and participation that would ultimately bring new ‘energies’ to our regular dance practices. In the large and luminous hall, we comfortably fitted two mandala mats upon which new pamos and pawos, step-by-step, were manifesting. As each new series of steps were learnt, people migrated to the second mandala

where they further trained in the new steps with the help of Lynne Geary, our local Vajra Dance teacher, and Adam Kadmon, next candidate to become a Dance instructor.

I was observing *Cosmico* teaching and dancing. To a clumsy beginner he seemed to naturally embody the movements of the dance, someone naturally ‘gifted’ in the Vajra Dance. But he clarified that it is also the result of long hours of training and practice that he has dedicated to perfect his learning.

Passionately and patiently he guided people to learn and repeat the different steps and timing coordinated with the Song of the Vajra. You can feel in *Cosmico* the desire to help people take in and value this precious method. In some occasions, directly from his enthusiasm, he couldn’t help himself to spontaneously tell people what a fantastic method we had received from our Master so that we can learn how to integrate movement in the state of contemplation.

He has been teaching the Vajra Dance since 2008, and, he confided to

Kunsangar North



Course of the Dance of the Song of the Vajra in Moscow with Tatiana Pronicheva and Ruslan Kim under supervision of Adriana dal Borgo July, 2012.

me, that he still holds a sense of wonder with regards to the way his life seems to unfold almost by itself and he became a teacher of the Vajra Dance. While he tells me this, the example given in the Upadesha of an attitude like a snake that disentangles itself without any effort from his own knots, comes to mind. Also I am reminded of Rinpoche often saying that someone potentiality manifests not by means of construction and a forced attitude, but instead it will manifest spontaneously through the cultivation of a state of no effort.

There is something simple and not pretentious in the way Cosimo ‘*Cosmico*’ teaches. The way he actually moves on the mandala is not much different from the way he normally walks and move. This seems to me a sign of his capacity of integration. There are not effects or emphasis in his steps and gestures. He just does what is necessary for the dance to be and to be learned, which seems to make the learning of the dance very approachable.

Given the length and the complexity of this dance there is a lot ‘to digest’ for

new learners and the journey is a mix of excitement and sudden blankness. Magically in the last day of the course all the choreography seemed come together. As all the dancers finally moved with same timing on the mandala, the harmony of the dance manifested like the vision of a lotus flower. It was a sign of a work well done and the teacher looked satisfied.

This first part of the course ended with a simple Ganapuja . After receiving warm gratitude and a small gift from all the new learners, Cosimo dedicated a deep heartfelt thank you to Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, the supreme source of the wonderful method of the Vajra Dance.

I’ve always felt that the Vajra Dance, with its quality to harmonize the inner and outer energy of the dancers and of the community, has played a special role to inspire the creation of the Ling in Melbourne. Moreover, having the energy of more ‘Pamos and Pawos’ dancing together on the mandala, will surely contribute to the further evolution of Samyasling for the benefit of all sentient beings. Emaho !!!

©

Namgyalgar North



Course of the Dance of the 3 Vajras with Nicki Elliot in Namgyalgar North July 28–29, 2012.

The Dance of the 3 Vajras with Nicki Elliot

by Skye Bailey

Here at Namgyalgar North, the skies opened up and we had a clear, sky-blue canvas. The native Australian wallabies, the various varieties of birdsong, the cows grazing, the

trees rustling in the cool winter wind and two of the Glasshouse Mountains in the background, set the scene for our Dance of the 3 Vajras course with the wonderfully accomplished teacher Nicki Elliott.

The class was almost equally matched women to men, with many practitioners dancing both PAWO and PAMO parts. As this was the first dance course I’ve at-

tended, I choose to only learn one part, which gave me the opportunity to rest and watch the beautiful dance of the more experienced practitioners.

The weekend flew by. The process of learning the footing and arm movements along with timing, with the blessings of the lineage holders tangibly felt, kept all of ones awareness in the present. Like the old saying, time flies when you’re having fun!

During the course, we also hosted the World-Wide Transmission, Retreat Web cast and Ganapuja, along with birthday celebrations of Nicki and Naomi. Rest was a self-regulated affair.

Two little people were in attendance too, Stella and Suraya, their vibrancy welcomed amongst the young and old ones of us in the group.

Every day since the course, I’ve had the privilege of dancing on the mandala

as circumstances have led to me having time to be in retreat here at Namgyalgar North. This land is truly alive with the blessings of the Enlightened Ones and being here, doing practise feels perfect. May all of us, everywhere, feel

the blessings of the teachings in our lives wherever we are, in any moment.

Thank you to all beings that made it possible to have Namgyalgar North and the Dzogchen teachings available here. Long-life and prosperity to Chögyal Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche.

©



Yantra Yoga course with Amare in Namgaylgar North.

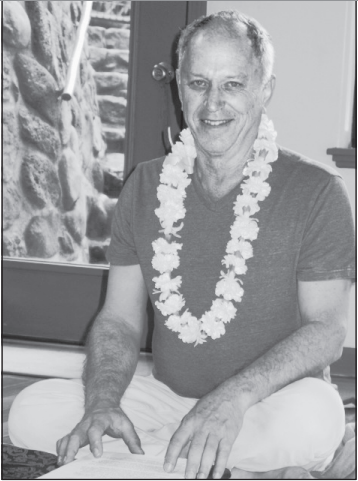


USA, Berkley >> Dondrubling



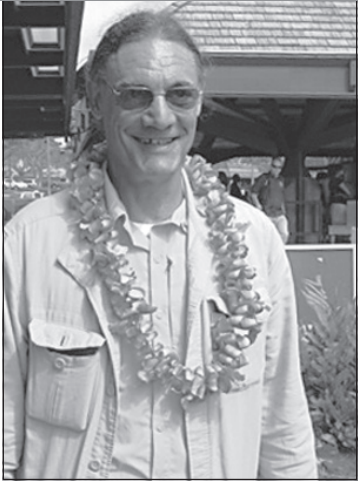
The Dance of the Six Spaces with Bodhi Krause, Aug 10–13, 2012, Dondrubling, Berkeley, California.

Hawaii



Steven Landsberg.

Steven Landsberg led a Santi Maha Sanga course June 8–10 and gave explanations during the Hawaiian retreat with ChNN June 13–17. Everyone had the opportunity to experience the three Rushan practices which is related to the separation of mind and nature of mind, the secret rushan of body, voice and mind. His explanations of the “Garland of Views” brought light on the subject as minds expanded with the discovery of knowledge. Steven is well versed and brings deep knowledge and experience to his class. ©



Fabio Andrico.

USA, Hawaii



As sounds of the ocean whispered and roared between the music, Hawaii blissfully received Vajra dance courses from Kyu during the summer. A delightful venue was located for the dance mandala at Keoka Park overlooking the Pacific Ocean for three days of teaching Liberation of 6 spaces. Kyu gave 3 Vajra dance course during the Hawaiian retreat with ChNN, June 13–17. For those attending who had studied the Vajra Dance she also reviewed the Vajra Dance in the evenings. Kyu is an exceptional Vajra Dance teacher. Everyone who attended enjoyed a happy time while acquiring a much greater understanding of integration of movement and the world mandala. ©

◀ Vajra Dance Retreat with Kyu.

USA, Portland



Steven Landsberg taught a course on the Rushan and View of Ati in Portland to the local sangha in June. Here everyone gathered including someone on skype for a ganapuja following the course.

Tashigar Sur



Mandarava Retreat with Nélida Saporiti in Tashigar Sur July 27–29, 2012.

During the course in Hawaii, June 13–17 with ChNN, Hawaii had the honor of have Fabio Andrico teach in a small and engaged group. Fabio gave an in-depth explanation of rhythmic breathing and clarified the importance of breathing while practicing yantra. He also reminded everyone that there are videos available with all of the yantra movements and that even though they are classified as level one and level two that they are equal as far as knowledge is concerned. His deep commitment to Rinpoche, webcast, and teaching Yantra throughout the world is a true blessing to the worldwide community. ©

Melinda – Red Gakyil

Passages Died

Chile



Yantra Yoga in Santiago de Chile with Carolina Mingolla, June 23–25, 2012.

Dear Vajra Brothers and Sisters!

Our Vajra Brother Alexey Klimenkov, son of Oleg Klimenkov ana Irina Klimenkova passed away on August 26. Alexey was 17 years old. Please do the practice of Shitro for him!

Gakyil of Kyiv Dzogchen Community (Tashiling) ©

Ukraine >> Tashiling



Programs

Germany

Yantra Yoga, Course for beginners

with Saadet Arslan  
October 12–14 in Dargyäl, Cologne  
Registration: Rico Aurich  
Tel.: 0049 177-159 36 03  
rico.aurich@dzogchen.de

Yantra Yoga, advanced course I–VI group without Pranayama

with Saadet Arslan  
October 26–28 in Dargyäl, Cologne  
Registration: Rico Aurich  
Tel.: 0049 177-159 36 03  
rico.aurich@dzogchen.de

Shitro, explanation and practice

with Jakob Winkler  
November 1–4 in Dargyäl, Cologne  
Registration: Heike Engerer  
heike.engerer@dzogchen.de

Vajra Dance, Song of the Vajra Part 2

with Karin Heinemann  
December 1–3, 14–16 in Dargyäl, Cologne  
Registration: Rico Aurich  
Tel.: 0049 177-159 36 03  
rico.aurich@dzogchen.de

Vajra Dance, practice weekend

with Karin Heinemann  
December 7–9 in Dargyaling, Cologne  
Registration: ling@dzogchen.de

Greece >> Garabbling

Hellenic Dzogchen Community – Garabbling welcomes all of you  
Chögyal Namkhai Norbu Dzogchen Retreat  
October 3–7, 2012  
Athens, Greece

The Hellenic Dzogchen Community is honoured to welcome Chögyal Namkhai Norbu this October for the teachings on Longsal Ati Lamgyi Ngöndro (Tib. klong gsal a ti'i lam gyi sngon 'gro).

Here is the teaching schedule confirmed by Rinpoche:

3rd Oct. 7–9 pm Introduction about this teaching. Transmission of Ati Guru Yoga dealing with the tridlung of Short Thun Practice.

4th Oct. 7–9 pm Instruction on the First Purification, and Sacred Practices. Tridlung of Medium Thun Practice.  
5th Oct. 7–9 pm Instruction on the main Dribyang, Purification Practices. Tridlung of Short Ganapuja.  
6th Oct. 10–12 am Instruction for Purifying and integrating in the primordial state.  
6th Oct. 4–6 pm Practice of Ganapuja for ending this retreat.  
7th Oct. 10–12 am Advice for practices in daily life, Tridlungs of collective practices and so on. Our retreat will finish with Ati Guru Yoga practice all together. As usual, there will be Yantra Yoga, Vajra Dance and practice explanation sessions for beginners and advanced practitioners.

Please do not hesitate to email us to [info@dzogchen.gr](mailto:info@dzogchen.gr) if you should have any questions!  
Visit [www.dzogchen.gr](http://www.dzogchen.gr) for more information about retreat and Hellenic Dzogchen Community.  
The Hellenic Dzogchen Community is looking forward seeing you all this October in Athens!

With warmest greetings from Athens  
Vasso Mamali  
Blue gakyil of the Hellenic Dzogchen Community

\*



Greece >> Garabling

>> continued from previous page  
**Greece hosting Tibet**

The Shang Shung Institute and the Hellenic Dzogchen Community welcome all of you to the Tibetan Cultural Event, September 28–30, 2012.

Prior to our beloved Master’s precious Teaching Longsal Ati Lamgyi Ngöndro from 3rd–7th October 2012 in Athens, we are also looking forward to welcoming all of you to the public talks, “Tibetan Medicine – A Holistic Approach to Health”, “Understanding one’s nature as a way to find real peace” and “The applica-

tion of essential wisdom in our everyday Life “ presented by Elio Guarisco and Oliver Leick. Aldo Oneto will introduce us to Ku Nye massage and Laura Evagelisti to Yantra Yoga. We will also have the opportunity to learn both Ku Nye and Yantra Yoga while practicing them at the same time.

Parallel to the public talks there will be a small “exhibition of Traditional Tibetan Art”, where pictures, statues and thanks of immeasurable historical and cultural value, will be shown.

Please do not hesitate to email us to [info@dzogchen.gr](mailto:info@dzogchen.gr) if you should have any questions!

Visit [www.dzogchen.gr](http://www.dzogchen.gr) for more information about the retreat and the Hellenic Dzogchen Community.

The Hellenic Dzogchen Community is looking forward seeing you all in Athens!

Spain

**Chögyal Namkhai Norbu in Spain**

We are pleased to announce the 2012–early 2013 programme of our Precious Master Chögyal Namkhai Norbu in Spain:

**Avalokiteshvara Khorva Dongtruk**  
Barcelona Retreat  
October 12–16, 2012  
Venue: Auditori AXA  
Avinguda Diagonal, 547 – Barcelona  
Contact: [gakyil@dzogchen.es](mailto:gakyil@dzogchen.es)

**Longsal Atii Gonpa Ngötrod**  
October 26th–30th  
Venue: Punta del Hidalgo – Tenerife  
The information about this retreat will be available soon!  
Contact: [gakyil@meriling.es](mailto:gakyil@meriling.es)

**Vajra Dance Instructors Meeting**  
November 2nd–7th  
Venue: Grand Hotel Callao Callao Salvaje – Costa Adeje – Tenerife Sur – Islas Canarias  
Contact: Yolanda Guerrero, Vajra Dance Instructor  
[yfguerrero@yahoo.es](mailto:yfguerrero@yahoo.es)  
Soledad Cañero  
[sol.amarillo@dzogchen.es](mailto:sol.amarillo@dzogchen.es)  
Olaya Plasencia  
[olaya.asistente@dzogchen.es](mailto:olaya.asistente@dzogchen.es)

**SMS, Vajra Dance, Yantra Yoga Instructors, Instructors Candidates and the whole Dzogchen**

**Community Meeting with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu**  
November 9–13, 2012  
Venue: Grand Hotel Callao  
Contact: Ana Sánchez  
[ana.azul@dzogchen.es](mailto:ana.azul@dzogchen.es)

**Yantra Yoga Teachers Training**  
November 15–22, 2012  
Venue: Grand Hotel Callao  
Contact: Soledad Cañero  
[sol.amarillo@dzogchen.es](mailto:sol.amarillo@dzogchen.es)  
Olaya Plasencia  
[olaya.asistente@dzogchen.es](mailto:olaya.asistente@dzogchen.es)

**Longsal Longde**  
November 23–29, 2012  
Venue: Grand Hotel Callao  
Contact: [gakyil@dzogchen.es](mailto:gakyil@dzogchen.es)

**Chöd – Teaching and Practice**  
December 7th - 13th, 2012  
Venue: Grand Hotel Callao  
Contact: [gakyil@dzogchen.es](mailto:gakyil@dzogchen.es)

**Guru Dragphur – Teaching and Practice**  
December 26, 2012–January 1, 2013  
Venue: Complejo Polideportivo Municipal Las Torres  
C/ Tagara, 2 (Barrio Las Torres)  
38670 Adeje – Tenerife Sur – Islas Canarias  
Contact: [gakyil@dzogchen.es](mailto:gakyil@dzogchen.es)

**Tibetan Cultural Event**  
January 11–17, 2013  
Venue: the information about the venue is not available yet  
San Cristobal de la Laguna – Tenerife – Islas Canarias  
Contact: [gakyil@meriling.es](mailto:gakyil@meriling.es)

**Tibetan Losar Ceremony**  
Tenerife  
The information about this event is not available yet.  
Contact: [gakyil@dzogchen.es](mailto:gakyil@dzogchen.es)

**Mandarava Chülden Retreat**  
February 15–25, 2013  
Venue: Grand Hotel Callao  
Contact: [gakyil@dzogchen.es](mailto:gakyil@dzogchen.es)

The programme is subject to changes according to the circumstances. Please visit our website, spread the word and contact us!

Looking forward to meeting you at the teachings, we send warm regards!  
Spanish Dzogchen Community  
[www.dzogchen.es](http://www.dzogchen.es)

Spain

**Chögyal Namkhai Norbu Dzogchen Teaching Retreat Avalokiteshvara Khorva Dongtruk**

This teaching, a terma of Adzom Drugpa, belongs to the cycle *Od Gsal Rdo Rje Gsang Mdzod*, The Secret Treasure of the Vajra of Clear Light.

It was originally transmitted by Guru Padmasambhava to his consort Yeshe Tsogyal and to his disciples, including Vairochana. Chögyal Namkhai Norbu received this teaching from his uncle, Toden Ogyen Tenzin, disciple of Adzom Drugpa, a great practitioner and Dzogchen master who manifested the Body of Light.

The final aim of this practice is the State of Dzogchen.

This form of Avalokiteshvara is called Khorva Dongtruk, which means the one who overturns or empties samsara. The teaching includes several practices which give the possibility of liberation and help to

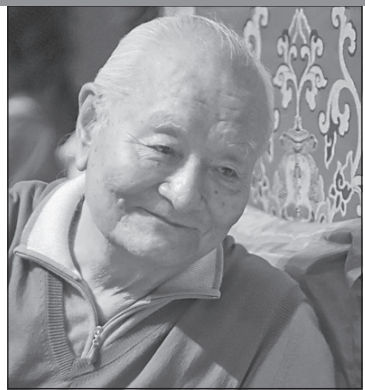


overcome many problems and difficulties, both for the teaching and for those who are practising in the kaliyuga. These methods are like the sun and the moon to eliminate the darkness of suffering and like a panacea to cure the chronic illness of samsara.

Those who meet this teaching are fortunate and have good possibilities.

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

Programme:  
October 12th, 16:00–18:00  
**Introduction of this teaching. Transmission of Ati Guru Yoga and Tridlung of Short Thun Practice.**



October 13th, 10:00–12:00  
**Donwang of Khorva Dongtruk.**

October 14th, 10:00–12:00  
**Instruction on Khorva Dongtruk Practice. Tridlung of Short and Medium Gana Puja.**

October 15th, 10:00–12:00  
**Instruction on Khorva Dongtruk Practice. Tridlung of Medium Thun Practice.**  
16:00–19:00  
**Gana Puja for the New Moon and for ending our retreat.**

October 16th, 10:00–12:00  
**Advices for the daily life practices and tridlungs of collective practices. Ati Guru Yoga for ending our retreat.**

Prices  
250 € For members of the Dzogchen Community (up to date with 2012 fees), discounts apply according to membership  
To attend loose days: 50 €  
People with low income can request a discount on the price of the retreat

Other Activities  
October 9th – Time to be announced  
Join us for the exhibition of **My Reincarnation, a film by Jennifer Fox**  
At Casa del Tibet – Carrer Rosselló, 181 – Barcelona  
October 17th – Time to be announced  
Join us for the **presentation of the spanish edition of On Birth, Life and Death with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, Elías Capriles and Editorial Kairós**  
At Casa del Tibet – Carrer Rosselló, 181 – Barcelona

During the Retreat:  
**Yantra Yoga and Vajra Dance Practice for advanced**  
**Yantra Yoga Course for Beginners** with Glòria Pinsach  
**Vajra Dance Course for Beginners** with Yolanda Ferrandiz  
**Explanations on Tun and Ganapuja Practices** with Elías Capriles

Information and updates:  
[gakyil@dzogchen.es](mailto:gakyil@dzogchen.es)  
Visit our website: [www.dzogchen.es](http://www.dzogchen.es)  
Follow us on Facebook: Comunidad Dzogchen España  
Twitter: @Kundusling

Kundusling  
Passatge de la Pau, 10bis – 3<sup>o</sup>. 1<sup>a</sup>.  
Barcelona – Spain – 08002

Spain

**An Important Clarification on the Meeting with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu on How to Teach and Communicate in the Dzogchen Community, Tenerife, November 9–13**

Dear Vajra Family,  
We want to clarify that the Meeting on How to Teach and Communicate in the Dzogchen Community, Tenerife, November 9–13, is for instructors and instructor-candidates of SMS, Vajra Dance, Yantra Yoga, practitioners who are seriously committed to preparing themselves to become instructors in the future and members of the Community who teach practices.

Please confirm you’re attending and indicate to what category you belong.

A list of participants will be given to Rinpoche.

With our thanks and warm regards,  
Ana Sánchez  
Blue Gakyil, Kundusling  
[ana.azul@dzogchen.es](mailto:ana.azul@dzogchen.es)

**Accommodation in Tenerife 2012–early 2013**

Dear Vajra Family,  
We’d like to present Ready to Fly, the tour operator who’s working in collaboration with the Spanish Dzogchen Community for the retreats and events in Tenerife this year. Although it’s in our website <http://www.dzogchen.es/plan-your-trip-rtf/> so far, we realize that people are not using it the way we envisioned.

For the previous years, “running an extra mile”, other gakyils strived to help practitioners to find accommodation for the retreats. This year it isn’t possible: we have six retreats, three instructors events, a Tibetan Cultural Week and Losar to organize in a row. The initiative of establishing collaboration with a tour operator came up not only in the sense of finding a way to provide services: visa, flights, accommodations, insurance, touristic information. By the agreement we have, some costs are cut off and reverted into benefits to the Tibetan Cultural Week and services provided to the main guests. Not to mention the events will happen during high season in Tenerife. Vacancies at hotels, houses and apartments to rent get

distributed among tour operators. It may be a hard task to find a good place and good prices. But the Dzogchen Community has a tour operator of its own, and ready to attend a range of financial possibilities.

Thank you so much for your comprehension and, with this explanation, we hope people get more interested on checking the option of asking a non-bidding quotation of services to Ready to Fly. It’s only a matter of filling in a form [www.dzogchen.es/plan-your-trip-rtf/](http://www.dzogchen.es/plan-your-trip-rtf/). Anyway, for those who don’t want this service, there’s always the possibility of doing their own research through touristic websites. Those who do so, please be aware that you may be paying more and as regards the

situation of not finding vacancy at Hotel Callao – there are vacancies there! it’s because the vacancies are distributed among tour operators. Ready to Fly, our tour operator, has them and other good options to present, it’s only a matter of getting to know and choose.

The chance to gather around Chögyal Namkhai Norbu for four months is a merit. We’d like to share it with you!

Looking forward to meeting you all later this year in Tenerife,  
The Spanish Dzogchen Community  
[gakyil@dzogchen.es](mailto:gakyil@dzogchen.es)  
[www.dzogchen.es](http://www.dzogchen.es)



UK

Shang Shung and Community Events

**Drajyor**  
with Dr Fabian Sanders  
15th–16th September in London

The Drajyor phonetic transcription system was devised by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu in order for students who do not know Tibetan to be able to easily pronounce the Tibetan practice texts of the Dzogchen Community. In this course, the Drajyor system will be explained in relation to the Tibetan alphabet, drawing detailed examples from two commonly used practices of the Dzogchen Community. This course is open to all who are interested in the teachings and practices of the Dzogchen Community.

We will be studying the following texts:  
Ganapuja, Mandarava: Long Version.  
Price: £60  
Location: AJA, 7 Eton Avenue,  
London NW3 3EL  
Bookings: [events@shangshunguk.org](mailto:events@shangshunguk.org)

**Yantra Yoga for Beginners**  
with John Renshaw  
22nd–23rd September in London  
Price: £120  
Location: London Buddhist Arts Centre,  
Eastbourne House, London, E2 oPT  
Bookings: [yantra@shangshunguk.org](mailto:yantra@shangshunguk.org)

**Mandarava Tsa Lung Explanation and Practice**  
with Elio Guarisco  
21st–30th September 2012  
Price: T.B.A.  
Location: London, T.B.A.  
Bookings: [events@shangshunguk.org](mailto:events@shangshunguk.org)

**Healing with Fire: Tibetan Moxibustion Course**  
with Elio Guarisco  
5th–7th Oct 2012

The moxibustion course is inspired by the work, and exhaustive research during the course of many years by Professor Namkhai Norbu, who studied and compared a large number of ancient sources of Tibetan moxibustion. The result of this research has now materialised in a manual of Moxibustion entitled The Clear Crystal Mirror, a Concise Guide to the Practice of Moxibustion.  
Price: £150  
Location: TBA  
Bookings: [events@shangshunguk.org](mailto:events@shangshunguk.org)

**Dance of the Three Vajra (Om A Hum)**  
with Cindy Faulkner  
12th–14th October 2012  
Location: Buddhist Art Centre, Eastbourne House, London E2 oPT  
Prices and Payment: TBA  
Bookings: [weston402@btinternet.com](mailto:weston402@btinternet.com)

**Karma Yoga with Webcast Practice**  
Kunsalling, Wales

We will be working on the land and in and around the house and listening to the webcast.  
Note: Food and accommodation is free at Kunselling during karma yoga weeks.

**Dark Garuda Practice Retreat**  
with Lol Kane  
19th–29th October 2012  
Kunsalling, Wales  
Please Note: this practice retreat was formerly advertised as taking place 21–30 July.

The intention of the retreat is towards developing the function of the principal mantras of the Dark Garuda practice – this retreat perhaps representing a golden opportunity to do so while being buoyed up by the collective energy generated within group practice. Those wishing to practice silent retreat will be supported in doing so.  
For Bookings: [lokkane@onetel.com](mailto:lokkane@onetel.com)

Merigar East

**The Intensive Kunye Massage Seminar at Merigar East**  
with Aldo Oneto  
April 27–May 3, 2013

Merigar East is happy to invite everyone to the first part of the Intensive Kunye Massage Seminar with Aldo Oneto.  
Kun Nye, traditional Tibetan massage, is cited in the Four Medical Tantras, the essential corpus of Tibetan medicine. One of the external therapies in the Tibetan healing system, Ku Nye is included as an element in this category after diet or correct nutrition, behavior or healthy living, and medicaments or pharmaceuticals.  
The six external therapies can be divided in two aspects. The first consists of three healing methods of a mild nature: Kun Nye massage; hot and cold compresses; and medicinal and thermal baths. The second group of three includes therapies of an invasive

character: moxa, bloodletting, and acupuncture. Kun Nye originated in the ancient realm of Shang Shung in the pre-Buddhist Bon culture. Arising approximately four thousand years ago, precedent to the founding of the Tibetan kingdom, the Shang Shung civilization is considered the source of Tibetan culture. Over the centuries, the nucleus of Tibetan medicine, which had its beginnings in that early realm, developed and integrated within the Tibetan kingdom and the Buddhist Vajrayana tradition, becoming a vast medical system unique in its completeness.  
Traditional Tibetan massage can be divided in three phases: KU, the application of oil, added to which are medicinal or herbal substances according to the type of illness, symptoms, and personality of the patient, over the entire body. NYE, the central phase of treatment wherein diverse manual techniques are applied, involving digital pressure on the skin, muscles, nerves, tendons,

and energy points. CHI, the concluding phase, consisting of the removal of oily residue on the body with flour, in order to avoid eventual impairment that any remaining oil might cause.  
This course will consist of three cycles of intensive training with a duration of seven days each (6.5 hours per day) every five months. After completing all three cycles you will receive Shang Shung Institute Kunye diploma. Students who receive the Shang Shung Institute Kunye diploma can attend updated training courses taught by Tibetan doctors, and have the possibility of learning additional practices and techniques related to Tibetan medicine.  
The first training course will take place from April 27 to May 3, 2013 in Merigar East, 23 August, Constanta, Romania.  
For detailed information and registration please contact us at [office@dzogchen.ro](mailto:office@dzogchen.ro).

**Spring Retreat Namgyalgar South 2012**  
Practicing The Essence of Ati Yoga  
Sat 29th September–Mon 8th October

**Chögyal Namkhai Norbu’s Web cast retreat Longsal Ati’i Lam-gyi Ngöndro**  
a preliminary practice for the path of Dzogchen from the Longsal  
October 3rd–7th

**The Seven Semdzins – Meditative Stability through Simultaneous Shine and Lhagthong**  
Led by Elise Stutchbury, authorized SMS Base Level teacher

During this retreat we will examine the View, Meditation and Behavior of Dzogchen, with particular focus on this series of practices of the Essence of Ati Yoga. The practices of The Seven Semdzins form part of the “Preliminary Practices” of Dzogchen. Through using this method of “holding the mind” we can generate experiences related to body, speech and mind, enabling us to discover our true nature.  
This retreat is open to all and Newcomers are Welcome

Please bring your texts: *The Precious Vase, The Preliminary Practices of the Base and Collective Practice For Special Days*. Also bring your meditation belt, or a sarong your can tie and use. As we may do some practice outside, weather permitting, please also bring suitable rugs and cushions, as Gonpa cushions can not be taken outside.  
Accommodation: Caravans, dormitory beds and tent sites are available onsite. Further information (including off land holiday rental accomm.) is available from Viki as below or on the Namgyalgar Website (Namgyalgar South page).  
Travel: information about bus and air travel to the Gar is available from Viki or on the website (NStth page).  
Meals: will be prepared communally with retreatants sharing cooking and cleanup etc. Approximate cost per adult per day is \$12–\$15 for 3 meals and hot beverages.  
Information about the retreat schedule and pricing is available from Viki.  
Enquiries and Bookings:  
Viki at Tel 02.44737668  
[secretary@dzogchen.org.au](mailto:secretary@dzogchen.org.au)

Tsegyalgar East

**Avalokiteshavara Khorva Community Retreat**  
10/13–10/16  
A practice retreat that coincides with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu’s web cast

**Refresher Course of the Song of the Vajra**  
with Kyu  
10/19–10/21

**Mandarava**  
with Annalen Gall  
Nov. 8–11, 2012

**Community Chöd Retreat**  
12/7–12/13  
A practice retreat that coincides with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu’s web cast

**Vajra Dance Weekend**  
12/8–12/9, Details TBA

**Annual Holiday Retreat**  
12/26–1/1  
A practice retreat that coincides with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu’s web cast

**SMS Level One Retreat**  
with Jim Valby  
2/8/13–2/10/13

**SMS Base Level Retreat**  
with Jim Valby  
3/8/13–3/10/13

For more information contact:  
phone 413 369 4153  
[secretary@tsegyalgar.org](mailto:secretary@tsegyalgar.org)

**Jim Valby’s Schedule**  
Nov 2–6, 2012, Meriling, Tenerife, **SMS Base**  
Nov 16–20, 2012, Kundusling, Barcelona, **Purification Practices**  
Dec 12–16, 2012, Pelzomling, Mexico City, **SMS Base**  
Dec 18–23, 2012, Tsegyalgar West, Baja California, Mexico, **SMS Base**  
Jan 3–7, 2013, Tashigar Norte, Venezuela, **Purification Practices**  
Jan 11–15, 2013, Tashigar Norte, Venezuela, **SMS Level One**  
Feb 8–10, 2013, Tsegyalgar East, Conway, **SMS Level One**  
Feb 22–24, 2013, Kundrolling, NYC, **SMS Base and Worldwide Guruyoga Preparation**  
Mar 8–10, 2013, Tsegyalgar East, Conway, **SMS Base**  
Mar 22–24, 2013, Kundrolling, NYC, **SMS Level One**  
Apr 13–17, 2013, Paris, France, **SMS Base**  
Apr 20–27, 2013, Dejamling, France, **SMS Level Two**

Tsegyalgar West

October 11–23rd, 2012  
**Grisha Mokhin to visit Tsegyalgar West – Opening of the Gar**  
Also in Todos Santos, TBA for dharma talk

24 October to 5 November:  
**Carolina Mingolla Teaches Yantra Yoga**  
Talk & Demo in Todos Santos.

November 9  
**World Wide Transmission**  
Adzom Drugpa Anniversary

November 22–30th  
**Longde Sangha Retreat with webcast**

December 7 to 13th, 2012  
**Chöd Sangha Retreat with webcast**  
December 8th  
**Rinpoche’s birthday Ganapuja & long life practice**  
& a little party or open house

December 18 to 23rd 2012  
**Retreat with Jim Valby on Dzogchen**  
17 December Public talk in Todos Santos

December 26 to January 1  
**Holiday Sangha Group Retreat**  
  
January:  
**Vajra Dance TBA**

February  
**Michael Katz on Dream Yoga**  
in Todos Santos  
Feb 8–11:  
**Dream Yoga Retreat at TW**

Feb 11th  
**Losar party at the Gar!**  
Happy Lunar New Year!

Feb 15–25th  
**Mandarava Chudlen Sangha retreat with webcast**

5 March–2 April  
**Nina Robinson teaches Mandarava and Chöd**  
Group practice retreats

April 26–28th  
**Rinpoche’s retreat in Mexico City**

May 1–3, 2013  
**Teachings form the book of CHNN : “Life, Birth and Death”**  
In Todos Santos TBA

May 8–12  
**Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche Visit To Baja**  
  
Dzogchen Teachings TBA

May 13–20  
**Song of the Vajra Dance part II**  
with Bodhi Krause at the Gar  
(The first part will be in Mexico City on April 8–14.)

Please contact us for more information:  
[tsegyalgarwestsecretary@gmail.com](mailto:tsegyalgarwestsecretary@gmail.com)  
[www.tsegyalgarwest.org](http://www.tsegyalgarwest.org)



## Review

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## The Indestructible Mirror

Ursa Major Gallery  
Shelburne Falls, MA

Louise Landes-Levi

I meet Enrico del Angelo, irregularly, in Western MA, & Isabel – the occasion is the Jnana Dakini teaching of Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche. Enrico cordially offers me some ice cream when I take an afternoon off to see the exhibition of modern art from Lhasa at the Ursa Major Gallery. The gallery, directed by Lauri Denyer, is set amid potholes (ancient glacier remnants) in the town of Shelburne Falls. It is close to the Buckland schoolhouse where the amazing teachings are taking place. It is not far from Khandroling, the land where the dance *terma* of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu was received & where the dance, itself an elevated art form, is intensively practiced, now in the Vajra Hall, a structure he envisioned – set on a hill where once a small tent provided him with the silence required to receive the *terma*, conferred by the same Jnana Dakini, whose practice method or ‘*sadhana*’ he is now teaching.

In Shelburne Falls, we are not dealing with transmission, initiation, the maintenance of ‘sacred’ formula but with invention, a new tradition, in the work of Tashi Phuntsok (b. Lhasa 1977) – a new way to integrate mantra and manifestation, in the work of Tseren Dolma (b. Lhasa, 1966) – a modern view, in one of her paintings *Untitled* – a woman is lodged between the Neolithic world and the digital one, the later at present defining the planet and in the work of Tenzin Norbu (b. Dauton, Nepal 1971) whose monk with cell phone is the defining piece of the exhibition, at least the one with which Ms. Denyer has chosen to present the entire exhibit, entitled *The Indestructible Mirror* (ILLUSTRATION) and suggesting the line which appears in *The Crystal & The Way of Life* (ed. John Shane) from the *Song of the Vajra* – *siṃa siṃa* – the *Indestructible Vajra*.

Here we deal with Diaspora, with the prophecy of exile, with appropriation and with defiance, a defiance that permits liberation through expression. The represented artists live, for the most part, in Lhasa, some having been born in Nepal (Tenzin Norbu). Ms. Denyer has done a remarkable work to assemble this collection, assisted by Paula Vanzo, the afore mention Enrico Dell’Angelo and Efrem Marder, whose loan of *Heavenly Bliss* (ILLUSTRATION) by Drugu Choegyal Rinpoche (b. Kham, Tibet 1946) gives to the exhibition, its most nakedly modern, but also, subtly traditional, at least in its depiction or expression of mind, imagery. One understands the depth of the painter’s view in this large abstract or, in the painter’s words ‘spontaneous’ painting –



watercolor and gold on rice paper. I recall ‘Group Portrait’ Gode’s work from TIBET NOW, 2011 – ASIA’s show in Castel del Piano, Grosseto, Italy. The painting is a stunning and (deliberately) disfigured mandala, painted with mineral colors (not pigment). Its figures radically depart from traditional invitees. Here instead, Water Rocket, Superman, Karl Marx, a Tibetan monk attired a la Mao Tse Tung, a fanged Mickey Mouse, 2 interlaced figurines in the linear style of Keith Haring et. al.

Tibet enters the 21st century – its artists no longer protected by the Himalayas, by the monetary and/or by tradition itself. As the West approaches the refined paradigm – conserved in the ark of the Tibetan civilization, at least from the 12th century, when it became a repository for the marauded and exiled Tantric tradition from India – Tibet itself moves toward the modern and the post modern, the surreal, the Dadaist, the pop and the neo-pop but it does so with pathos and with the criteria, concerns and symbols of its own culture, threatened, indeed deracinated as these artists matured, 1950 & onward.

Denyer has worked to make a generic selection. In her small gallery, great spirits seem to settle and to ask for ‘peace’ – a resolution however which can not be framed-for it addresses human aspiration and spirit and not directly, in most of these paintings, the political. But the two are inexorably linked. Sherab Gyaltsen (b. 1958 Shigatse) with his root-like mandala ‘Portrait of Boy’, Tashi Phuntsok, with his cities, each house, for him, a mantra or ‘Prayer Bead’ of spiritual heritage, Tseren, with her beautiful

panels, one (cited above) especially touching – she paints the perennial woman, digitalized by the patriarchy, by the shadow of guilt, by the new technology, effacing as much as it affords, w. relation to communication. (ILLUSTRATION) I see this painting and wonder how a woman living in Lhasa can paint what I feel – can mirror my emotion? This is not the language of transmission and initiation, but a spiritual current flows from these paintings. Her other work is more traditional, at least with regard to imagery: ‘The 3 Poisons’ w. cock, goat and elephant, the footprints of the Buddha, the stupa et.al.

Shelburne Falls was once a zone of peace. Non-fighting – a code of protection – was imposed – among the Indians, within a day’s journey on foot to and from Salmon Falls – the cascade of that name resonant enough to be heard from the gallery door. Lauri has done well to place Ursa Major here. Enrico & Isabel serve ice cream. We are steps from the potholes – relics of the geothermal activity, which generated their formation more than 4 million years ago.

Tibetan art has come from the extremity and the purity of tradition – to this small gallery – and transformed itself into images that speak to the exile of the 21st century – both Tibetan and planetary. They speak to the inexorability of spiritual aspiration, the search for the vocabulary of change.

The tigse is not dismissed, it is not defeated. The Iron Bird, which, in the vision of Guru Padmasambhava, would fly from Tibet, would also fly to Tibet. We are privileged to receive this show, in a site, which was the

heart (or vortex) I hear from the towns people, including Peter Ruhf, whose work previously was shown at Ursa Major, of Pangaea (the ancient single continent) and equally, the heart of peace for the



Mohawk and Penobscot Nations.

How cruel the genocides of the so-called ‘civilized’ nations. How brave the artists who affirm the necessity of aesthetic consideration and expression under these and all conditions. And how amazing – this exhibit so far from the homes of most of the artists involved and so close to the hearts of those from the recent retreat, whose privilege it was to see them at Ursa Major, the gallery opened afternoons and over the week-end of the teachings and throughout the year. ©

## An Interview with Lauri Denyer

Director Ursa Major Gallery,  
Shelburne Falls, MA

What inspired you to open a gallery? The gallery opened in 2010 after I rented it for a studio space and realized it was perfect for showing art, as it is located on a little street in Shelburne Falls that gets a lot of foot traffic. My father left behind a lot of canvases and it seemed like a wonderful thing to be able to let people see these paintings, so I began showing them in 2011 without much fanfare.

In what ways does such phenomenal and hands on responsibility affect your practice?

As far as formal practice is concerned, naturally taking on a job and responsibility means one has less time to attend retreats and do personal practice. But having had all the time in the world to follow Rinpoche, and having done so to my heart’s content, it was time to do something else, and see whether the teachings and practice have produced any real effects, and whether I can indeed practice in daily life.

What shows and/or activities were exhibited or presented at Ursa Major prior to the *Indestructible Mirror*?

There were the two exhibitions of my father’s large rainbow-like, meditative abstract paint-

ings and delicate drawings, followed by a fellow-practitioner’s work, Michael Katz’s expressionist paintings. Then there was a show called *Random* which comprised pieces by Moses Hoskins, Jim Smith, Harold Graves, Joan Wye, and others, including some family members like my mother Barbara Denyer, sister Stephanie, and a son and my daughters, and my own. The idea was that the show was without a theme other than randomness – but in fact it had to be hung very carefully or it would have looked terrible with all those disparate types of work together. Next was a show by local artist Peter Ruhf, whose work is fantastical magic real-

>> continued on the following page



## The Book L

Cool Grove Press  
Brooklyn, NY

*I have made of a footprint, a sacred one*  
Osage Women’s song

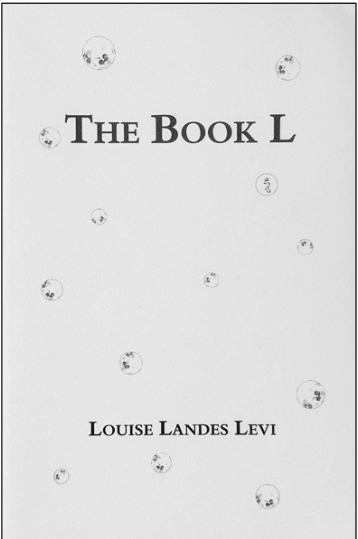
It is unusual to have met a great master like Chögyal Namkhai Norbu. It is unusual to have studied with him for many years – he tears open the obstacles to the work on oneself – he opens the gates of Dharma.

I said to him, in 1983, when we met in Amsterdam, 5 years after the initial encounter, in London I want to live in a cave & to realize myself. He said I might live in a cave (for 12 years) but I might not realize myself so it would be better for me to do poetry and music. I said, but master in this society, if you are good at something, you will receive praise meaning, it will develop pride & be bad for the ego. He replied for you it would be good to be famous & then, It’s good when dzog chen pas move around the world. This was surprising but I endeavored from that day until this one to follow his instruction (he did not say among whom to be famous, i.e. the Dylan Thomas quote – famous among barns).

Later, in Conway, on the top of the hill where the Vajra Hall now stands, in despair, I said, Master should I do poetry or music, feeling I could not do them both (or either) to perfection – he replied poetry, music & dance.

The Drukpa Kargu lineage, of which Chögyal Namkhai Norbu is the titular head – he once showed us his seal... indeed he passed it around – affirms artistic exposure endeavor and execution as spiritual exercise or practice. As does the Bharatiya Natyas-hastra, the Indian text (considered as the 5th veda) – transcribed sometime between the 4th BCE. \* The 4th century CE by the sage Bharatiya.

The master encouraged me. We write songs and poems together (my entire oeuvre, to 1982 has been thrown away). He drives me to the highway when I want in fact to stay at Merigar. There is a reading in Bologna: the trans-



portation plan – auto stop. No problem.

So, with great humility, humor and honor – I break tradition and present The Book L to readers of the Mirror- Ellen Pearlman, a NYC critic recently in Conway, said, (I paraphrase) ah... the form instead of obscuring your meanings is now conveying them, I suppose that’s a step. Beyond hope but also beyond fear, says Ma Chig [Lapdron].

Readers of the Mirror will be surprised to learn that our favorite household yogini/master, was well known to William Stuart Burroughs & Brion Gysin, masters of 20th century literary movements, and that the cut up technique, so exquisitely executed by them, had this great woman master as source, remember PHAT = to cut (see Terry Wilson’s Days Lane, Chanticleer, 2009).

Poetry remains an elusive and to some a useless art. For one such as me, regarding its practice there is little choice.

was quite well-attended and is the first of many readings, probably. The artists whose work is on display give gallery talks – and those can be quite inspiring too.

Finally what inspired you to present ‘Tibetan secular art’ and having curated it so beautifully, what for you differentiates secular from the more traditional or ‘sacred Tibetan art’ ? Thank you for your compliment. Those of us who attended Merigar’s 30th anniversary celebration were able to see a large exhibition of Tibetan paintings both

Death  
is conventional,  
everyone dies  
mother  
father  
f  
l  
o  
w  
e  
r  
&  
fish  
except some beings like Changchub Dorje  
Philip Whalen  
has to die,  
too  
I wish he didn’t & cld. put on his  
eye glasses.  
\*  
IT is bound  
to  
happen  
As  
I write I feel my heart  
grow  
l  
i  
g  
h  
t  
e  
r

*I just have to become the most powerful possible version of myself*

I find Ester  
kind  
Queen  
I find myself in the flowers  
I’m all covered up/ Namkhai Norbu, if you can’t  
MAKE ME BLOOM  
No one can.  
\*  
(fr. The Book L, p. 77)

Beyond critical analysis – its pleasing to some, obscure, indeed irrelevant to another. The Master removes obstacles, with all possible methods.

The Book L. bears indirect homage to Dutch poets of the Buddhist avant guard, in Europe, early & late 20th century – Bert Schierbeck, & Paul van Ostaijen. It is an effort to reconcile compassion and community in the so-called 3rd.world (on Isla Margarita) with impermanence, the death of those nearest seen through the transparency of Ati yoga. With many photos of the island, included a contested one of Namkhai Norbu ca. 2006, on Playa Zaragosa, printed with his generous permission. When questioned regarding the reactions of various people he wrote Ah,an example of the different dimensions in which we live.

To order: pleased contact author – levitatero8@hotmail.  
or publisher – Tej@coolgrove.com  
price \$15.00 plus postage  
or by donation.

>> continued from previous page  
ist imagery, then an installation/ performance piece by Bret Bourman, another fellow-practitioner, with a theme of relationship between what is inside and what is outside, and memory, space, nature, thought, mind. That was the one right before this Tibetan art show. There was a series of poetry workshops run by Jacqueline Gens this spring, which may continue, and a very beautiful reading by Louise Landes Levi from early and later works, and with singing and serangi – that

traditional and modern, curated by ASIA. Paola Vanzo, who organized the show and whose collection formed the basis of the modern art portion of the exhibit works in NY and was willing to loan me many paintings for this show. The catalog, available from ASIA in Italy, is very interesting and several of the paintings in it are in the Ursa Major show too. Tibetan traditional painting has been done for a defined purpose for many centuries, and has a certain form and style related to this purpose, which is to assist

spiritual practitioners to work with the imagery in their visualizations and practices, and to inspire others as a window on an inner, sacred, pure world. As Tibetans have been forced to relate more to the West, the results have been interesting, in that Tibetans have not lost this sacred viewpoint, but are finding ways to unite the sacred vision with a modern reality – at least this is what it looks like to me, since not a single piece is devoid of spiritual imagery, while definitely relating to the art world as we know it.

They stand up as well-executed, innovative, interesting pieces and have in fact been attracting the attention of New York galleries in recent years. I find them fascinating and beautiful and very moving. And I wanted others to get the chance to see them too. ©



# How I Met Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

Naomi Zeitz

## Looking For the Light Switch.

I guess you could say that I became a little more conscious after the death of my son Aaron on Memorial Day in May, 1977. He was 4 months old. Until then, life was a sort of haze of passions, emotions and conditioned responses. Both Aaron’s birth and the inconsolable loss were profound and earthshaking, needless to say, and forced me to seriously consider the nature of life and what I was doing with mine. It was not easy to continue living, but somehow I did, and fortunately found the way to a great Master and the incomparable Dzogchen Teachings.

Childhood had some special moments, magical moments and was a time of being closer to my own spiritual nature. I remember delighting in nature and fantasy, and all that it means to be in the dimension of childhood where one is closer to one’s essential nature somehow. Then as I grew up, those experiences and feelings faded, although something was always lingering around.

My family had strong and weak points as all do. I came from a non religious Jewish family with very strong leftist political beliefs, including the well known Marxist axiom: “religion is the opiate of the masses”. So I would have these sorts of unusual, out of the ordinary experiences, and maybe my 3 sisters did as well, but there was no place to discuss or acknowledge them. Maybe even my parents had some inkling of a sort of otherness than material reality, but that was not really an option in a family super identified with intellectualism, politics and activism. The material world was it.

I am not saying these were bad experiences. In some ways I feel fortunate that I was not conditioned by religion or a belief in god, and also a humanitarian training is not a bad thing. The relationships in the family had their qualities, stressful and not, that helped to shape my world view in good and bad ways, like everyone.

After the short life and then death of my son, I was brought to the brink of my own life and desire to live. I then explored more deeply things that had passed through my awareness at various points in my life. I left Aaron’s father. I started to do hatha yoga and the books I began to read in art school returned to me, like Hermann Hesse, Krishnamurti, and Thomas Merton. Art school was the time of the 60’s, Vietnam, hippies and marijuana and so, of course, I indulged in and explored all that that time had to offer. Once again, through that exploration, my sense of something “other” was confirmed.

Then in 1981, while working as a waitress at Cathy’s Waffle Store on Lark Street in Albany NY, one of my coworkers invited me to a “satsang” at her house. Satsang is a gathering of devotees, and the Guru was an East Indian Kashmir Shaivate shaktipat master, where people chant, sway and meditate. I was hooked almost immediately. Something happened. For the first time since I lost my son, I felt the wish to live, I felt the wish to live so I could discover the

source of this bliss and expanded awareness. I will confess, it was a powerful life changing experience for me, for which I am forever grateful.

So dramatically, I gave up everything, as am I known to do. I went to meet the Guru at the ashram in South Fallsburg NY, a converted Jewish resort hotel, in the neighborhood of the hotel where my parents met right before my father went to war in 1940 something. I received “shaktipat” (kundalini awakening) and my world turned inside out. I left Albany NY finally after so many years and moved into the ashram. I became the perfect devotee. I cleaned up my act. I stopped smoking everything. And for the first time since losing Aaron, I felt I could go on. I went to India a couple of times. I wore a sari and a bindi in the middle of my forehead. I woke up at 3 am and sang devotional chants and chopped vegetables. I loved it, I loved India and all the senses and sense that awoke there.

And then 5 years later, after living in the ashram on and off for some years, it all came to a halt. I saw the people around me, myself included, getting more neurotic and less integrated into society. Anyhow for me it was not complete; it was clearly not working anymore and apparently not the final point of my seeking.

I moved out of the Santa Monica, California ashram and got a job at the Bodhi Tree Bookstore, which was a metaphysical bookstore and an LA institution. It was liberating for me to be there and I began to speak with people, read books and feel free. At a certain point I remember writing something in my diary about “meeting a real teacher”. I knew my Master was out there, I just did not know where.

One day I was looking at the notice board at the Bodhi Tree and I saw a poster for a Red Tara teaching with a Tibetan lama. Something in the energy of the poster drew me. I went to the teaching and strongly connected. It was a different and deeper connection than the shaktipat; something more related. I made some friends at the teaching who were very involved with one lama, I went to a retreat also with him, and the lama did a MO for me saying I should move to Rochester NY, to his center.

After a couple of years of living in upstate NY, some of the time in a dharma center with my then partner Sue, and traveling back and forth to Australia where she lived, once again I became disenchanted. The traditional dharma scene was just not working for me, or for Sue. Somehow I got a hold of a copy of Women of Wisdom by Tsultrim Allione, and I read it voraciously. I was also very drawn to meeting Tsultrim because she had lost a child in the same way as I. Then I read Crystal and the Way of Light and that was it. The experience of that book was something totally beyond intellectual understanding; it was as if I was returning to a place I knew for all time, beyond time. I knew I had to meet this master, Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche.

I got the telephone number of Tsultrim Allione. I still remember that moment. I



called her and we set up a meeting because she lived across the river from my parents in NY State. I met her in the parking lot of a shopping mall. I told her the dharma scene in upstate NY was not working for me anymore. She asked me some questions. We had tea at her house and went to listen to some Sufi music. Then she took me back to the parking lot of the shopping mall. It was all very Castenada-like.

Sue and I attended some of Tsultrim’s first dakini retreats. We did practices from Rinpoche’s lineage and I felt very connected to them. It was like nothing I had ever experienced before. I remember Tsultrim speaking of Ayu Khandro and something in me clicked, also when singing the Song of the Vajra, and I knew this was my path, my lineage and Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche my teacher.

At a certain point Tsultrim told us that Chögyal Namkhai Norbu was coming to NYC to teach and we should come and meet him. This was in 1987. We were both thrilled. We were still living in Rochester in the dharma center, and we packed ourselves up for the travel, taking along with us an Austrian nun called Dechen, and went to NYC. I distinctly remember feeling that I was going to meet my teacher, that

finally the moment had arrived. I was so excited I could not sleep the night before.

We went to Columbia University and plopped ourselves down in the third row. Sue, Dechen in her robes, and I. Tsultrim was there. At one moment I felt the energy shift in the room and turned to look for the “lama”. There was none to be found, as far as I could see. And then I saw someone very simple, in a funny yellow windbreaker jacket, amble in with a powerful energy and presence. I thought, “That must be him.”

The teaching was on Yantra Yoga. I understood very little but I did understand one thing. I understood that this was my teacher. I was riveted, not by anything intellectual but by a strong experience of familiarity, power and presence. I was overjoyed and blown away. At that time, I was quite shy and rarely had the courage to say things in public, but I was so taken that I even asked Rinpoche a question at the end. I asked if someone was doing traditional Ngöndro, and one did not have a physical practice like Yantra Yoga, could one still be realized? I do not remember the answer because it was certainly beyond my capacity, but I do remember Rinpoche seemed amused and was somewhat ferocious.

At the end of the teaching Tsultrim introduced us to Rinpoche and we shook his hand. He walked out of the lecture room and I followed, I saw nothing else, only him. The energy was quite strong and we all floated behind Rinpoche down the stairs to the front of the building where he stopped. He stopped and was looking at the birds. Rinpoche said something about their ignorance. Somehow I knew those words were for me and the beginning of this incredible journey; the journey to dispel ignorance and discover the real nature. There are no words to describe the gratitude and love I feel for Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, for his capacity to help this being who had been wandering around in a thick fog looking for the light switch. Thank you Maestro for the limitless compassion and generosity you display in each moment. Thank you for helping me find the switch.

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