

Upcoming Retreats with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu



2013

Argentina
Tashigar Sur
March 22–28
Simhamukha of Ayu Khandro
retreat

April 1–8
Santi Maha Sangha Training

Peru
Lima
April 19–21
The Real Condition of Time –
The Dzogchen Experience

Mexico
April 26–28
Mexico Retreat

May 8–12
Tsegylgar West Retreat

USA
May 17–19
Los Angeles Retreat

May 24–26
Tara Mandala, Pagosa Springs, CO

May 31–June 2
New York City Retreat

June 7–12
Tsegylgar East Retreat

USA
Tsegylgar East
June 13–15
Santi Maha Sangha
Level I Exam
June 16–23
Santi Maha Sangha
Level II Training

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The retreat was held in the spacious 'Gonpa' at the Grand Hotel Callao.

Photo: M. Farmer

Enjoying the State of Definitive Happiness

Elisa Copello

Every time I come back from Tenerife, I feel the desire to return as soon as possible. I feel nostalgia for this special place dominated by the volcano and the power of the elements that manifest with all their energy. But this time the feeling was stronger, different and accompanied by a sense of belonging in the knowledge that in a few months we will have the first retreat on the island on our land. The Mandarava retreat was, therefore, the last to be organized elsewhere, more specifically, at the Grand Hotel Callao, with its pleasant and colourful swimming pools and lush natural setting.

The organization of the retreat was really perfect and a large team of students collaborated in various ways to make the conditions pleasant and relaxed. There were over 600 people from all over the world, with a very high percentage of practitioners

coming from Russia and the East European countries. There were many familiar faces but also an extraordinary participation of people, who were totally new, in the packed calendar of activities: the magnificent teachings of Rinpoche in the morning accompanied by valuable advice and useful reminders aimed at new and old students, practices led alternately by Nina Robinson and Analen Gall, and in the afternoon instructions on the *mudras*, visualisations and melodies with the two of them as well as a wonderful lesson on clarifying *kumbaka* given by Fabio Andrico. Then yantra yoga in the morning and the Dance of the Three Vajras on some of the afternoons. Other afternoons were devoted to Tibetan dances under the guidance of Tsering Dolker, Topgyal Gontse and Adriana Dal Borgo whose abundant patience and skill guided the most numerous group of practitioners

who wanted to take part in a "performance" under the watchful and amused eye of Rinpoche after the ganapujas and also on other occasions before and after the retreat.

Rinpoche has repeatedly stressed the importance of learning Tibetan dances and songs as a tribute and a commitment to keep alive a culture in danger of extinction. The songs in particular are often poignant testimonies of Tibetans' love for their land, their religious spirit, their devotion to His Holiness the Dalai Lama and their pride of being a people rich in tradition and ancient culture. Rinpoche has now transcribed 108 songs and Adriana has studied the steps of twenty dances that have been approved by the Master, although certainly others will be added. The songs and dances took place in a particularly joyous and festive atmosphere in which many people, young and

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Mandarava Retreat Tenerife

February 15–25, 2013

Excerpt from Day 3
February 17, 2013

Meeting Ayu Khandro and the Drombu

Good day to everybody everywhere. Today we are learning how we do the practice of Mandarava. This practice of Mandarava is mainly a long life practice. The base of the practice is called Jnanadhakini, so Mandarava is part of the Jnanadhakini teaching. This is the specific way this practice manifested for obtaining long life. So this root text is related to Guru Padmasambhava and his consort Mandarava. I will give you a little information about its origin.

In Nepal there is a famous place called Maratika. There are many sacred places, but Maratika is a very special place of Guru Padmasambhava. In the biography of Guru Padmasambhava and his consort Mandarava, they were in Maratika and did the practice of Buddha Amitayus – Buddha Amitayus in different manifestation aspects of the Five Dhyana Buddhas. That is a particular long life practice. Then we thought that this place is very important and we should go to Nepal to visit this place. One reason was at that time a monastery in Nepal had invited me and I thought it would be a good occasion to combine the visit to this monastery and also go to Maratika. Then of course we thought that when we would go to Maratika, we should do long life practice. Historically it says that Guru Padmasambhava and Mandarava obtained immortality and they realized that in Maratika, but I wondered which kind of long life practice we should do when we got there.

I was remembering when I was in Tibet and received teachings from my woman teacher Ayu Khandro. Ayu Khandro was a student of the first Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo and Nyagla Padma Dündul, and many of these important teachers. When I received teachings from Ayu Khandro, I went particularly because when I was in college my teacher told me I should receive the Vajrayogini empowerment from her. So I went to receive the Vajrayogini empowerment because I did not know Ayu Khandro and what teachings she was related to. In our region Ayu Khandro was famous, but not famous like a teacher that many people would go to to receive teachings. She was considered someone who was doing a dark retreat her whole life and she prepared protection cords, black ones, and the Tibetans like these cords very much. I had never met her but I already had the protection cord. Ayu Khandro lived at a small monastery that belonged to the Sakyapa tradition so I thought she was a Sakyapa practitioner. Also Vajrayogini belongs to the Sakyapa tradition.

When I arrived to Ayu Khandro I gave my letter from the college that said I had come to receive the empowerment of Vajrayogini. I told her I came because she had this transmission of this teaching from the first Jamyang Khyentse, so for that reason my teacher of the college sent me. When she read this letter she said, “Oh, you are a scholar studying in the college, a student of Khenpo Khyenrab, [my teacher was a very famous scholar], also you are a reincarnation, a studied one, I am only an old lady, what can I give you?” It seemed she presented herself in a very humble way. Then I thought maybe she does not want to give me the teaching. In any case, we met her that day. Nearby there was a Sakyapa monastery and that is where we put our tents and slept. I was not sure she would give me a teaching or not, but we tried again the next day.

Then when we arrived the next day before taking our breakfast, she sent a nun who was doing service for her and her niece, a very young lady, and they brought cheese and yogurt etc., and they said that Khandro sent this and asked me to come and have breakfast with her. I went there and we were eating breakfast together, and she said, “Oh, I had a dream of my teacher Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo

this night.” When she met Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo she was young and could not meet him for many days because he was doing a personal retreat. She and her friend were waiting some days there. One day Khyentse Wangpo asked them to come and he gave them a teaching called Khandro Sangdu. That is his *terma* teaching, Khandro means all dakinis, *sangdu* means the union of all secret teachings of the dakinis. Mainly there is the practice of Dorje Palmo. So there is a series of three or four initiations and one is the main initiation and the others are related more to action mantras. This teaching has fantastic instructions, *tsalungs*, kumbhaka, breathings; I remember very, very nice instructions. Anyway Ayu Khandro had this dream of Khyentse Wangpo and he gave her advice to give this Khandro Sangdu teaching to me. This was not Vajrayogini, but I was very happy. I said of course I am very happy, and asked her how should we do. Ayu Khandro said we should do two or three days of preparations. There was a khenpo in this monastery, who was a student of Ayu Khandro, and she said we should ask this khenpo to prepare everything, as she could not prepare anything.

You see, Ayu Khandro was not a young lady, but she was also not only an old lady. When she gave me teachings she was 113 years old. But she was not a very old lady who could not understand, not like that. She was very active and also everything was very clear. So then I went to the khenpo that day and I asked him to help and he was also very happy because he had never received this Khandro Sangdu teaching. He was very happy to collaborate. We found all that we needed to prepare *torma* and offerings; we prepared everything.

Then the day of the dakini arrived and she started to teach this teaching. After that there were many other teachings. When she finished the teaching I was always asking Ayu Khandro questions about her life, what she did, where she went, which kind of teachers she met, and which kinds of teachings she received, etc. She was always explaining she received this and that teaching and then I said I was interested in those teachings also. I asked each time for these kinds of teachings and I received many kinds of teachings from Ayu Khandro. In general Ayu Khandro was not giving teachings to many students, she was doing a personal retreat, living in the dark, there were only a few lamps; but when we were there she used more lamps. I also asked her why are she was doing this dark retreat. Then she told me she went to central Tibet and met a famous teacher called Trulzhig Rinpoche, one of the Trulzhigs of that period who



Photo: M. Noreger

was very famous for the practice of *yangtig*. She received that instruction and later she was interested to do this practice. And after the death of her teacher Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo, she remained all the rest of her life in retreat and she started to do this dark retreat.

Also she said when she was quite young she went from Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo's place to Nyagla Padma Dündul's place, and she received all the transmissions of the teachings called Kachag Rangdrol, a series of the teachings of Nyagla Padma Dündul. So I asked to receive this teaching and I received all of Kachag Rangdrol from Ayu Khandro. In this Kachag Rangdrol there is a series of Guru Amitayus. This is Guru Amitayus in the form of Guru Padmasambhava and Guru Padmasambhava performed the practice that is Guru Amitayus. Guru Padmasambhava obtained this practice in Maratika. For that reason he put this teaching in *terma* for the future. Later Nyagla Padma Dündul discovered that *terma*. So I received that teaching from Ayu Khandro. Also I received transmission of this from the son of my teacher Changchub Dorje, because at the place of my teacher Changchub Dorje, there was a yearly seven-day practice of the long life practice of Guru Amitayus and they did the practice of Nyagla Padma Dündul. When I was there doing this practice, Gyurme Rinpoche gave many transmissions for people who did not have the transmissions and I received also that. This is how these practices are connected.

I am remembering this and thinking if we go to Maratika, we should do this practice before going to Nepal. So in Merigar I prepared all these practice books, also for Westerners, because whenever I go somewhere there are always many Westerners. So I know that and we prepared a transcription of the practice of Guru Amitayus. That was our aim and why we were going there. But of course before we went to Maratika we went to the monastery in the north of Nepal called Tolu, and we organized a retreat there.

We went to Tolu and we did that retreat and teaching. And after Tolu we went to Maratika. When we were in Tolu I had many interesting dreams. It was one of the first dreams I had of my uncle, Khyentse Rinpoche. From my uncle I received a very important Dzogchen teaching called Nyingthig Yazhi. It is the series of the essence of the Dzogchen teachings and I received many other teachings from him. In the dream he told me to go to Maratika in this moment. There is the place of Guru Padmasambhava and there is an important place of the long life practice. Then I said I know that, I prepared already the practice of

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Losar Poem

So this is the dawning of the Age of Aquarius
That long awaited communitas, with its panacea of universal love
Destined to unlock hard hearts.

Let the water snakes torpedo with their periscopic heads
As they propel us into sights beyond the norm to shed
Fixations, mental concepts and mean thoughts, our usual
Stale fare.

Let’s take our daily frights into the realm of self-manifest
Iridescence
Shed a skin; trade our complacency for wisdom mind
Wake to never ending freshness
And the minds true liberation

May all beings unearth the bounty of their innate treasure
And share in the grace of harmony
Released at last when love will steer the stars.

Jacqueline Gens
Dawn
Tsegyalgar East
February 11, 2013

Editorial

With this issue we would like to extend to all our readers many good wishes for a healthy and prosperous Water Snake year, the new lunar Tibetan year that formally began on February 11, 2013. The entry of a new year marks a time of beginnings and endings and indicates new trends and tendencies both at the global and individual level. Tibetan astrologer Tenzin Tsewang Jamlingpa from Dharamsala discusses some of the aspects of the Water Snake year in our Focus on Tibetan Astrology section.

While December 2012 saw the purchase of the Global Gar – Dzamling Gar in Tenerife, Spain – we start this New Year with the first plans for developing the new Gar, an important part of Rinpoche’s vision for the International Dzogchen Community. By Global Gar, Rinpoche has explained it will be a place where all other Gars have representation, where Rinpoche can gather with his senior students and representatives to discuss setting standards and developing teaching programs and where coordination of activities of IDC, SSI, ASIA and the Tibetan Medicine School can take place. The next months will be devoted to obtaining the legal permits to develop this Gar and soon the construction phase should begin under the direction of the Dzamling Gar Development Committee led by Giovanni Boni and Migmar Tsering. The Development Committee will be charged with both out-sourcing to professional building companies and organizing karma yoga teams within the Community. There will be many projects large and small, so opportunities to participate will be many.

The New Year has also brought exciting new changes to The Mirror’s website – melong.com. We are very pleased to announce that the website is now available in Italian and Polish and will shortly be available in Chinese and Russian.

Our warmest wishes for the Water Snake year and we hope you enjoy this issue!

The Mirror Editorial Staff

» continued from previous page
the *terma* teaching of Nyagla Padma Dündul and we want to do this practice. My uncle said yes that is important, but also in this moment you should also do the long life practice of the Five Dakinis. And I asked which is the long life practice of the Five Dakinis because I did not have any idea. My teacher said when you arrive there you can have that indication very precise. Then he showed me a paper and said this is the main base of these teachings. When I looked at this there were these five syllables, *bam, ha, ri, ni, sa*, and this was a very important indication.

When I arrived in Maratika we were preparing to do this practice and there was the cave of Mandarava. There are two caves, one is called Guru Padmasambhava’s cave and one is Mandarava’s. The cave of Guru Padmasambhava they had organized and there was something not so very easy. But the cave of Mandarava was totally free and there was not someone inside or someone controlling, so we went inside and cleaned a little and we wanted to do practice in that cave, we prepared very well for doing this long life practice of Nyagla Padma Dündul. And then when we started this practice, of course I am thinking we should do something and not that I am only going to give the *lung* of this practice. Maybe to do something like a *dawang* or something, but there were no particular indications.

With this idea I had a dream. In the dream we are in this cave and I am empowering all my students. The empowerment was very interesting and there had been some indication of the practice of Mandarava, but we were not doing that practice because we didn’t know how. Then this practice of Mandarava should come out; when I finished to give the initiation there was a kind of dakini who looked like Ekajati and when I was giving this initiation she was helping and collaborating with me. When the initiation was finished she gave me a kind of *drombu*. A *drombu* is a kind of egg, for *terma*, many times *termas* come from *drombus*. So sometimes *tertons* who discover a *drombu* on a specific day, specific time, this *drombu* will open and the seed syllables related to this *terma* come out. This is one of the aspects of how *terma* teachings come out and many *terma* teachings are related to *drombu*.

I will give you an example of *drombu*. My Uncle Khyentse discovered a *drombu* once. In that period I was present. In the summertime when we had holidays from college I went to see my Uncle Khyentse Rinpoche. Khyentse Rinpoche told me he received indications from the guardians that there is a *terma* in a *donbu* that should be discovered. It needed to be discovered publically. He showed me the indications and when I read them I saw we should go to a country not so very far, we could travel almost one day by

horse. We arrived in this place. And then there was a cave, a sacred place and near by this cave on the rock in the afternoon when you are going and you are looking near by this rock, you can see with the shadow that it looks like a letter A. This is the precise indication where the cave is. Then the date was very precise. The *terma* was in the *drombu*. It said this *terma* was very important for that epoch. The revolution had not started by this point. So it is something very useful for the country and the teachings. So I asked him should we do this? We should go on this date and discover.

He said he felt a little afraid because everything is related to circumstance. He was worried that maybe he would not be able to discover the *terma* because of circumstances and many people would come to see it publicly and if he could not discover the *terma*, what would he do? I said don’t worry; don’t feel afraid, when the guardians indicate in this way it will be fine. He was not really decided but I decided. This was a secret indication book but I published all and I told everyone there will be this *terma* teaching and where and when and we should go. So then this became famous and many people, monks and lay people, began preparing to come. Many people were curious.

The first day we left Galenting and we went to Lhalung Thang and we remained there and did *sang* and *serkyem*. It was still far. Then we arrived at this place and there was not a lot of room for putting tents, but somehow everyone was able to make place for living there. Then the next day we went to look at the side of the rock, I was leading, and trying to find the place. We discovered it and the shadows looked like letter A. To get there was difficult; there were lots of bushes and no road. We asked everyone to help prepare the road and there were so many people that everything was prepared easily. After two days we were perfectly able to get into this place.

Then when we got into this place we had one day more, but then how can we invite my uncle, he could not walk or ride a horse. The road was very tiny and so that day we organized and somehow brought my uncle to that place. We prepared a Ganapuja with the three roots teaching of Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo. We did a very good Ganapuja; there were many monks from different places. Then the time was arriving to discover the *drombu*. When we arrived almost at the time we are not sure what to do, and now my uncle should know. We asked him what he needed. He said he needed a small pick to go into the rock and got up to go near the rock. He told everyone to concentrate on Guru Padmasambhava and chant the mantra of Guru Padmasambhava.

There were many, many people almost to the bottom of the mountain because not everyone could be near to the

spot. Everyone was chanting and then my teacher took the pick and concentrated and then he threw it on the top of the rock and it touched a piece and fell down, but when it touched it made a white mark. Then my uncle said someone should go there to dig. Who should go? There was a monk Kalzang Tsering, which means Fortunate Long Life, so he should go. But he could not go and then everyone said we needed to make a kind of staircase and many young people went to cut a big tree, they cut branches, and then there were steps to the rock and slowly he went up and when he arrived there he beat the rock and it seemed hard and then it became smooth and after a little while a piece of the rock came out and we could see this *drombu*, and the sun was shining, beating down, and it seemed luminous. The monk asked what to do and if he could touch it. My uncle told him not to touch it. Then the other students spread out a big piece of cotton and he threw it down. So the *drombu* is there now and my uncle had prepared something like a very small vase, and inside there were some sacred things and he put it there. Then he closed the vase with some clay. Then the monk came down.

After this everyone wanted to receive a blessing from this *drombu* and we were there for hours and hours. Until the late evening we were there and then we put this *drombu* in a big gough. Next day we did a Ganapuja and also people were asking again and again for blessings. This is the story of the *drombu*, but this is only for discovering the *drombu*. Somehow it must open. But you do not break it open and look inside. You cannot do that. So then you keep it until the time arrives to open. My uncle kept this *drombu* in the gough, a very nice gough, for many months. People came from everywhere to see the *drombu* and receive blessings. But he did not receive the indication of when to open it. Then one day this *drombu* disappeared. We do not know what happened. One day the *drombu* was no longer in the gough. It does not mean someone stole it, maybe some guardian was keeping it. I asked my uncle why that happened and he said maybe it was not yet time or maybe too late or maybe too early. There was something that did not work. So this is *drombu*. ☸

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Protection of the Cultural Heritage of Tibet

Some of the objectives of ASIA for the Year of the Water Snake

This year ASIA celebrates 25 years. Founded on the inspiration of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, over many years ASIA has realized about 150 projects of international cooperation and public awareness programs reaching over 500,000 beneficiaries. It is currently the only international organization rooted and present in all regions of China inhabited by the Tibetan minority.

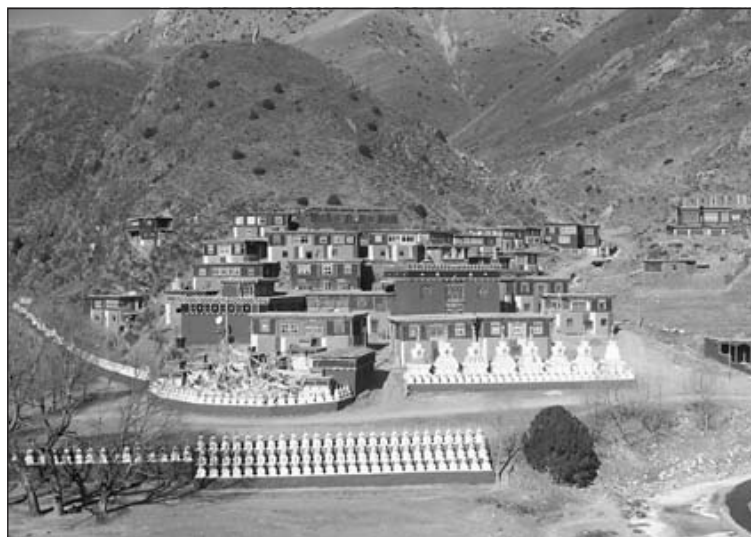
One of the most important areas of intervention of the organization has always been the protection of cultural heritage, in order to safeguard and promote the culture, spirituality and traditional arts of the beneficiary populations.

This year one of the various objectives that ASIA has adopted in this area is to complete the plan of action for the people of Tibet, which has been developing since the late nineties according to the mission of its founder and current president.

In 1997, Chögyal Namkhai Norbu visited the Tibetan regions of Kham and Ütsang and established the strategic lines of an integrated action plan aimed at 11 Tibetan villages for the construction of primary schools, health clinics, colleges of traditional studies and meditation practices, drinking water systems and training for teachers and health workers in the villages. This program was needed to improve the plight of the Tibetans and to preserve their immense cultural heritage. The changes brought about in Tibet by the advent of the Chinese People's Republic in 1951 and again during the years of the Cultural Revolution (1966–1976) dislocated the traditional Tibetan socio-cultural structure and introduced a series of new economic and social models that have actually led the Tibetan population to impoverishment and social exclusion.

Since then, despite the great economic progress of China and the relative success of national policies for the reduction of poverty, the majority of the Tibetan people, especially nomadic communities, live under very difficult conditions and do not always have access to basic services.

In this context, the monasteries, which are not only religious centers but also cultural ones, have dramatically suffered from



Dzolung College.

the repressive policies of the PRC, jeopardizing the "life" itself of Tibetan culture. The extreme poverty of the region prevents the local population from being self-sufficient in the restructuring and re-evaluation of these places, which are the driving force of economic and cultural recovery. Hence as a solution to the problem, there is a need to find a path of cooperation between the local community and international bodies that are sensitive to the issue.

Of fundamental importance is the role of the study colleges, which are often the only educational opportunity for young Tibetans who are unable to attend school either because it is extremely far from their place of residence or due to the high costs associated with education. The colleges, therefore, in addition to being religious institutions, fill the gaps left by the national education system and have become centers of education. In fact, in addition to religious teachings such as Sutra, Tantra and the Great Perfection, the young monks are taught grammar, history, poetry, Tibetan medicine, mathematics, and English.

This is the context of the interventions linked to Chögyal Namkhai Norbu in the traditional practice and study colleges of Dzolung, Dzamthog and Dzongsta, located in the Tibetan Autonomous Region, and in the College of Sanghkri Monastery in Qinghai province, planned for this year.

The latter has played a historically important role as a reference point for practitioners of the Nyingma doctrine, one of the four main schools of Tibetan Buddhism.

Sanghkri Monastery was founded by Jaluspa Tsewang Rigzin, a khempo from Mewa monastery in Sichuan that is linked to the lineage of Azom Drugpa. It is said that in 1958 when the Red Guards captured Tsewang Rigzin, he disappeared in front of everyone in a rainbow.

The monastery is located in the village of SangKhri in Tongde

County, Qinghai Province in the central western part of China. During the Cultural Revolution it was completely destroyed and its libraries and books were lost, while the lamas and monks who survived were forced to take refuge in the mountains.

In 1986, when the effects of the Cultural Revolution were over and a new era in Chinese politics began, the new Abbot began the reconstruction of the monastery and the monks' dwellings. Slowly the monastery resumed its cultural and educational activities and many students began to attend lessons.

In 2008, a first project funded by the Embassy of the Netherlands in China enabled ASIA to start the construction of 30 new housing units at the College to accommodate 90 new students coming from remote nomadic areas, a building of 625 sq.m. for the classrooms and the library of the college. In 2010, thanks to funding from the Region of Tuscany, the rooms for the students were furnished, the bathrooms became functional and a surrounding wall was built.

Today there are 300 students who attend classes, but many others want to be able to enter Sangkhri college, so the abbot has asked ASIA to construct two new buildings for other dormitories. The project is ready and this year, as soon as the funds become available, we will get started.

Dzolung is a small monastery in the Sakyapa tradition, located in Chamdo Prefecture (Tibet Autonomous Region), which was the residence of A-Yu Khadro, Chögyal Namkhai Norbu's yogini teacher. The yogini spent most of her life here in retreat in a cave located on the hill behind the current Monastery. Prior to going into retreat A-Yu Khadro travelled across most of Tibet and Nepal practicing the Chod, a tantric doctrine born and developed in Tibet in the eleventh century. A-Yu Khadro died in 1953 at the age of 115 years.

At the moment her reincarnation (tulku), recognized by SS Sakya



Sangkhri Monastery.

Trizin, is living at the monastery. The young Tulku has built a small

Dzamthog – also located in Chamdo prefecture – is a small



Dzongsta College.

Study College and sought the help of Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche to build a small Practice College. The college, with 10 rooms, was created and the goal this year is to complete it with the necessary equipment – beds, stoves, cabinets, books, material for practicing – for the monks' rooms.

Founded 746 years ago by Drogon Chè Phak, Dzongtsa is a small monastery belonging to the Sakyapa tradition located near the village of Tarze (Chamdo Prefecture, Tibet Autonomous Region) at 3800 m above sea level. Until 1958, the complex consisted of a main temple, the College of traditional studies and the College of religious practices. The monastery then housed more than 100 monks. During the Cultural Revolution it was all completely destroyed. Many years later, some of the older monks began reconstruction with the very limited means at their disposal and started up once again the main religious activities for the benefit of the surrounding community.

ASIA has intervened in support of the monks in the reconstruction of the college, the temple and housing for 60 students with funding from the Dutch Embassy in Beijing, the Dutch Dzogchen Community and the Region of Tuscany. This year we want to complete the interior of the second floor of the temple with libraries, paintings, rooms and other work.

monastery of the Sakyapa tradition and a sacred place of Vajra Kilaya – Dorje Purba in Tibetan – where very ancient tantric rituals are practiced.

Some young monks and tulkus are currently studying at the Sakya College in Dehra Dun in India, and in the future will come back to teach at Dzamthog Monastery.

ASIA has accepted the request of the abbot of the monastery for help and has built the main temple. This year ASIA has set the goal of completing the organization's involvement with the construction of the practice college, which collapsed some time ago.

Institutions like these represent one of the last bastions for the preservation of this ancient culture. The monks studying in them are the custodians of thousands of years of knowledge that can be passed on to the new generations with the support of all those who want to give the Tibetans and their culture, some hope.

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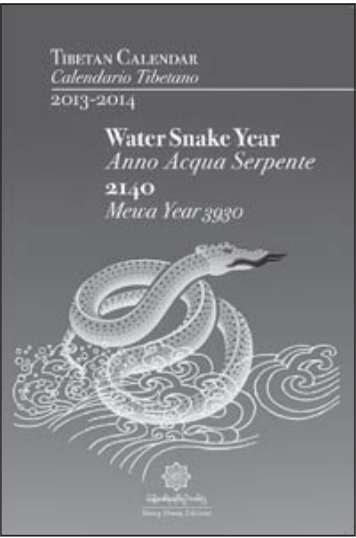


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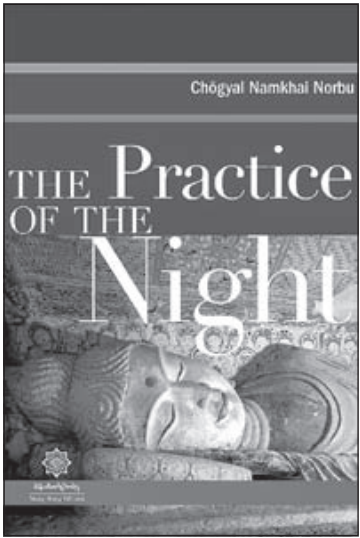
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Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

The Practice of the Night and the Dark Retreat of Twenty-Four Hours

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Tibetan Calendar

We are pleased to announce the publication of the Tibetan Calendar for the Year of the Water Snake (2013–2014). Pocket agenda containing concise indications of the practices recommended by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu for special days, astrological aspects from the Tibetan lunar calendar, individual influences affecting those born between 1918 and 2013, and positive and negative days for Naga practice. Indispensable for identifying favorable and unfavorable days for

Integrating nighttime into our practice is crucial in Dzogchen. Once we learn to become aware in our dreams, we can practice far more effectively in our dreams than when we are awake. The Dzogchen approach to dream yoga is extremely straightforward and requires no intellectual training or complex visualizations. And yet it is one of the most important practices we can do since it prepares us for death and the bardo state.

Essentially, the practice of the night is nothing other than Guru-yoga, but some practitioners find it difficult to relax in the state of presence as they fall asleep. The best method for overcoming this kind of problem is dark retreat. This book covers instructions for the practice of the night as well as for a preliminary dark retreat lasting twenty-four hours. eBooks from Shang Shung Edizioni are password-protected and feature a digital ex libris licensed

daily activities and remembering special practice days. The calendar also includes a table indicating the days of the month to avoid surgery in specific areas of the body according

to three Tibetan astrological systems as well as a table with the first days of the Tibetan new year according to the Phugpa system. The Calendar can be ordered at shangshungstore.org ©

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» *Enjoying continued from page 1* old, danced for hours tirelessly and enthusiastically trying at best to imitate Adriana and those who had already had the opportunity to train and learn the steps systematically under her expert guide. Rinpoche also composed a song for Dzamling Gar which we had the opportunity to listen and dance to during the retreat. The song is a complete teaching whose words and melody arose spontaneously while the Master was relaxing in the pool at home. It is an invitation to all the Communities of the world to come to Dzamling Gar, where there is no lack of happiness and where all students can manifest their self-perfected qualities living in the true knowledge of the primordial state. During the retreat Giovanni Boni organized more than one guided tour of the land where he explained in a detailed and concrete way about the project that should start soon. The property is in a really nice location and those who had the fortune to visit it could not help but feel the same enthusiasm that transpires in the song of Dzamling Gar whose potential is truly amazing. It is not



Nina Robinson. Photo: M. Farmer



Annalen Gall. Photo: M. Farmer

really hard to imagine how it will be when the work is finished: a paradise in Playa Paraiso and Calle Paraiso. Maybe it's not really a coincidence! From the property you can see the sea below with coves and bays that, during the retreat, following the advice of the Master who invited us to enjoy and relax, many practitioners visited discovering unexpected places off the beaten track of the island's touristic spots. It was very much an intense retreat, full of energy characterized by the desire to be together not only to practice, dance and sing, but also by the desire to discover

this island which, for many of us, has become more and more familiar. A well-known destination where we can collaborate all together to realize this new project of Rinpoche's that marks a new evolutionary phase within our Community. ©

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu Schedule 2013

» continued from page 1

Russia
June 28–July 5
Kunsangar North Retreat

Ukraine
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

UK
October 3
London, ASIA House, 6.30pm
Lecture Padmasambhava & the Light of Kailash volume 2

Oct. 4–6
London, Camden Centre
Dzogchen Teachings
Longsal Ati Nadzer

Spain
October 9–13
Barcelona Retreat



Focus on Tibetan Astrology

The start of the new Tibetan Water Snake Year – *Namgyal* or Totally Victorious in Tibetan – was celebrated on February 11, 2013. In this issue of The Mirror, to mark this auspicious moment in the passage of time, we would like to ‘Focus on Tibetan Astrology’ by presenting three articles on the topic.

The first article by Tibetan astrologer Tenzin Tsewang Jamlingpa from Dharamshala India presents a brief introduction to the Tibetan astrological system, outlines predictions about the whole year in general as well as for each month in different parts of the world, and concludes with the obstacles for the year and their remedies, all based on the Men-Tsee-Khang Annual Almanac for the Water Snake Year.

Then Thubten Phuntsog, currently professor at the School for Tibetan Studies at Southern-West University for Nationalities in Chengdu, delves back into the earliest origins of Tibetan astrology and discusses *Jungtsi* or Elemental astrology and the origin of the *parka* or trigrams, one of the oldest astrological systems, at length. His talk is from a weekend seminar given at Merigar in 1998.

The last article by Rita Leti, a long time student of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, gives an overview of the various Tibetan astrological systems and information about the Elements in *Jungtsi* astrology and the importance of their relationships.

Water Snake Year 2013

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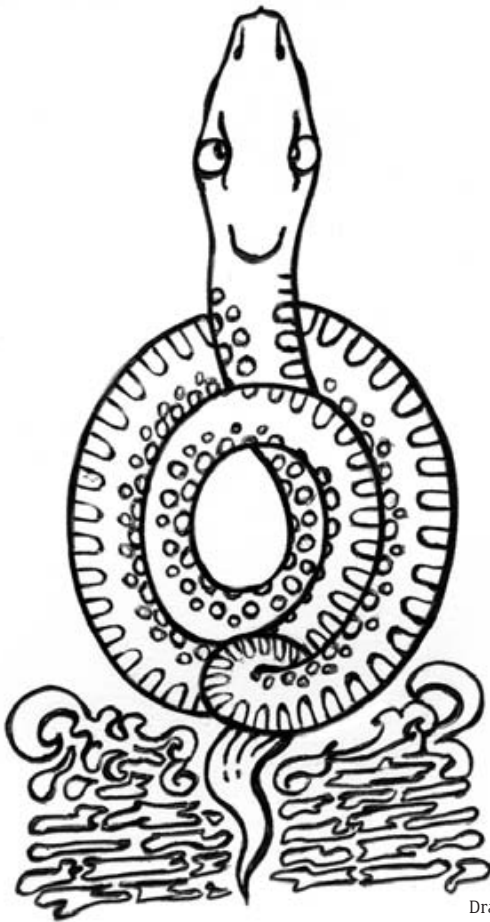
Introduction to the Tibetan System of the Year

In the Tibetan calendar system, or in other words, in Tibetan Astrology, each year is symbolized by one of the twelve year-signs, along with one of the five elements. These twelve year-signs are represented by twelve animals beginning with the Mouse, Ox, Tiger, Rabbit, Dragon, Snake, Horse, Sheep, Monkey, Bird, Dog and Pig and by five elements – Wood, Fire, Earth, Iron and Water. Of the twelve year-signs, the Mouse, Tiger, Dragon, Horse, Monkey and Dog are classified as male years while the rest are female years. When these twelve signs are combined with the five elements, we get a total of sixty years, starting from the Wood Mouse and ending with the Water Pig. The twelve years arise in succession with a male year followed by a female year, starting from the Mouse, and each element is repeated twice, (once for the male year and then for the female year) starting from the Wood element. This cycle of counting years first began in the year 837 BC, which is the Wood Mouse year, when Lord Manjushri first taught Elemental Astrology in China.

A year is further divided into twelve months, and a month into thirty days, both of which are

again represented by the twelve animals. In Tibetan culture, the first day of the first Tibetan month is popularly celebrated as Losar or Tibetan New Year, which is also known as the Tibetan King Year. It has been 2140 years since the first Tibetan king Nyatri Tsenpo ruled Tibet. However, in the actual calculations of Elemental Astrology a year starts from the first day of the eleventh Tibetan month, i.e. the first Tiger Day of the Tiger Month. There is a reason behind taking the 11th Tibetan month as the start of a year. The time tools of days, months and years are nothing but a means to mark the external changes in the season, which essentially occur

due to the motions of the celestial bodies like the sun and the moon with respect to the earth. A complete cycle of waxing and waning moon is considered as a month. A complete cycle of the Sun through the twelve zodiacs, in which the Sun completes the two transits of summer and winter solstice, is considered as a year. The winter solstice falls in the eleventh Tibetan month, and thus this month marks a new beginning in the external season and with that, its corresponding impact on the wellbeing of human beings. Therefore, in the context of the title of this article, the length of the Water Snake year is actually



Drawing: Bepe Goia

from 14th December 2012 till 1st January 2014.

Predictions about the Wellbeing of the World in the Water Snake Year

This Water Snake year is also called ‘*Namgyal*’ (Totally Victorious) in Tibetan and ‘*Vijaya*’ in Sanskrit. Predictions about the wellbeing of the world this year are mainly based on the readings of Yangchar Astrology (a type of astrology originating from India) and on the results of planetary motions (Mercury, Venus, Mars, Saturn and Jupiter) in the Tibetan almanac and touch on subjects such as the wellbeing of important political leaders and ordinary people, cattle and crops. In addition there are excerpts on natural calamities and epidemics. Besides the prognosis on the whole year in general, there are descriptions of each month of the year.

Despite the fact that the first day of the eleventh Tibetan month is the beginning of the new year (Water Snake), the Tibetan almanac begins with the first day of the third Tibetan month and ends with the last day of the second Tibetan month. These differences in the starting point of a year have their own historical backgrounds and purpose. In the almanac system, a year is defined as the complete cycle of the Sun, starting from the zodiac sign of Aries, which falls in the third Tibetan month. Therefore, the following description of this year is as per the Tibetan almanac, which starts from 11th April 2013 and ends on 29th April 2014.

On the whole, this will be an average year. The second half of

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Introduction to Tibetan Astrology

From a lecture by
Professor Thubten Phuntsog
First part of a weekend seminar at
Merigar, 21–22 February, 1998

Translated by Elio Guarisco
Reprinted from issue 44
of The Mirror



moves on the basis of the combination of the elements so that when the elements are harmonious there is increase, when they are not in harmony diminution, culminating in disintegration, begins. The origin of the trigrams or *parka* is linked to the ancient culture of the Bon, the pre-Buddhist religion of Tibet. Nowadays, astrological calculations based on the *parka* are common practice in all the new schools of Tibetan Buddhism, such as the Gelug, the Sakya and the Kagyu as well as in the ancient Nyingma school. Modifying their terminology to suit the Buddhist frame of thought and language, these schools also adopted many rituals of the pre-Buddhist Bon culture – for ex-

ample the rituals of the *gtos*, the *mdos*, the *yas* and the *glud* as well as the ritual of the *sang* (during which juniper and other fragrant herbs are burned for different purposes, including the propitiation of local deities).

But despite such wide and conscious appropriation from the Bon culture, there was a time in Tibetan history when the culture and the followers of Bon were widely persecuted by the Buddhists mainly for political reasons. Since most of the Tibetans were fond of Bon rituals and often took recourse to them, the newly introduced Buddhist culture had no choice but to assimilate them in some way. In this process of assimilation, unwilling to acknowledge the Bon origin of elemental astrology and other rites, they considered the elements of astrology and rites resembling those found in the Indian culture to have been imported from India, while those resembling the Chinese culture to have been imported from China.

However, many astrological and ritual features were unique to Tibet and were not found in either China or India. For this reason they acknowledged them to have originated from or been systematized by a historical figure called Kong tse phrul gyi rgyal po whom

the Buddhists, later on, considered to be a manifestation of Manjusri, the *boddhisattva* who represents wisdom. Since Kong tse phrul gyi rgyal po was born 600 years before the Buddha, it was difficult for them to call him a Buddhist, so they did not say that he was a Buddhist nor admitted he was a Bonpo. During the 13th, 14th and 15th centuries some Tibetan scholars began to claim that the *parka* came from China. In the 18th century lcang skya rol pa'i rdo rje, and the Mongolian scholar Thu'u bkvan cho kyi nyi ma and other scholars, mistakenly identified Kong tse phrul gyi rgyal po with Confucius, saying that they were one and the same person. However, many reasons prove beyond any shade of doubt that Kong tse phrul gyi rgyal po and Confucius were two different people. (This topic was more fully discussed during Prof. Thubten Phuntsog's conference at Merigar on January 17th 1998.)

In my opinion when we research the ancient origins of a particular type of knowledge, it is hard to speak of it exclusively in terms of knowledge belonging only to a particular group of people. Astrology in particular is a very ancient discipline which is common to many groups of peoples. For example in most parts of

the world, people refer to the days of the week, Sunday, Monday etc., with the names of the planets. Of course different languages use different words for the planets, but they clearly refer to the same thing; for example, in English we say ‘Sunday’, in Tibetan, *Za nyi ma*, or ‘the sun day or planet’.

In elemental astrology the days are also associated with the elemental properties, for example Sunday with Fire, Monday with Water, Tuesday with Fire, Wednesday with Water, Thursday with Wood, Friday with Metal and Saturday with Earth. Before the people of Tibet had a written language they indicated the days of the week with symbols. For example in Tibet Sunday was symbolised by a drawing of a sun, Monday by the moon, Tuesday by an eye, Wednesday by a hand, Thursday by a wooden *purba* or three bladed wooden dagger, Friday by a sword or trident and Saturday by a penis.

Now let us see how the Bon texts explain the origin of the *parka* by means of a mythological tale which represents the process of the formation of the world in eight stages:

1. the stage in which the pure part of the elements manifested as space;

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Focus on Tibetan Astrology

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the Water Snake year will be better than the first half. The first half could be a testing time for crops, vegetation and, therefore, for animals, too. The stars and constellations will have less positive influence on the growth of medicinal herbs. Nevertheless, water and rain will be abundant in the second half and leaders and subjects, especially children, will enjoy a period of prosperity. In the field of health, one should be wary of disorders related to the kidneys.

Now to describe the wellbeing of different geographic locations in the world. Although there is no exact description of the countries associated with the different directions, the centre is taken as Bodh Gaya in India. At the centre, in general, it is going to be a good year with good produce. People will abide by the Dharma and there will be prosperity. These times of prosperity are likely to take place from 11th April to 9th May and from 10th May in particular. However from 9th June to 22nd July, there are chances of struggle and drought.

In the east, in general, it is going to be a neutral year. From 9th June to 8th July political leaders will enter a period of prosperity. From 9th July there is a slight risk of drought. From 9th August to 19th September there may be a possibility of struggle. From 20th September to 24th December there will be peace and prosperity. From 25th December to 29th April (2014) there could be some slim signs of difficulty.

In the south-east, it is going to be a happy period between 17th July and 21st August. However, there are slight possibilities of

drought and struggle from 22nd August to 13th September and from 14th September to 24th November respectively. In the south, there may be drought and struggle from 17th June to 6th August and 15th January (2014) to 29th April (2014) respectively. From 22nd July to 10th November, there is risk of natural calamities. Extra care should be given to the security of leaders.

In the south-west, in general, it will be a year of struggle and drought, especially from 11th April to 16th June and 16th January (2014) to 29th April (2014). From 7th August to 17th December there is danger of natural calamities. In the west, in general, it will be a neutral year. Except for the period between 1st January (2014) till 15th January (2014), it will be a year of good crops.

In the north-west and north, it will be a neutral year in general although there will be chances of epidemic and unrest in the north. From 18th May to 1st January (2014) there may be unrest in Tibet. In the north-east, there are possibilities of misfortunes of a sudden nature which may manifest in the forms of struggle or fire.

Obstacles and Remedies in the Water Snake Year

Astrological readings are of many kinds, beginning from our birth till death. When a child is born, he/she is welcomed by a reading of his/her Life Horoscope, in which there are details about the interpretations of the year, day, constellation and zodiac of the birth. Based on the configuration or the position of the planets in their respective zodiacs at the

very moment of the child's birth, a reading is cast with respect to twelve different aspects of the newborn's life. It also indicates the total lifespan of the individual and how the different planets rule each phase of his/her life and what effects those planets have on those phases.

Apart from this detailed Life Horoscope, a Yearly Horoscope can be cast to see the events in the current year or the year to come in order to perform all the required ritual remedies in advance. In times of illness, a reading can be cast particularly to see the gravity of the sickness and the required rite to perform. At times of union, a Marital Compatibility reading is done to examine the compatibility of the bride and groom. Required rituals are performed to correct weaknesses in the different aspects like the duration or the strength of the bond, the health of the mother or the newborn, the prosperity of the new family and social acceptance of the new bond.

There is also astrological guidance on geomancy (Feng Shui) for building temples, monasteries, palaces or simple residences. And finally when a person dies, a Death reading is cast to ensure the safety of the family, the after-life of the deceased and other funeral rites. In the Tibetan context, astrology welcomes a person into this world, takes care during his/her stay on this earth, and finally ensures a good rebirth at the end of one's journey.

For all those who are of the Snake year-sign, this year (Snake) is a called Kag/Keg (Obstacle Year). It is better to avoid visiting the sick and building new constructions.

Taking life prolonging empowerments is the required remedy. Other Pujas include Boom, Dugkar, Tokzung and Kegdok. For all those who are of Pig year-sign, this year is *Dunzur* (Seventh Removed Year). Some of the Pujas to perform are Topchen, Chusum, Donggyen, Tokzung, Gyaltsen Tsemo and Dralha Puja. For all those who are of the Bird and Ox year-signs, this year is called *Thunsum Tsub* (Harshness of the Three Compatible Signs). Required Pujas are Dralha Puja and Gyab Zhi. For all those who are of the Tiger and Monkey year-signs, this year is called *Zhi Shed* (Four Adversaries). One should save the lives of other animals as a remedy and not start new business projects and long travels. The required Pujas are Nyitri, Mendo and Zung Due.

For individuals of ages in the following table, this year is called *Gumik* (Multiples of Nine). The Tibetan system of counting an individual's year is similar to the way we count our grade in school or the century. If you are in school doing your 2nd grade, we say, 'I am in my 2nd year' even before completing it, and likewise we say that we are in the 21st century. Similarly, Tibetans say, 'I am in my 26th year', when the individual is 25 years old. In the western way, we use the system of stating one's past-year rather than the current-year, which is why we say that we are so many years old. Therefore, the table below is as per the Tibetan system or the current-year of an individual.

1	9	10	17	18	19	25	27	28	33	36
37	41	45	46	49	54	55	57	63	64	65
72	73	81	82	89	90	91	97	99	100	

The Pujas for children in *Gumik* are Dugkar and Drol Toe. The Pujas for middle-aged adults in *Gumik* are Namgyalma Zung. The Pujas for the elderly in *Gumik* are Gyed Tongpa (for men) and Dreshue Mdo (for women). The Pujas for leaders in *Gumik* are Jampel Tsenjoed and Lodoe Sangmoe Shuepai Mdo.

For individuals of ages in the following table, this year is called *Neki Gumik* and *Durmik* (Multiples of Nine and Tomb Signs) which are also types of obstacle years.

9	15	21	33	45	51
57	69	75	81	93	

The actions and Pujas to perform for all in the above years are making offerings to the shrine, serving the Sangha with offerings, Shernying Duedok, Gyab Zhi and Serwoe.

Though there is no escape from the consequence of one's previous Karma,
Yet out of His Compassion, the Victor guides us with his skilful methods,
To impede the sudden conditions and obstacles,
And abiding by the remedial rites, may happiness prevail.

Reference:
1) Tibetan Annual Almanac Water Snake Year (2013), Men-Tsee-Khang Dharamshala.

* Since this is an astrological reading, the author holds no legal responsibility for any prediction or prognosis made in this article. ©

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2. the stage in which the impure part of the elements manifested as earth;
 3. the stage in which the mountain arose to connect space and earth;
 4. the stage in which the wind through the stony valleys of the mountain arose;
 5. the stage in which fire was produced by the movement of the wind;
 6. the stage in which the meeting of wind and fire brought about the rain;
 7. the stage in which wood or the tree arose, based on the interaction of wind, fire, water and earth.

This process as well as the outer world is symbolised by the drawing of a golden turtle, whose head represents the direction south.

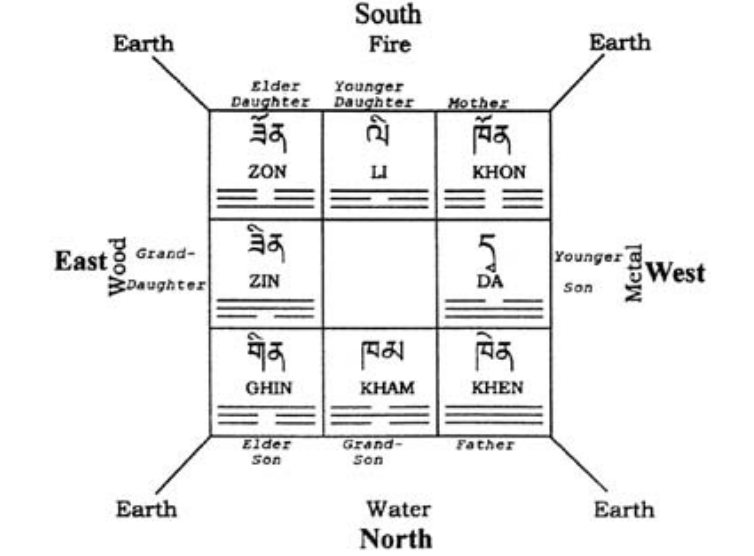
1. The pure essence of the elements emerged from the mouth of the turtle as vapour and transformed into the 'old father of existence' (Sipa yab rgen), the first and most ancient trigram, *Khen*, symbol of the sky. He is described as an old man with white hair, dressed in yellow silk, riding a dog and holding a crystal wand in his hand.
2. The impure aspects of the elements emerged as the dung of

the turtle and fell and became 'old mother of existence', (Sipe yum rge ma) *Khon*, the second trigram that symbolises the earth. She is represented as an old lady with white hair the colour of a conch-shell, with a hundred wrinkles on her face, dressed in white silk, holding a hoe in her right hand and a wooden stick in her left and riding a sheep.

3. The old father and mother of existence married and from their union came the eldest son, the third trigram, *Ghin*, who symbolises the mountain connecting sky and earth. The eldest son is represented by a figure resembling a monk, holding a sacred book in his hands and riding a rose-coloured ox.

4. Then the wind blowing through the stony mountain valleys gave rise to the fourth trigram called *Zon*. This trigram is symbolised by the eldest daughter represented as a young woman dressed in yellow silk, riding a *dzo*, and holding in her hands a balloon-like round bag made of skin.

5. The action of the wind produced the fire element symbolised by the trigram *Li* which is represented by the youngest daughter of the old father and mother of existence. She is rosy in colour, with a horse's head, dressed in red silk,



holding a ladle full of blood in her right hand and a torch in her left.

6. From the encounter of air and fire arose the sixth trigram called *Kham* which is symbolised by the grandson of the old father and mother and represented as a black-coloured man, with long hair, dressed in black, holding a leather ball full of water in his hand and riding a black pig.
7. Then from the interaction of the fire and wind arose the rain which fell thus originating the trigram *Zin* symbolised by the tree. The trigram *Zin* is represented by the grand-daughter who is greenish in colour, dressed in green silk, riding a green donkey, with her

hands crossed on her chest and holding a plant.

8. Through the function of the element fire which melted the earth, its pure essence, metal (gold, silver, copper, etc.), manifests, associated with the trigram *Da*. The trigram *Da* is the youngest son of the old father and the old mother and he is represented by a young warrior wearing a helmet and armour, holding a sword and a lance in his hands and riding a goat.

Therefore making a brief summary – the first trigram, *Khen*, is the father, *Khon* is the mother, *Ghin* is the elder son, *Zon* is the elder daughter, *Li* is the younger daughter, *Da* is the younger son,

Kham is the grand-son and *Zin* is the grand-daughter.

According to the tale, the trigrams *Kham* and *Zin* came about in this way. The elder son, *Ghin* wishing to find a bride, circled Mount Meru, the 'axis mundis' three times in a clockwise direction; *Zon*, with the same wish circled the ocean three times in a counter clockwise direction. The two of them met in the midst of a vortex of wind in the country called *srin po gdudg pa can gyi yul*, which means 'the country inhabited by wild cannibals', in a place called *ye le dgung sngon* or 'primordial sky'. In the midst of the vortex they did not recognise each other and engaged in an incestuous relationship. From their union was born a son, the trigram *Kham*, and a daughter, the trigram *Zin*.

This incestuous relationship was a tragedy that caused a disturbance among various classes of non-humans, in particular between the Devas and the Nagas, who became drunk with mental confusion (because existence had been defiled by the incestuous relationship) and coupled between themselves thus giving birth to the Eight Classes of demons and gods. Following this the beings of the six classes of existence were

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Astrology of the Elements

Rita Leti
From 'A Short Introduction to Tibetan Astrology of the Elements' by Rita Leti, translated from Italian by Robin Cooke, reprinted from The Mirror issue 9, June 1991

The Tibetan tradition of astrology based on the combination of five Elements, twelve animal and nine numbers. It is considered a science which can harmonize man with the universe.

Western astrology, Chinese astrology and now Tibetan astrology: whoever enters this path wishes to know what the differences, peculiarities and similarities are. The heavenly bodies have been observed from all latitudes for millennia by very different cultures. This has obviously led to different points of departure, directions and interpretations on the part of the observer interested in understanding the interaction between the cosmos and man.

The Tibetan tradition of astrology is vast, eclectic and extraordinarily rich. Its roots lie in the ancient Kingdom of Shang Shung and in the Bon tradition but it subsequently also received and integrated influences and contributions from the Chinese and Indian astrological traditions.

In fact there are various kinds of astrology in Tibet. A brief analysis of their names provides a good introduction to their substance: *kartsi* (*skar rtsis*), *tujor* (*dus sbyor*) and *nagtsi* (*nag rtsis*) are all astrological systems which derive from different Tantras because, like Tibetan medicine, astrology is considered a sacred science, that is to say, a science

which can harmonize man with the universe.

Kartsi: *kar* (*skar*) means astronomy, *tsi* (*rtsis*) means astrology. This is the astrology of astronomy: astrology based on the positions of the constellations.

So *Kartsi* is principally astronomy, the study of the stars. Much Indian astrology is present in this system as introduced into Tibetan astrology. *Garzis* derives from the famous Kalachakra Tantra (The Wheel of Time). Kalachakra is not simply astrology, but is rather an explanation through astrology of the condition of the individual, the external universe and the Elements.

Tujor: *tu* (*dus*) means time, *jor* (*sbyor*) combination. So *tujor* means the combination of time, that is, the Zodiac. *Tujor* is a 'zodiacal' kind of astrology, which studies the movement of the sun through the twelve houses.

Nagtsi: *nag* (*nag*) means black, *tsi* (*rtsis*) means astrology, black astrology or 'astrology of the Elements'. This kind of astrology mostly came from China.

The reason why the Chinese kind of astrology is called 'black astrology' is really very simple. India is by definition the white country. In Tibetan, India is called *Gyagar* (*gya* country, *gar* white). Moreover, Indians have always worn white clothes, and the Brahmins ate 'white' food (without meat) etc. So in contrast, China has always been the black country. In fact, in Tibetan, China is called *Gyanag* (*gya* country, *nag* black). Quite the opposite of India, in China all types of meat have always been eaten and at the time of the Emperors, all the ministers wore long false black beards etc.

So this is why the Chinese kind of astrology is called *Nagtsi* or black astrology as opposed to *Kartsi*, white or Indian astrology. (*Gar* means white (*dkar*) as well



as constellation (*skar*) – the calligraphy is slightly different, but the pronunciation is exactly the same).

Nagtsi astrology is based on the combination of five Elements and twelve animals (Mouse, Ox, Tiger, Hare, Dragon, Snake, Horse, Sheep, Monkey, Bird, Dog and

Boar), which must not be confused with the twelve signs of the Zodiac. This kind of astrology allows one to understand the *prana*, that is, the energy of a person in both its internal and external contexts.

Although the black and white systems (based on the Elements

and the position of the constellations respectively) both form an integral part of Tibetan astrology, the latter must not be considered as a simple derivation of Chinese and Indian astrology. On the contrary, it has an independent origin, a complete astrological system being already in existence in the an-

» continued from previous page
born, the hell beings etc., and illnesses and suffering arose among these classes.

This suffering which struck the inhabitants of the world came to the attention of the old father, the trigram Khen, who called out asking what was happening. A reply came from the sky saying that what was happening was the result of an incestuous rapport of the elder son with his sister and that it would be beneficial if the family did not remain together but split up to reside in the eight directions. Li, the younger daughter, with the wish to reconcile the family, approached the old father, Khen, apologising for the misunderstanding between the two trigrams, Ghin and Zon which had caused the suffering troubling the world. The old father, however, misunderstood her words, got angry and the problems within the family did not come to an end so the members of the family took up residence in the eight directions. Each one took his or her property to their direction and these belongings (including rocks, pieces of wood and so forth) were

the very substances that, later on, became used in the rites to pacify the damage caused by an unfavourable combination of the elements or of the trigrams.

Finally the old mother, who was born in the earth sheep year, died at the age of 226 in the wood dragon year. She was buried in the earth the following year, that of the wood snake. At that time there was no funerary ritual to appease the Eight Classes and to balance the elements of the family, and, as a consequence, the old father who was born in the earth dog year and lived for 253 years, died the following year, the metal pig year. In a similar fashion, as the result of the lack of proper funerary rites, Zin, Zon and Kham suddenly died. After that Da, Li and Ghin discussed the matter and created the rite to appease the Eight Classes of demons and gods and to balance the elements within the family. As a result of this the world enjoyed peace and prosperity for many eons.

Following this period of prosperity, the world began to decline and all its inhabitants experienced an augmentation of mental affliction.

At that time the Sage Yod po appeared who recounted the legend of the origin of the Parkha and became the first Tibetan to explain astrological calculations.

After many centuries in a period in which no form of writing existed, the teacher of astrology named Sa bdag nag po started to indicate the parkha, the mewa, and the animals with white and black pebbles.

After many centuries, the prince Shi kha then tse born (2551 BC.) in the year of the metal rabbit, established the rules of governing using astrological calculations. In 1957 BC in the wood monkey year, the astrology master Sa bdag rlung rgyal was born, who taught the sage nGnon po. On the basis of the instruction of his teacher, the latter elaborated a way of astrological calculation using the combination of the twelve animal signs with the five elements. He associated colours with the five elements: green for wood, red for fire, yellow for earth, white for metal and black for water and then associated these elements to the parkha and animal signs by way of different dots of colour.

In 1557 BC. in the year of wood mouse, another master of astrology, Ze'u kong 'phrul chung was born. He applied the mother-son-friend-enemy relationship to the field of medicine for the first time. In the wood mouse year in 1197 BC., a famous astrologer, Kongtse sphrul gyi rgyal po, was born. On the basis of his astrological knowledge and on the request of four of his most intelligent students he composed 357 treatises on the rituals of the gto, mdos, yas and the gljud, which have the function of balancing the elements and pacifying the disturbances caused by the Eight Classes of spirits and gods.

In 417 BC. in the wood mouse year, Nyatri Tsenpo, the first Tibetan king, was born. When he became king of Tibet, the so-called 'community of astrological practitioners' developed and propagated astrology widely. At that time, on the basis of the observations of the southerly and northerly movement of the sun, the observation of the stars and the migration of birds, the rain, clouds, wind and snow, the community prepared the solar calendar of 360 days mainly for the sake of the farmers and nomads.

There are many details regarding the development of the elements, how disturbances manifested and how substances were used to pacify the imbalance of the elements but we would need a week simply to explain them. This is a mythological story not a real one, nonetheless its symbols could be considered to be an invaluable field of research. This information concerning the mythological origin of the trigrams as well as the mewa or numbers can only be found in the Bon texts; one does not find similar explanation in the astrological treatises of China or other countries. In fact, when Chinese astrological experts are asked about the origin of the parka or trigrams they do not have a very clear explanation and sometimes refer to a particular race of people called Yi who lived on the border between China and who were originally Tibetans with customs and beliefs closely linked to the Bon culture.

Thubten Phuntsog is a professor at the School for Tibetan Studies at Southern-West University for Nationalities in Chengdu, Sichuan Province, China. ©

Focus on Tibetan Astrology

cient Kingdom of Shang Shung, situated in Western Tibetan near Mount Kailash. The system’s basic components are the twelve symbolic animals (non Zodiacal, but analogous to the twelve Chinese astrological animal signs), combined with five Elements and nine numbers, from nine to one, called *mewa (sme ba)*.
This autonomous Bon tradition derives from the famous sage

– is presented as its symbol. The colour green and the rectangle also remind one of the tree.
The triangle and the colour red represent Fire, with its attributes of heat and force of expansion. Earth and its stability are represented by the square. Its colour is yellow, a symbol of richness (yellow is the colour of gold) and abundance.
The semicircle and the colour

of incandescent magma capable of transforming itself into solid black rock as soon as it emerges from the mouth of a volcano!
Earth generates Metal – deep down in the bowels of the Earth, this hard and shining Element which is both malleable and compact is born.
To say that Metal generates Water is to refer to a characteristic which was well known to

and lastly an Enemy Element (which tends to destroy it, and is the Mother of its own Mother Element).
Taking as an example the Element Fire, we can say that the Mother of Fire is Wood, the Child of Fire is Earth, its Friend is Iron and its Enemy is Water.

Friend and Enemy
The relation between any two non-adjoining Elements in the generative cycle is considered to be a negative, inharmonious, conflictual relationship between two Elements. It is to be noted how a Friend-Enemy relation is never reciprocally advantageous or reciprocally disadvantageous. For example, Water is the Enemy of Fire (in fact it puts it out), but Fire is a Friend of Water (it sets it in motion, expands and transforms it as in the boiling process).

This way of relating the Elements with each other is not the only one possible. For instance in *Kartsi* astrology, completely different considerations are made when analysing the Elements of the constellations or the Elements that govern any particular day.
But in any case, the relations between the Elements form the basis of all kinds of Tibetan astrology. Analysing their relationships one can often intuitively understand the result of their meeting. What happens, for instance, when Fire and Water are put together? Or Fire and Air? (Air helps Fire to grow etc.).

otherwise he cannot understand the condition of an individual and some diseases cannot be cured. The Elements taken into consideration in the *Jungtsi* astrological system are not the same or not in the same order as those used in other astrological systems and in Buddhist philosophy. This set of Elements, however, is adopted in Tibetan medical theory. In fact, each Element has its own function and a precise correspondence within the physical body. According to the Tibetans, disease arises when there is an inharmonious situation within the individual – discord between the Elements.
The predominance of a particular Element gives a person specific characteristics, tendencies in attitude and energy, both within and without.

Knowing all this allows one to operate in an appropriate and precise way in one’s own existence. In Tibet, astrology is not a goal in itself. It is a rigorous operational science. Nothing is left to chance. There are precise techniques for intervening and restoring the equilibrium. Together with the knowledge of each discord, exists the method to harmonise it.
This is true not only as regards the material circumstances we live in – although the opportunity of choosing the most favourable moment for our actions, so as to live in harmony with time, should not be ignored. But even more valuable is the knowledge of our personal Elemental situation through which we can understand and correct physical and mental tendencies determined by an imbalance in our Elements thus allowing us to progress spiritually.

All reality, both material and subtle, is composed of the five Elements. These Elements govern both our inner and outer worlds. They relate both to the concrete physical world and to inner characteristics. They determine the quality of energy and tendencies of the mind. And finally they are a subtle essence, light and colour. A true understanding of this concept means entering into the heart of reality. Many way of using this knowledge exist on many levels. Like a stone thrown into the water, which produces larger and larger circles, the knowledge of the five Elements is an essential nucleus which expands well beyond visible limits.

Maria Rita Leti has studied Oriental language and civilization at the University of Oriental Studies in Naples. She has been interested in Tibetan astrology for many years and has deepened her knowledge under the guidance of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu of whom she is a long time student. At present she lives and studies in Rome.






Tonba Sherab (Ston pa gshen rab) who lived 500 years before Buddha Sakyamuni. Only later, starting from the reign of the Tibetan king Songtsengambo (Srong btsan sgam po), that is, from the seventh century onwards, did Tibet have direct contact both with China and India. In this period much Chinese astrology was introduced (one of Songtsengambo’s wives was Chinese and expert in astrology). The Kalachakra, on the other hand, was introduced from India only in more recent times.
This brief introduction is intended to make clear from the start certain areas of confusion which are likely to arise when talking about Tibetan astrology in general, and in particular about the rich and fascinating collection of astrological data which forms the ‘Tibetan calendar’, the fulcrum of Tibetan astrology and an indispensable tool for every astrological interpretation. But this subject requires an article to itself.
The description below refers to *Nagtsi* astrology, that is ‘black astrology’, or astrology of the Elements, the Tibetan *Jungtsi (byung rtsis)* system.

The Five Elements
Jungtsi astrology involves five Elements: Wood, Fire, Earth, Iron and Water. Each of these is symbolically represented by a specific colour and a geometrical shape. The rectangle represents Wood and corresponds to the colour green and the Air Element. Whenever Wood is spoken of in Tibetan astrology, we refer to what in the West is known as the Element Air. To understand this, it is necessary to think of Wood not as an inert material, but as a living tree. A tree grows and develops day by day, forever changing and moving in the wind. This incessant growth and mobility, this energy and capacity for development, are the internal characteristic or hallmark of the Element Air. This is why the tree (Wood) – by analogy

white indicate the Element Iron. Iron or Metal (another name for the same Element) belongs to Earth and it is born in the Earth.
When we talk about Earth, we are referring to something large and heavy. Talking about Metal, we refer to something hard, concentrated and compact, which, however, is to be found within the Element Earth. This is why, when considering the Elements in general, Iron sometimes disappears as a distinct Element and becomes part of the Earth. The *Kartsi* system of astrology, for example, only recognizes four Elements: Air, Fire, Earth and Water, just like the classical four Elements of Western Astrology.
Water, with its constant fluidity and its capacity to take any shape, is represented by a figure without corners, the circle, and by the colour blue.

Mother and Child
These five Elements form a harmonious system and are the material foundation of all existence. Their order is not accidental: a specific relationship in fact exists between all the single Elements. This relationship is first and foremost one of ‘generation’ between each Element and all the others or, as the Tibetans say, the five Elements move ‘from Mother to Child’: Wood is the Mother of Fire, Fire is the Mother of Earth, Earth is the Mother of Iron, Iron is the Mother of Water and finally Water is the Mother of Wood – thus the circle closes and the cycle starts again. To understand what all this means (and at the same time to remember the correct succession) all you need to do is to consider the physical characteristics of each Element. The fact that Wood generates Fire is obvious; Fire generates Earth – and what is our own Earth, like other planets, if not the result of the cooling of a flaming sphere? And the Earth we tread on each day is none other than the outer crust of a nucleus

alchemy: the property that metals have of melting, becoming liquid, thereby giving rise to the fluid Element, of which Water is the symbol ‘par excellence’. Water generates Wood: here the tree returns, whose sap and vital essence draws indispensable nourishment from water – and without water no form of vegetable life can exist.

<i>Xin</i> wood	<i>Me</i> fire	<i>Sa</i> earth	<i>Jag</i> iron	<i>Qu</i> water
				
green	red	yellow	white	blue

This cycle of continual generation can also be traced in the opposite direction. In this case we say that Wood is the Child of Water, Water the Child of Metal, Metal the Child of Earth, Earth the Child of Fire, and Fire the Child of Wood, which in turn is the Child of Water, and so on. This is what is meant when one says that two Elements have a Mother-Child relation. This relation is generally considered to be positive (particularly when the Mother Element is seen with respect to the child since the Mother “protects” her Child, a little less the other way round), that is to say a harmonious relationship of agreement between two Elements.

The Four Relations
Altogether, four different sorts of relation exist between Elements: 1) Mother, 2) Child, 3) Friend, and 4) Enemy. Every Element has a Mother Element (from which it was generated), a Child Element (which it generates), a Friend Element (which helps its manifestation, and is the Son of the Son),

Bepe Goia Manifesting the Reality Around Us

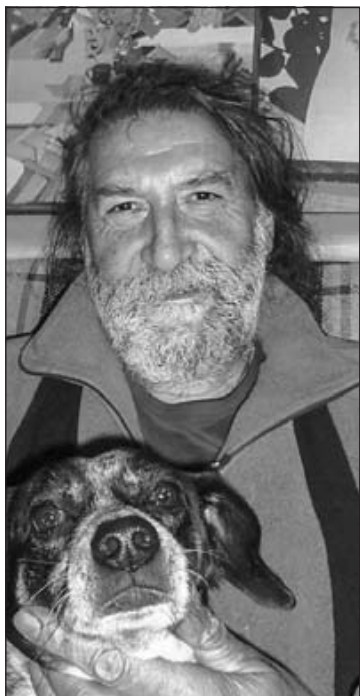
In my youth I studied at the Institute of Art in Gorizia for four years. Before that I was studying at an industrial institute but things didn't go well for me there. Then one summer my uncle came to visit us and told my parents that I wasn't cut out for that type of study because I had been really obsessed with design from when I had been a small child. He told them to send me to an art school. At the time we were living outside town and the art institute was not very close and my parents thought that I was too little – I was thirteen – to travel there every day. But he managed to convince them and I started attending the institute of art. I got on really well there.

When I was 18 I started to have exhibitions and won some medals at the Institute and other little prizes for my work and it really encouraged me. When our friends came to see us from Venice, the ex-students from the Institute who were already going to the Academy of Fine Arts, who were older and our 'idols' with their long beards and velvet clothes, this became another goal for me to reach and when I was about 18 I started to attend the Fine Arts Academy in Venice.

At the Academy I started to work with the 'master' Bruno Saetti, an important painter who had a kind of empathy towards me and thought I had a good technique and so I became his assistant. Then 1968 arrived when we 'occupied' the Academy and everything became complicated. We were rebelling against the system and the Academy became a free meeting place. It was occupied by the students and there were free lessons in theatre, in painting etc., and we invited different speakers to come. We were all politically charged up and became leaders of the extreme left. But with this there gradually came about a type of split – there were two or three incidents concerning money – and the idea of the students being a 'social group' started to disintegrate.

At that point I left all of this behind – spurred by some kind of spiritual research I went to Istanbul and stayed there for a few months. I did the whole 1968 trip, hitch-hiking as far as Brindisi then took the ferry to Izmir then gradually made my way to Istanbul. There we hung out at the Gulan Hotel described by Ginsburg, smoking, trying to be like our idols, and at some point, when I hadn't found anything that I was looking for and the feeling had passed, we came back to Italy where things had already calmed down and I went back to work at the Academy.

I had my own art studio in different parts of Venice and I started to have my work shown in gal-



didn't behave well which was not fine because it wasn't good for his name. Then in 1974 I went to India for a couple of months and when I came back I no longer had my place with him at the Academy and I had to start my work all over again and go back and teach at the Liceo Artistico.

However, before that I was unemployed for a couple of years. I didn't feel like trying to go ahead – I had a sort of crisis in which I didn't feel like collaborating with society, being used as an instrument. There were all these ideologies and I, too, felt like I wanted to experience what 'reality' was like so I went to work for a few months in the port of Monfalcone loading and unloading wood. That was really tough work and I would

to another, doing what I liked, no longer following artistic currents like in the past when I had worked for a period on, for example, surrealism in my aesthetic research. Now I gradually started to be more relaxed. My research was no longer obsessive and totally encompassing. In the past I would dream about the work I would do and have the image in my mind, but once I started to practice a bit I gradually began to have some experiences.

And I thought back to when I started to do things. I never remember not doing things. Even at nursery school, they teach you to do this and that. And I would do it, it would be gratifying and they would tell me how good I was. It was the same with my

are apart from all those artistic currents, even though there is always some contact with a current because you cannot start from nothing. You start from lots of aesthetic culture, absorbing a lot of aesthetic formalism. My aesthetic and spiritual research has been driven by a sense of dissatisfaction that needed to be dissolved.

Today I think that the manifestation of the "reality that surrounds us" through forms and colors is a profound need for me. That turning to attempts of words and communication is a necessity in one's existential journey and the desire and attachment to 'doing' is synonymous with research into primary harmony and a formal statement of one's path.



"The Sutra of the Tiger and the Strawberry" by Bepe Goia.

Bepe's latest work is a 10 page booklet illustrating an ancient Zen parable using the technique of engraving with etching and aquatint. The 10 plates are printed in color. The text is illustrated with sharp and contemporary writing. Print run of 30 copies of the book plus 10 artists proofs. Made of pesca paper 350 gr. The illustrated plates are 25 cm x 35.

eries and won some important prizes. At that time I was infatuated and tried out many different aesthetic forms in my work that were experimental. It wasn't like I was doing research into any particular artistic current like the abstract or into the informal – I had some experiences with them but they didn't last very long. I would be fascinated with a certain style just like a student doing research but these experiences were not very profound, they were more superficial. But I was still unsatisfied with my research.

There was a prize that a well-to-do person had left in inheritance to the Bevilacqua La Masa foundation that was given every year to a promising young artist which was a beautiful studio in Palazzo Carminati. I won this prize and was there in Piazza Carminati for five years. And after that, when you have a free studio and other things for free... Master Saetti liked me but from time to time I

come back at the end of the day totally exhausted. At the beginning I was quite wound up but then everything has its weight and after eight hours in the port [...]

Then I came into contact with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu and the teachings in the summer of 1980 at Montebelluna. At the time I was working at the Liceo Artistico in Treviso and a friend of mine who knew I would be interested told me that there was an Indian master at Montebelluna. At the time I had already been following Guru Maharaji who was a very young tantric master. This first retreat with Rinpoche was wonderful and had an effect on me and I started to relax a bit.

After the retreat at Montebelluna my research was no longer spasmodic or absolute because previously I had been working 12 or 14 hours a day, really in a wound up way. From that time on I would pass from one thing

grandmother who would tell me how good I was at drawing. But you don't realize that those skills, those instincts were something you had previously. Karma. In the past I had done something similar. For me it was easy to draw and it was satisfying and I went ahead – it was a psychological mechanism that I could understand and I sensed that I had always worked in that field.

In 1981 I moved to Merigar. It was in April at Easter time and the Master was here at Merigar and everyone was sleeping in sleeping bags on the floor. Then I came in the summer with my tent and shortly after bought my little house in Casidore and started to renovate it.

Today – I no longer have a story to tell or any vision to show to the world. I have never been part of an artistic movement. I have been doing my personal research, taking something from here or there. I belong to the individualists who

Now I have burned my vain ambitions and particular "world view" and artistic trends and intellectual itineraries that tend to charge the mind and the ego. Since I cannot suppress the basic desire to soften the path by 'doing', I search for quietening of anxiety in every action that I do.

It is all part of vision and now that I have met the practice and what is happening, my infinite gratitude goes to the Master, the Sangha and the Dharma. ©



Borobudur: Adventures of a Pilgrim

(Part I)

Lynn Newdome

Lynn Newdome studied and practiced Tibetan Buddhism, as taught and transmitted by Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche and Namkai Norbu Rinpoche, for over 40 years. Seeing photographs of the ancient monument, Borobudur, she recognized the symbolism of the nine-yana path. In 2012 she embarked on a solo pilgrimage to Java, Indonesia, to unravel Borobudur’s mysteries and experience its powerful messages directly. Lynn plans to return to Borobudur this summer.

In Part I (of 3), Lynn embarks on this journey and begins her exploration.

Ancient sculptures of exquisite beauty carved onto the walls of an enormous stone temple – I was captivated by Borobudur from the moment I opened the book, *Golden Tales of the Buddhas*.¹ Here was a Javanese monument built between 760 and 830 CE, buried for centuries by jungle, rediscovered in 1814, and remaining a mystery to the modern world. With the profile of a stepped pyramid, Borobudur’s aerial view revealed the footprint of a giant mandala. Its sacred images echoed the Tibetan Buddhism I’d studied and practiced for over twenty years, and the essence of this faraway place resonated in my being.

Fast forward another twenty years to 2011, when I opened that book again and instantly knew I must go to Borobudur. I didn’t know whether, as an American woman in my fifties, it would even be safe to venture – alone – to the foot of an active volcano on an island I couldn’t find on a map. I



meaning or use, but Borobudur was built when Mahayana and Vajrayana Buddhist lineages were flourishing in India and spreading along trade routes throughout Asia. The structure holds 432 *Dhyani Buddhas*² on its outer walls, another 72 Buddhas on its top terrace, and 1,460 panels of detailed bas-relief within its galleries.

Although the sculptures’ imagery derives from ancient India and Indonesia, its Buddhist messages are beyond time and culture. I saw Borobudur’s series of reliefs, starting at the base and wrapping around four ascending levels, as describing the path through the *yanas*,³ toward enlightenment. I would travel there as a modern pilgrim, tracing the footsteps of that journey, to experience Borobudur’s wisdom directly.

In July I had the good fortune to attend retreats taught by

halls was good preparation for the tropical climate to come.

By the end of July I thought I’d prepared for everything, but couldn’t have anticipated losing my glasses. On the red-eye flight out of Boston, I took two sleep tablets, not realizing they were double strength, so that I’d actually taken a quadruple dosage. The last thing I remembered before falling asleep was looking for my eyeglass case, and the first thing I realized upon waking was that my glasses were gone. Without them I was nearly blind.

I contemplated spending a month at my dream destination without being able to see it. The situation looked bleak, but I was determined to not let it ruin my trip. Through a fog of connections at the London and Singapore airports, I called my hotel with a message. When I finally landed in Java, my surroundings were a blur, but I’d arranged for a car to drive me directly to an “express” eyeglass store. There, although unable to communicate why I couldn’t see the big “E” on the chart, the optician figured out my prescription. In about an hour my glasses were ready. I’d arrived in a new country and now was literally seeing Indonesia through new eyes.

Suddenly the world was vivid and wildly in motion. All around me, the streets of *Jogja*⁴ were teeming with motorcycles, half of them ridden by women in traditional Muslim headscarves, none of them observing the road’s center line, and all with seeming disregard for the danger. Scared, I repeatedly gasped, “Crazy!” and my driver, Eko, laughed in agreement.

Using my limited *Bahasa Indonesia*, I talked with Eko, who asked how long I was staying at Borobudur. When I answered, “*Satu bulan*” (one month), he looked startled, then told me I meant “*satu hari*” (one day). I tried to explain “*satu bulan*,” but Eko was convinced I meant one day,

because *no one* stays at Borobudur for *one month*.

The hour-long drive stayed on city streets, not going into the countryside I’d expected, so I was surprised when *Candi*⁵ Borobudur suddenly came into view. The car turned to enter Borobudur Park and stopped in front of the elegant Manohara Hotel. My new home, built of richly carved wooden beams and graceful roofs, had few exterior walls. Instead, its “interior” spaces opened directly onto the beautiful adjoining conservation land.

The next morning was August 1, and I was ready to begin my exploration. The *candi* was an easy walk from my room, on a hill bounded by an iron fence. I entered through the main East Gate and climbed a steep staircase to reach its base. (Borobudur’s four sides face the cardinal

mudra are along all four sides of the fifth level.

Midmorning I heard the Islamic prayers, broadcast from what seemed to be the four directions of the mountains. Their low resonance sounded to me like Tibetan chanting, a call to meditation. My instinct was to turn outward and take the posture of the Buddhas. Gazing at the expansive volcanic range, I felt like I was at the center of the world.

I was eager to greet people – hotel staff, park security guards and travelers – with my few phrases of *Bahasa Indonesia*. For the Central Javanese, meeting someone from the U.S. was unusual. (In fact, during my entire stay I didn’t encounter another Caucasian American.) Introducing myself was always received with broad smiles and an enthusiastic “*Amerika good!*” Many Indonesians



directions, each with gateways and stairs leading up to the central circular terrace.) Most visitors proceed straight to the top, but on that first day I greeted the pair of stone lions guarding the entrance and turned left to circle around Borobudur’s outer wall.

Above me to the right were seated Buddhas, and to my left, open landscape. I stopped in front of each Eastern Buddha in earth-witnessing mudra, initially distressed at seeing that many were without a head or hands, or missing altogether. Below the Buddhas, a sculptured row of elegant male and female bodhisattvas encircled the entire wall. I was puzzled to not distinguish them as any of the narrative reliefs, and only eventually realized they were among Borobudur’s additional 1,212 “decorative” panels.

At the Southeast corner, part of the outer wall had been removed to reveal a section of Borobudur’s original base.⁶ Here, scenes of tormented beings with twisted bodies and grimacing expressions illustrated the *Karmavibhanga Sutra*.⁷ Even though only a few of the original 160 panels remained visible, the understanding of suffering and its chain of causes is essential to embark on the Buddhist path.

Continuing on to the South side, I paused at each Buddha in generosity mudra, then to the Western Buddhas in meditation mudra, and lastly, the Northern Buddhas in fearlessness mudra. Though not visible from my vantage, Central Buddhas in teaching

asked to take my picture, and women warmly embraced me. That I was Buddhist drew some surprise and curiosity, but hearing that I was staying at Borobudur for “*satu bulan*” was invariably a shock. Soon I became recognized as the “*satu bulan*” woman.

I spent late afternoon in my room, studying the reliefs’ sutras and symbolism. Dinner in an open pavilion brought the most delightful surprise – live *gamelan*⁸ music. These cascading bell-tones were completely captivating to me, as a musician. Joining the concert, traditional Javanese dancers in full lavish costume performed the slow, graceful movements of their ancient art. And rising in the background was *Candi* Borobudur, illuminated in the night sky.



didn’t like to travel, had little understanding of Indonesia’s Islamic culture, and couldn’t speak the language. Nevertheless, I booked flights halfway around the world and arranged to stay a month at the Manohara Hotel, within the sacred grounds of Borobudur Park.

During the first seven months of 2012 I devoted every spare minute to studying the language, *Bahasa Indonesia*, and intensively researching Borobudur. Not much is understood about its original

Namkai Norbu Rinpoche, where I gained several valuable insights. Dedicating the Universal Mandala, Rinpoche said that we weren’t building it for ourselves, but for people of the future. Perhaps Borobudur, too, was not created just for ninth century Buddhists, but also to manifest for later peoples. Rinpoche presented a concise history of Buddhist lineages, providing a clear context for Borobudur. And, the experience of sitting for hours in hot meditation

1 *Borobudur: Golden Tales of the Buddhas*, text by John Miksic, photographs by Marcello Tranchini, Shambhala Publications, 1990.

2 Five aspects of Buddha or enlightened mind, each relating to a particular wisdom, direction, color, etc.

3 A progression of the Buddhist teachings, emphasizing different aspects of knowledge and experience.

4 Indonesians’ reference to Yogyakarta.

5 Pronounced “*chaundy*,” the Indonesian term for an ancient Buddhist or Hindu temple.

6 The initial “hidden foot” was covered by a stronger base in an early phase of Borobudur’s construction.

7 Buddha’s teachings on samsara and the workings of karma.

8 An Indonesian “orchestra” of gongs, metallophones, drums and often, a vocalist/soloist. ©

Tenerife

Trust 100%!

Guru Dragphur Retreat, Tenerife, Dec. 26, 2012–Jan. 1, 2013

Alba Papini

How can you talk about a drop of water during a heavy rainfall? How do you define it? In itself it holds all the rain, it is the rain itself.

That is how I felt looking at my notes on the Master's Guru Dragphur retreat held in Tenerife December 26–January 1 straddling the solstice of 2012 and the entry into 2013.

During the three days of intense practice of the Vajra Dance that we did at the Grand Hotel Cal-lao, Tenerife, and throughout the world, December 21 to 23, I felt a pervasive sense of agitation melt into a state of calm. The world around and Spanish society in particular, so overwhelmed by the disintegration of the social security system, with the consequent tremendous suffering of fear and mental confusion for people, was relaxing it hold on me.

...There is not a single party that corresponds to our condition... evolution is linked to realization. In duality there is good and bad, the just and the unjust who are fighting each other, thousands of diseases caused by negative provocations ... Money conditions our lives, complicated, short ... you have to know how to get directly into the practice, be present, you have to know how to prepare yourself to get out of the cage and fly...

Some of the many drops that the Master let fall on us, on this burning thirst.

Coming and going, following a perfect thread, he told us about the need to discover our true nature through experience through which we learn everything, even ordinary things, without having to have a belief system.

All experiences are linked to phenomena, to the nature of the elements and to our three doors (body, voice and mind). So we can find out what the Buddha called the nature of the Void, profound and luminous beyond explanation



... And how do you know without an explanation? With experience. Through the Master.

He transmits and introduces us to our potentiality, to the discovery of Rigpa, which may need time and work to manifest.

The transmission and the method from him – from us, participation, trust, and application. Guru Yoga, but also learning to be present, remembering to be present, to practice. Understanding that if the past affects us negatively we have to purify it and then abandon it, living and enjoying our ever fleeting and changeable circumstances, in order to be able to integrate into our three dimensions of body, voice and mind, instant presence. With the Song of the Vajra. But what happens when we follow the path and run the risk of interrupting it because negativity comes up? We should learn to eliminate the obstacle, and given that negativity cannot be eliminated, we send it back from where it came.

And again, trust. Total trust. To overcome negativity and strengthen the energy to realize ourselves because we need time, positive healthy time to overcome and purify the karma that ripens. We do not know how our life will end, with illness or a sudden accident.

Guru Padmasambhava was invited to Tibet and had to take on the extremely powerful local Bön guardians. Continuous obstacles arose and gradually these guardians were transformed into Guardians of the Teaching. The last one was Dorje Legpa. In Bön there was a series of Dzogchen Teachings and when Guru Padmasambhava conquered him, he was transformed into an important Dzogchen Guardian. However, successively Guru Padmasambhava integrated into the form of Guru Dragphur, part of the ancient Bön tradition.

Guru Dragphur is Guru Padmasambhava.

The practice of water, Tso, empowered, eliminates diseases that

are risky for humans and animals. There was a Sakyapa practitioner who was able to block even the cholera and had been invited to the countryside to do Tso pujas and rituals. When the Master asked him about this practice of Tso he discovered that it was part of the ancient practice of Guru Dragphur.

The San ritual is also from the Bön tradition, as is the making of Torma, all introduced by Guru Padmasambhava. Even the seed syllable of the powerful practice of Garuda originates in Bön, and so it was maintained and transmitted by Guru Padmasambhava.

In the Tibetan lungta (prayer flags) for example, also coming from Bön, there is the explanation of the figures of the five animals. The living energy of the animals represents the elements. In order to cure the disturbed relationship between the individual and the elements, not only medicine was used, but most of all pujas and rituals, many of them related to Garuda, to care for the energy.

Fire in the Bön tradition, is the symbol of the function of energy, the source. In the lungta it is the most important animal, the flaming eagle. In the center of the lungta there is a horse with a norbu, a jewel, on his back, the symbol of the individual whose potentiality continues for years and lifetimes.

Then there is the Tiger, the symbol of Air because he lives in a forest full of wood that represents Air in Tibetan astrology. The Lion represents Earth. Hardened earth becomes rock creating high mountains where the snow is. In Tibet and even in China it was said that the Snow Lion lived there, with green fur and resembling a small Tibetan dog.

Then there is the Dragon that represents Water. It is said that many merchants, traveling the seas were in danger of disappearing in the jaws of these animals. To confirm this they would bring birds and let them fly the ocean, if they came back, the sea was free

» continued on the following page



New Year in Tenerife and Tibetan Dances

Elena Fokina

The ganapuja started at 4pm and we prepared everything quickly under the supervision of Tsvetan.

After the ganapuja we brought yogurt to everyone, but we did it "secretly" so that Rinpoche did not know about it. When he began to eat his yogurt, at the same time

we brought out ours and started to do the same. It was New Year integration.

After that Rinpoche asked us to sing Tibetan songs and to dance. We danced with Adriana Dal Borgo and with Tsering and Topgyal.

Rinpoche left the party at 10.30 pm.

We continued to dance and at midnight everyone ate 12 grapes. It is a Spanish tradition to have one grape and to wish something with every strike of the clock. Then we danced and danced.

What a nice New Year it was! ©

Cats' Stories

A greeting card with many colorful cats had been on Rinpoche's desk since Christmas.

One day, on a sunny afternoon in Tenerife, Rinpoche asked a question to the few students around him at that moment.

And, one by one, the stories came up.



CATS' STORIES

Do you have an idea what are the relationships between these cats?



Grey cat is a mother, blue cat is a father, green cat is a child. Child cat has clothes relations with Mother Cat. Father Cat became jealous and decided to bring a present, a yellow ball of cotton threads. This time mother became jealous, because she doesn't have a present for a kid.



All the cats are three sisters, are going to a party. To enjoy the party at it best cats want to be very beautiful. Grey cat dressed up very nicely, put colourful dots on her body, a cute scarf around her neck, also some make-up on tips of her ears. Green cat put on a nice dress as well and a bright flower scarf. But a third cat, Blue one, doesn't

Third Edition of the Tibetan Culture Week

Aldo Oneto

The third edition of the Tibetan Culture Week was held January 11 to 17 in San Cristobal della Laguna, a town in the north of Tenerife, a cultural and university town, recognized by UNESCO as a heritage of humanity. The main topic was Tibetan Medicine, with a significant number of visitors who were very intrigued and fascinated by the great themes illustrated by the Tibetan doctors specially invited from Tibet. The event was coordinated by Dr. Phuntsog Wangmo, who not only spoke on specific topics, such as obstetrics, childbirth and pediatrics according to the concepts of Tibet medicine, but also successfully organized the lectures that followed each other in the following seven days. The success of the event, however, was also due to the incessant energy of the organizers from the Community: Kundusling, Meriling, the International Shang Shung Institute, ASIA and many volunteers from all over who supported and took on the numerous commitments that were part of such an event.



Photo: T. Boehm

If the theme of Tibetan Medicine played a major role in the event, other activities and initiatives that followed also had an important role. In fact, in the area of the Santo Domingo Convent that hosted the Cultural Week and which was made available by the local authorities, besides the large room for the talks on Tibetan medicine, we were also able to make use of a big area for Tibetan dances and songs and recreational activities. In addition a beautiful living room was set up to exhibit the tangkhas depicting the Medical Tantras on loan from ASIA, and the abundant space let visitors enjoy the paintings to the full. The Cultural Week opened with a keynote speech by the Master on

the origin and history of Tibetan medicine. Following this there was a presentation of the Doctors who had just arrived from Tibet who formed a strong bond with the Dzogchen Community by presenting the Master with an incredible multi-volume encyclopedia on the medical traditions of the whole of Tibet, a work of immense value and interest. In the following days, the same team of doctors, made an agreement between Rinpoche and 'Arura', which consists in the production and dissemination of Tibetan medicine. The opening ceremony was followed by the opening of the ASIA exhibition. In the days that followed, each of the doctors gave a talk of the utmost importance with excellent

and clear explanations of the main themes, such as diet, lifestyle, the composition of medicines according to the type of patient, external therapies with a brief presentation of Tibetan massage, treatment and cure of mental illness, and finally a basic explanation of the main diagnostic methods used by doctors. On the final day of the Cultural Week, the Master gave a lecture at the University of La Laguna on the theme of Death in Tibetan Medicine. The hall was full of people who were very attentive to the words of the Master. The concert given by Ani Choy-

Espacio Multicultural Aguiere, the cinema/theater in La Laguna that was the concert venue was packed with spectators. The concert was very moving and created a strong positive feeling. The next three days, after the formal closure of the event, were dedicated to a Hospice held by Doctor Phuntsog Wangmo on guided assistance to the dying according to Tibetan Medicine, while Fabio Andrico led a short course on harmonic breathing and finally Urgyen Sonam, a Tibetan from Australia, led a workshop on the production of Tangkhas in silk. We look forward to seeing you



Photo: T. Boehm

» continued from previous page of Dragons. It is the most powerful animal that represents the element of Water. Returning to the practice of Guru Dragphur, the Master explained that it unifies many functions of realized energy: Vajrapani protection against paralysis, Manjushri for increased intelligence, Avalokitesvara for compassion, the Buddha of Medicine to overcome disease, Amitayus for long life. It dominates the Gyalpo, a male class of beings that create negative provocations producing agitation and nervousness. Since humans are always agitated, this immediately attracts the Gyalpo and so the agitation increases. Falling into the Gyalpo class, doing practices to them, leads to domination by them not just for a few years

but for thousands of years, and cannot be gotten rid of. During the Chinese cultural revolution the Gyalpo manifested everywhere, and for years the Dalai Lama has asked people not to do the practice of Dorje Shugden. The other figure, feminine, dominated by Guru Dragphur is Semo, an evil spirit that causes negativity, drains the life force, as, for example, happens in AIDS, in which people do not die immediately but become weaker and weaker until eventually they die. Through the initiation, the introduction to the practice of Guru Dragphur not only overcomes negativity but also leads to total realization. However, the value at the relative level is essential to strengthen energy. The same thing can be said for the prac-



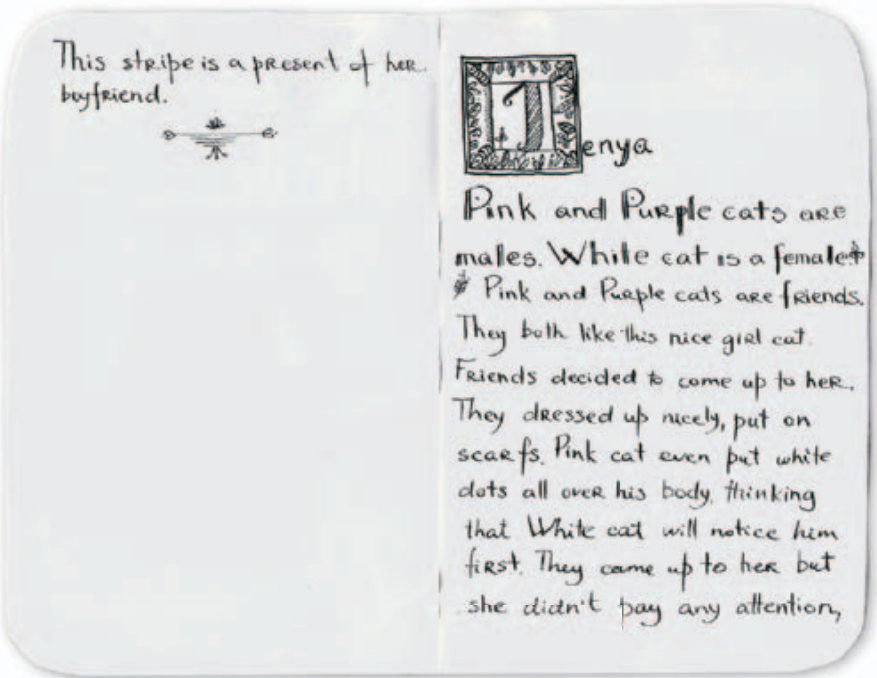
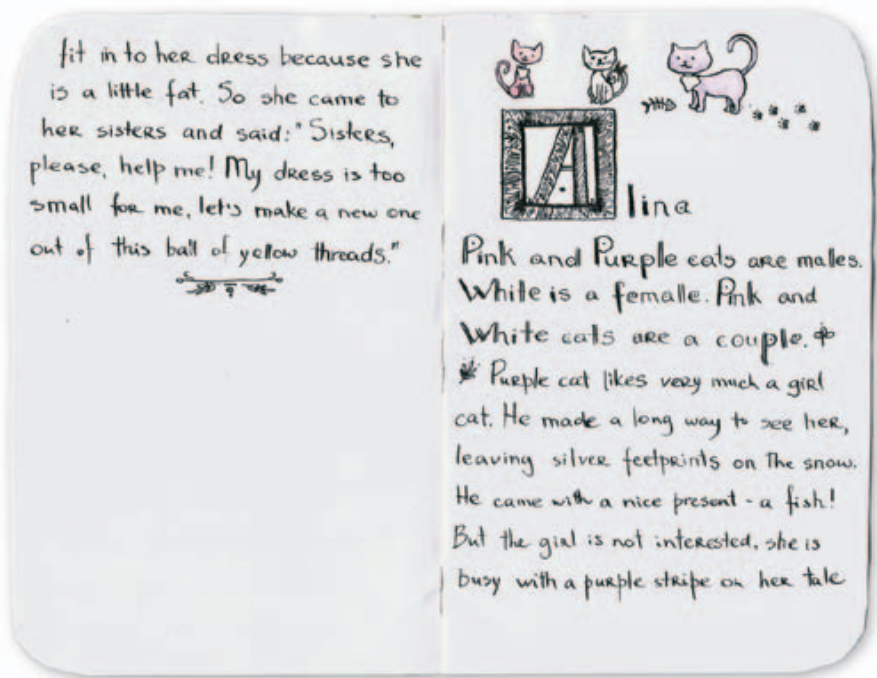
tice of Sinhamukha. Outside the state of contemplation, in dualistic vision, we can receive infinite negativity because when energy is disorderly we become passive and receptive to negativity.

The Master's advice: to do it every day. 15 minutes is sufficient. The cold and the drafts of the sports pavilion in Adeje which hosted the Guru Dragphur retreat, felt even more after the

comfortable retreats, Dances and festivities at the Grande Hotel Cal-lao, dissolved day after day with the fire that the Master lit in us – overwhelming, secret and wonderful. And New Year's Eve, 2012, without alcohol, but with special foods, decorations and party dresses, the dancing began and ended the year in overflowing joy. ©

Meriling New Gakyil

The new Gakyil of Meriling was elected at an assembly on January 26. Yellow: Elvira Heredia elvira.amarillo@meriling.es Red: Carles Jañez Brucet carles.rojo@meriling.es Blue: Michael Truckenbrodt michael.azul@meriling.es



The Dzamling Gar Song

This song was composed by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu during his stay in Tenerife in January 2013, on the occasion of the birth of Dzamling Gar.

The words and melody arose spontaneously over three days, while the Master was relaxing in the swimming pool at his home.

May this short text, which is a complete teaching, bring joy and benefit to all sentient beings!

The Italian and English versions are the transcription of the first oral translation by the Master himself and express the meaning of the song rather than a word by word translation. The transcription was made by Rita Bizzotto and the English translation by Nick Simmons.

Any possible error is exclusively due to our lack of understanding.

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1

zàmlín gár lú

zàm ~ lín kyon~ gyĩ~, zóg~ qen~ dùs~ dé~,
 zàm ~ lín kyon~ gyĩ~, zóg~ qen~ dùs~ dé~,
 zàm~ lín~ gár~ la~ ji~ gyòg~ gǎñ~ ǎñ~gyòg
 dé~ lhod~du peb ~ xog ~.
 zàm~ lín~ gár~ la~ ji~ gyòg~ gǎñ~ ǎñ~gyòg
 dé~ lhod~du peb ~ xog ~ ò~.
 gá ~gyid zòm~ jyũñ~ lag ~ a~.
 gǎñ~ ǎñ~gyòg dé~ lhod~du peb ~ xog
 gá ~gyid zòm~jyũñ lag,
 pun~ sum~ cog~jyũñ lag,
 gá ~gyid~ rol~ la~ peb~ ẽ~dǎñ,
 dé ~gyid ñám~ dũ~ rol~ lo.
 dra ~la~ xis~bar xog,
 sàm ~dõn drùb~par xog,
 dra ~xis lhun~ gyĩs~ grũb~ ù~nas,
 qyog ~gun~las nám~ par~ gyál~ lo.

Chögyal Namkhai
Norbu
Dzamling Gar Lu

Dzogchen Communities of the whole world,
Dzogchen Communities of the whole world,
As soon as possible, in a relaxed manner,

Come to Dzamling Gar!
As soon as possible, in a relaxed manner,
Come to Dzamling Gar!

Happiness is not lacking,
Come as soon as possible, in a relaxed manner.
Happiness is not lacking,
All is perfected, nothing is missing,
Come to enjoy happiness,
We want to enjoy this happiness together

Perfecting our fortune and all positive things,
 Manifesting all self-perfected qualities,
 In all directions victory is manifesting, without
 any obstacle.

All together let's unite our strength and capacity,
All together let's unite our strength and
capacity,
All Dzogchen Communities, unite your strength and
capacity,
All Dzogchen Communities, unite your strength and
capacity,

Happiness is not lacking,
 unite your strength and energy!
 Happiness is not lacking,
 all is self-perfected and manifests
 when we live in the knowledge of the
 primordial state¹
 With this, happiness arises in the world

Perfecting all fortune,
 Manifesting the self-perfected qualities,
 And developing our knowledge and application of
 evolution
 The entire world enjoys happiness.


Integrate in your state the meaning of Ati!²
 Integrate in your state the meaning of Ati!
 The knowledge itself of evolution
 and its application. Thus the whole world is brought
 into a state of peace.³
 The knowledge itself of evolution
 and its application. Thus the whole world is brought
 into a state of peace.
 Happiness is not lacking,
 Let's go, let's bring the world into a state of
 peace.


Happiness is not lacking,
 our state, our condition as it truly is, as
 evolution, we integrate
 and applying it, the sun of Samantabhadra⁴ arises

Perfecting fortune and all positive things,
 Manifesting the self-perfected qualities,
 All enjoy the state of definitive happiness.


» continued from
previous page


because she was very hungry
and dreamt of eating a fish.





These cats are all friends. ♣
♣ Yellow cat brought a mouse.
But the mouse is a fake one, not
real. Green and Pink cats don't
know that this is a fake mouse,
they think it is real. They are surprised



 inpoche

These cat are very good friends. †

✱ Yellow cat is thinking now:

• Oh, even though we are all very good friends, however now these two seems to be more interested in this mouse, they don't pay any attention to me and i am all alone here. But it is ok, i don't care, i also have someone else... this little yellow cat, i don't care! i am satisfied being alone!"

- 1 It means that it does not depend on effort.
- 2 The knowledge of Ati must not remain only on an intellectual level.
- 3 This is our duty, what we must do.
- 4 Here *Gun san*, Samantabhadra, means that all goes well, that this arises, does not refer to the Buddha Samantabhadra.

MerigarWest

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

Merigar West News

January and February in general are quite a difficult period of time to organise activities at Merigar West because the cold and the snow create various logistic problems.

In spite of this we managed to organise three important and different events following the guidelines of the program we are working on in 2013 to organise courses that are “specialised”, courses that are open to everyone, and activities in which we can integrate with the local community.

We had a course of supervision by Laura Evangelisti and Fabio Andrico of three instructors of Yantra Yoga second level. This level is quite specialised and there were about twenty or so people who came to Merigar for the course in spite of serious problems of snow and ice.

Then there was a weekend dedicated to improving awareness of breathing with Fabio Andrico. This course was open to everyone and the Gonpa was filled with more than fifty people of whom half had no idea about Merigar and had arrived solely for the course.

The day of Losar was dedicated to promoting ASIA in the Amiata area and we had a stand in the town square, we showed a documentary in the Arcidosso Town Hall and held a solidarity dinner in collaboration with a local association called “La Vettoraia”. The day went very well and the local authorities and many local towns-

people participated. Doing something for other people is not only expressing solidarity with them. It is also an opportunity to meet people and create different relationships with them, based on sharing a common ideal and a new and valuable project. For this reason we were happy to have had the opportunity to help ASIA concretely, but also to have found a way to work together, Merigar and Amiata people, on a common project.

Encouraged by the success of these initiatives we are defining the details of our program for the rest of 2013. At the moment the following are the most important events.

Retreats with our Masters

- The Easter Retreat with Khyentse Yeshe on Jigmed Lingpa’s “Yeshe Lama” text
- Two retreats with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu September 6–13 and September 28–30

In-depth courses and retreats for practitioners

- Three Teacher Trainings: Vajra Dance First Level with Prima Mai July 13–19; Yantra Yoga First Level with Laura Evangelisti and Fabio Andrico August 26–September 1; Vajra Dance Second Level with Adriana Dal Borgo and Prima Mai September 14–22.
- SMS First Level Course with Fabio Risolo over five weekends, which can also be accesses in closed webcast
- Practice Retreats: Seventh Lojyong in April, Dance of the Vajra only for

instructors in June, Mandarava with Nina Robinson in August, Chod with Tsultrim Allione in November.

Courses open to non-practitioners

A week of Dance of the Vajra July 21–27 and a week of Yantra Yoga August 4–10; both courses will have sessions dedicated to beginners and, at the same time, sessions for those who have already done base courses. The most particular point, however, is that children will also have some activities for themselves with Kumar Kumari Yantra Yoga and Santi Maha Sangha for children; for these activities there will be certain weeks suitable for family holidays where each person will find something of interest.

Open days

From April on we will dedicate a couple of Saturdays per month to the many people who would like to visit Merigar and not only to see the buildings but to learn a little more about the place. For this there will be someone who will talk about the history of Merigar, about the people who come to Merigar and their reasons for coming. Visitors will be able to participate in demonstrations of Yantra Yoga or Vajra Dance or other activities linked to Tibetan culture. ©

Khyentse Yeshe
at Merigar West
29.III–1.IV.2013

Learn

the

Secrets

of All

BUDDHAS

HEXAGON © All rights reserved

For assistance with accommodations, please contact luna@dzogchen.it
Contact the secretary's office for information and registration:
+39 0564 966837 office@dzogchen.it
Advance registration is recommended. To register, send an email to office@dzogchen.it indicating your name and membership number.

Germany, Berlin >>Dödjungling

We are very happy to inform you that our precious teacher gave the name **Dödjungling** (“Dödjung” means obtaining all desires) for the new Ling in “Berling”.

All the best,
Gakyil of Berlin
gakyil@dodjungling.de
Dzogchen Community Germany



Outstanding Women in Buddhism Award

The Dutch Gakyil congratulates Babeth VanLoo for receiving an ‘Outstanding Women in Buddhism’ Award.

Babeth is the first co-producer of My Reincarnation, the documentary film about Rinpoche and Khyentse Yeshe.

She was also the initiator and, for many years director of the Dutch Buddhist Broadcasting Foundation and the Buddhist Film Festival Europe in Amsterdam. She is an outstanding documentary maker, for instance about several well known Lamas and about different Buddhist traditions.

Warmest regards,
The Dutch Gakyil ©

MerigarEast

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Comunitatea Dzog-Chen	Romania	www.dzogchen.ro

Latest activities of the Merigar East Gakyil

As reported in the previous issue of The Mirror we are preparing for the Body Mind Festival in Bucharest (1st–3rd of March). The flyers – also advertising the summer retreat with Rinpoche – have been made by Artur Zolkowski, our Polish graphic designer. Anatolie, our Gekö will be present at the festival with a DVD demonstration of Yantra Yoga and the Dance of Liberation of the Six Lokas.

We would like to invite Irina from Russia, our candidate for project manager for the summer retreat, to attend to our third gakyil meeting at the end of March via skype.

It was a great pleasure for us to welcome a group of 12 newcomers from Constanta to the Gar for the explanation of the World Wide Trans-



mission on the anniversary of Garab Dorje. We hope to see them again at the summer retreat.

At the Gar, our Geko, Anatolie, has done some work on the electrical infrastructure and is now in the process of buying an underground water tank that will be placed behind the Gonpa so as to be able to finish the drop part of the Longsal symbol there. ©

Estonia >>Thadrulling

The name of the Ling of the Estonian Dzogchen Community has been changed by Rinpoche from Tashiling to **Thadrulling** (‘Beyond limitation’).

With kind regards, Gakyil of Estonian Dzogchen Community ©

Poland, Krakow >>Tashiling

New Ling in Krakow

We are happy to announce that our Master gave the name **Tashiling** (‘good fortune’ in Tibetan) to the new ling in Krakow.

Kind regards, Gakyil of Krakow Dzogchen Community Poland ©

Losar in Prague

Fundraising for ASIA Onlus

The Czech Community is happy to inform you that this year once again we organized Losar celebrations in Prague – Saturday February 9, 2013 from afternoon till late night in the ancient New Town Hall building. The Losar event is a successful project for the public which we have already been organizing for 8 years.

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

The Czech Dzogchen Community is the main organizer of the whole event every year. Our team with 10 people had a few intensive months of work ahead of the event, but it was definitely worth it. Although we faced flu in the main organizers team, the event went well again and we enjoyed collaboration and enthusiasm. As every year, everyone involved worked as volunteers.

On the main stage we presented a cultural program for the general public: Tibetan singer Soname, several other music groups (mostly in which practitioners played), an astrological explanation of the Water Snake year and short puja by Geshe Gyatso Choehortshang, Milarepa performance, Tibetan songs (Merigar Song and few others performed by children from Waldorf school in Prague and students from the newly opened Tibetan studies in Charles University), a lottery, juggling and so on.

There was also a huge space for specific workshops and presentations of various traditions, in which

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the Dzogchen Community presented Yantra Yoga, the Vajra Dance and ASIA documentaries.

The whole event was also designed for families with children, so there was a playroom and various workshops for children (printing Lungtas, making Namkhas, making Tsa Tsa).

For hungry and thirsty people there was also a little restaurant with Tibetan and Indian food and Tearoom. As usual we offered tsampa sweets



with nyongdrol inside. Visitors could buy books and many other articles from many dharma-shops.

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

Fundraising for ASIA brought in 3700 Euro which will be sent for the scholarship program and the long distance sponsorship project. We have

adopted 4 children and one elderly person from the Losar proceeds since 2005.

On behalf of the Losar team
Tereza Starkova

©

KunsangarSouth

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



Losar for children – and not only!

On February 10, on the eve of the New Water Snake Year, Kunsangar South arranged the celebration of Losar together with local children and their parents from Goncharne village near the Gar. Kunsangar South is quite young, but the local children already know that there is such a happy holiday as the

Tibetan New Year, and the celebration has already become a tradition here. And our Geko has the greatest respect for this tradition.

Each year more and more local children and adults come to this celebration. This year, there were nearly forty children of different ages who came with their parents. The parents were also interested in celebrating.

The event began with an introduction to the tradition of celebrating

Losar, the story of life in Tibet, Tibetan customs and culture – and it was all illustrated with beautiful videos on a big screen. Then the children played a lot of games and took part in different competitions. They were running and jumping, competing in various activities and winning sweet and attractive prizes with great pleasure. The adult villagers also had fun at our celebration. They played an amusing game called the “Crocodile” in which people

try to demonstrate some word producing no sounds, and others have to guess what it is.

Dzogchen Community members also prepared some treats for our guests. These were the traditional natural sweets – balls of tsampa, grain cookies, and everyone enjoyed the Tibetan tea with butter.

At the end of the celebration in the village, the Geko invited the villagers to make an excursion to visit

the Gonpa, which, as you probably know, has become very beautiful after it was decorated last year. Everyone really liked the unusual architecture of the Gonpa and the colorful painted ceiling, both children and adults were curiously contemplating the interior for a long time. Everyone was happy and satisfied. So, Losar in Crimea this year was a great success!

©

Ukraine, Kiev »Tobgyalling

The name of the ling of the Kiev Dzogchen Community has been changed by Rinpoche from Tashiling to **Tobgyalling**, (“royal potentialities” in Tibetan).

Kind regards,
The Gakyil of the Kiev Dzogchen Community
kiev.dzogchen@gmail.com

©

KunsangarNorth

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



New Year at Kunsangar North

The New Year holidays were celebrated at Kunsangar North for a whole week with a rich

retreat program. On the 28th of December activities started with a course of the Song of the Vajra Dance for beginners with Tatyana Pronicheva, a retreat on Santi Maha

Sangha First Level practices with Sasha Pubants and the webcast of the Guru Draggur retreat with Rinpoche from Tenerife. On the 30th the intensive practice retreat on Purification of

the Six Lokas with Vajrasattva began. January 1–3 there was a course on Tibetan Medicine with Doctor Phuntsog Wangmo on Chögyal Namkhai Norbu’s book “Birth, life and death”. During all

these days many people also practiced Yantra Yoga, the Vajra Dance and Chod together.

In addition there was a wonderful New Year party prepared by the Gakyil with a lot of help from Community people. There were about 120 Vajra brothers and sisters celebrating together, and the party was very successful. We had a big New Year tree decorated right in the forest, nice food and drinks, games and dances in the gonpa, competitions for children, a bonfire outdoors with hot pilaff and mulled wine – everything was very joyful and tasty! There was even a special DC Ded Moroz (Russian Santa Claus) who came to the party in sunglasses and with a travelling case, ready to fly from Kunsangar North directly to Tenerife.

©

THE MIRROR



Newspaper of the International
Dzogchen Community of
Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

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Taiwan >>Gephelling

Inauguration of SSCP and Gephelling

By Harry Mao

The inauguration of Shang Shung Chinese Publications and Gephelling Taiwan successfully took place on 27th January 2013. In the morning, we did sang and serkyem led by Khenpu Tserying Tashi, who has come to Rinpoche's teachings many times.

At 2pm in the afternoon the program started. We introduced the



organization and activities of the International Dzogchen Community and Shang Shung Institute and, in addition, we presented future plans which included group practices, courses of Vajra Dance, Yantra Yoga practice, teaching on Namkha, the Tibetan Language Drajyor system, and Tibetan culture interaction with local Tibetan organizations. The event concluded with the showing of the movie 'My Reincarnation' at 7pm.

Taiwan, Republic of China, with a population of 23 million and 35,980

sq.km., has over twenty thousand monasteries and temples and hundreds of Tibetan Buddhist centers. Relatively, it is kind of competitive situation, but we do have the most faith in Rinpoche's precious Dzogchen teachings and we will fulfill his wish among all Chinese.

NamgyalgarNorth

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Update 9/3/2013

It's just over a year since Rinpoche spoke to Namgyalgar Gakyil on how things should be in Australia – that Namgyalgar North should now be the main Gar for the Dzogchen Teachings, while the South Gar should be rented out as much as possible, to make money.

He also endorsed for that year a provisional strucure for the Gakyil-that each Gar should have a six person Gakyil, with one person from each Gar Gakyil colour to be on a central

Gakyil, so also of six people. These six would also be the Directors of the Dzogchen Community of Namgyalgar Incorporated, which is the legal entity we have here in Australia.

It is taking a while to get development approval for the Gonpa, accommodation and Cinerarium at Namgyalgar North – but we hope to have that approval in April or soon after.

In the meantime we have had an inaugural retreat with Rinpoche last March (with an event permit from the Local Council) and a steady program of smaller courses in SMS, Vajra Dance and Yantra Yoga, and an ongoing daily practice schedule. In April we have a couple of retreats with Elio Guarisco, once again with event permits.

The recently founded Shang Shung Institute Australia also has its base at Namgyalgar North and is working to establish ongoing courses in Tibetan language, Thangka painting, Tibetan medicine (in collaboration with the already established Australian Tibetan Medicine Association as well as with the the SSI Tibetan Medicine programs), and of course Tibetan Song and Dance!

After the April retreats, the Namgyalgar Gakyils will meet all together at Namgyalgar North to consider what structures will best carry us forward as we become a branch of the International Dzogchen Community. As we grow, it will soon become necessary for us to become a Not for Profit Company rather than an Incorporated Association, as at present, and we hope that from the outset this can be set up as a branch of the International Dzogchen Community. We are also in process of reviewing our accounting systems, moving to a cloud based

system for greater ease, clarity and transparency.

It is a lot of structural change and evolution, which can be experienced as being a long way from the utter simplicity of Dzogchen. But as Rinpoche constantly reminds us, whatever we do with presence and in a very relaxed way, there is no problem, we can enjoy our life! And having a structure that works in the societies and circumstances we live in, that provides a solid Base for the continuation of the priceless Dzogchen Teachings of our precious Maestro!

TsegyalgarEast

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

Gakyil of Tsegyalgar East

Dear Vajra Family,

The Tsegyalgar East Dzogchen Community is very pleased to announce that Ed Hayes has been selected and approved to join the Blue Gakyil.

We are fortunate to have Ed back on the Gakyil. He brings many years of experience and dedication to this task. Welcome, Ed!

Our current Gakyil members include:

Blue: Tom Burton, Elisa Gonzales, Ed Hayes
bluegakyil@tsegyalgar.org

Yellow: Al Dagget, Vern Harrington, John LaFrance
yellowgakyil@tsegyalgar.org

Red: John Foster, Kathy McGrane, Joe Zurylo
redgakyil@tsegyalgar.org

For general questions they may be contacted at gakyil@tsegyalgar.org

TsegyalgarWest

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

The Gift of the Dharma
A new isolated retreat house in Baha Sur, Mexico

by Vincent Imberti

"The gift of the Dharma excels all other gifts."
"Sabbadānam dhammadānam jināti"
The Buddha. Dharmapāda, verse 354

About three years ago in 2011 I went to the Gar in Baja and spent 3 months there. While I was there I noticed that all the little 'casitas' (cabins) are very close to each other so you cannot really do individual retreats for a long time because there is life all around when people are there. Even the construction is not very nice because they are made of concrete. The Gar is a huge place of 3000 acres and it is beautiful with blue skies most of the year.

I saw the huge potential to have a place for people to do private retreats in isolation for extended periods of time, so I thought it would be nice if I built a retreat cabin and offered it to the Gar as a gift.

So I went to the US, took some workshops on natural buildings and got some knowledge, came back to



the Gar in 2012 and spent six months there. I arranged for local workers to build a casita made completely of natural materials: the walls are made of adobe, constructed with mud bricks that were made and sun-baked on the construction site itself. The roof *lis madel* of intertwined palm leaves, which is traditional in that area. The floor consists of handmade bricks.

I wanted to make a place where people would feel grounded, so there is this natural feeling about it (i.e. the walls and floor being made of earth, the roof made with palm leaves).

The cabin is about 6m x 4m, just big enough to do the Vajra Wave without hitting walls or furniture.

The casita is situated on the edge of a canyon, and is completely isolated. You cannot hear any human sounds. Everyone who has been there says that there is a special feeling to the place. Physically it is only 300 or 400 metres from the Gar's kitchen, but because of its geographical location the casita is protected from sounds.

The idea is for the meditator to be completely self-sufficient during their retreats there, with no intercourse with the rest of the Community, for this reason the casita has been built



with its own kitchen and toilet with water that is piped down from the mountain.

In front of the casita there is a platform of sand where *the* meditator can do yoga or meditation. On one side there is a low range of mountains; and it is the best place in the world outside of Tibet for doing namkha arte. There is a fantastic and immense blue sky day after day for most of the year.

The system that I invented is like this. Since the cabin didn't cost the Gar a cent to build because I am the sponsor, there is no reason for the Gar to rent it. Every meditator who uses it makes a donation at the end

of his/her stay. Half of the donation, whatever the amount given, will go for the upkeep of the casita, and the other half to sponsor the next person doing a retreat there.

So, when a meditator arrives for retreat he/she would find some money to buy food, clothing, toiletries and medicines for the retreat. In this way each meditator is sponsored, and the use of the cabin is completely free.

The donation made by the meditator upon leaving the cabin can be of any amount. It is an act of faith, and half of it will sponsor the stay of the next person.

» continued on the following page



» continued from previous page

Usually if a person is doing, say, a six-week retreat there is so much appreciation that he/she really wants to sponsor the next person. It is really an act of love for the Dharma – whatever you receive, you really want to give to others. So this is the beauty of it – whatever donation you give is an act of love to help the next meditator. I have been thinking that the half of the donation that goes for the maintenance of the casita will accumulate, and after some time if it is sufficient,

a part of that fund could be used to sponsor the travel of dedicated and committed repeat meditators who may live in distant countries, do not have enough money to travel, and would like to come back to do another retreat. At the moment, the casita is finished, and people should contact the secretary of Tsegyalgar West who will keep a roster of people who wish to use the retreat cabin. If this system works, I would like to inspire people to do a similar project in other places, or in other Gars. It

saddens me deeply to know that some people cannot develop the dharma because they do not have the money to attend a meditation retreat, or do a self-retreat, and so, in a tiny way, I wish to help this situation. In the near future there will be a website with information and photos of the retreat casita, and also for me to get precious feedback from meditators to know how they would like to improve the place. To reserve a place in the casita: tsegyalgarwestsecretary@gmail.com

USA, Berkeley » Dondrubling

Greetings from the Bay Area and Dondrubling
Dzogchen Community West Coast, Berkeley

I would like to introduce our New Gakyil.

Blue: Dawa Gail Lorian, President, Gene Kim
Red: Richard Bermack, Vice-President, Monica Hernandez
Yellow: Lee Weiss, Treasurer, Laurel Bellon

All the Best, Dawa

©

TashigarSur

Tashigar South	Tanti 5155	Phone & Fax: 0054 - 3541 - 498 356
Comunidad Dzogchen Tashigar	Pcia. de Córdoba	secretaria@tashigarsur.com
Calle pública S/N	Argentina	www.tashigarsur.com

New Gekö and Secretary needed

Gekö Request

Dear Sangha: Tashigar Sur is calling for a new Gekö in the Gar from May 2013 to March/April 2014. We offer a salary, medical assistance, housing and retreats with Rinpoche for free. It requires: Three years as an active member of the Community and at least three re-

treats in person, Good character and willingness to serve the public, Essential fluency in Spanish. If you are interested, please send your answer to this e-mail as soon as possible: secretaria@tashigarsur.com

We will confirm the precise date of the election that will take place at the assembly in the months of March or April. The new Gekö is asked to be at Tashigar at least 15 days before start-

ing the period to get familiar with the functioning of the Gar.

Tashi Delegs! Tashigar Sur Gakyil

Secretary Request

Dear members of the Dzogchen Community: Tashigar South needs a new secretary from May 2013 to March/April 2014. Please contact us if you are interested to collaborate in this

role and you are capable of satisfying the profile that is presented below:
· Knowledge of PC and office equipment.
· Knowledge of English and Spanish in writing and oral communication.
· Possibility to carry out the daily activities required in the gar.
· Ability to establish personal relationships.
· Capacity to register, classify and file diverse information (bills, events, etc.)

· Minimum three years as Dzogchen Community member.
We offer:
· Housing
· Salary
· Retreats with Rinpoche for free
· Social benefits
For the previously expressed reasons we await your communication soon.
Send your Curriculum Vitae to: secretaria@tashigarsur.com ©

Courses

Merigar West



Participants in the Yantra Yoga course on the Third, Fourth and Fifth Series and Related Pranayama led by first level instructors Marco Baseggio, Patrizia Pearl and Sergio Quaranta under the supervision of Fabio Andrico and Laura Evangelisti January 17-23 at Merigar West. Photo: I. Wagner

Italy, Venice



Mandarava with Nina Robinson in Venice, Italy January 2013.

Dzamling Gar



Kumar Kumari with Laura Evangelisti at the Global Gar in Tenerife, Spain February 8-10, 2013.

Italy, Rome » Zhenphenling



On January 19th and 20th, at Zhenphenling, our center in Rome, we hosted Fabio Risolo, who conducted a wonderful retreat on the instruction and practice of Shiné and Lhagthong. The group consisted of 'old' practitioners, those of recent years and also 'brand new' members, who are approaching the Teaching after meeting our Master at Merigar or who have been attending a weekly meditation course at our center.

The clarity and depth of Fabio's explanations enthused all of us, bringing new and better understanding to those who, in the past, had already covered this topic while studying the base or first level of Santi Maha Sangha; it also permitted the 'newer' people to contextualize Shiné and Lhagthong within diverse spiritual paths of Sutra, Tantra and Dzogchen and to participate with greater ease in the relative practices and those of Semdzin and Rushen.

The perception of all of us having made an internal journey, through the reflections solicited from Fabio's expla-

nations, left all of us with a sense of joy and gratitude. Long Life to our Master!

Zhenphenling
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Via G. Miani 5 - 00154 Roma
tel. 06 57300346 fax 06 86905885
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www.zhenphenling.it ©

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Czech Republic



Kumbaka retreat with Fabio Andrico in Prague, Czech Republic February 2–6, 2013. Yogis from Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, Germany and the Czech Republic came and had a perfect time together. Thank you, Fabio!
Photo: M. Slavicek



Yantra Yoga presentation by Fijalka Turzikova during the Celebration of Losar 2013 in the New Prague Town Hall. It is a big event regularly organized by Czech Dzogchen Community (About 700 visitors, all income goes for ASIA Onlus)

Slovakia



Yantra Yoga course for Beginners in České Budějovice with Fijalka Turzikova in January, 2013.



Eight movements in Žilina, Slovakia with Jan Dolensky Feb. 8–10, 2013.

Ukraine, Yekaterinburg



Practical Intense Second Level Course of Yantra Yoga in Yekaterinburg, Ukraine with Victor Krachkovsky January 4–10, 2013.

Kunsangar North



Longsal Tsalung Retreat with Elio Guarisco 13–18 February, 2013.
The subject was “Yogic exercises for getting experience of clarity and emptiness from the Longsal Teaching of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu”. More than 80 participants were involved in very intensive studies with 4 tuns a day and the webcast of Mandarava Chudlen from Tenerife. There was a very warm atmosphere, and everybody was happy, including Elio.

Russia, Moscow



Origin of Disease and Healing. Tibetan Medicine about Health of Body and Mind. Moscow, “Open World Center”. January 5–6, 2013. 65 participants.

Siberia

Yantra Yoga with Zhenya Rud in Siberia

It has become a tradition to organise joint retreats with the collaboration of the cities of Ulan Ude, Irkutsk, Angarsk and others, which make up the Dzogchen Community of the Baikal region in Siberia. Also this January we had another wonderful training in Irkutsk with experienced instructor of Yantra Yoga, Evgeny (Zhenya) Rud!

Long sessions, rich in content, alternating with our “homework” created a unique retreat atmosphere during this event. The amazing capacity of Evgeny to work with the entire group (and the hall, as always, was packed to the limit), and at the same time to notice and correct the errors of each participant made it possible for all practitioners to gain a deep, concrete experience. By means of relaxation, full and harmonious breathing, awareness during move-



ment, and the experiences of bliss, emptiness and clarity we entered the state of contemplation!

We sincerely hope that this fruitful collaboration will continue successfully. Evgeny Rud has already agreed to lead an international Yantra Yoga retreat from the 15th to 25th August 2013 at the purest, deepest and most beautiful lake in this world: Lake

Baikal. The retreat will take place on the legendary and mysterious island of Olhon.

Follow further information, reserve these dates for your holidays – you will not regret it. Welcome to Siberia! The Dzogchen Community of the Baikal region
sesegdugarova@gmail.com ©

Kunsangar North



Birth, Life, Death. Course on Tibetan Medicine with Dr. Phuntsog Wangmo organized by Shang Shung Institute, Russia in Kunsangar North. January 1–3. 90 participants.



Singapore

Yantra Yoga Workshops in Singapore with Emily Coleing

by Leong Wai Ying

From the 29th January to 3rd February 2013, Namdrolling was privileged to host 2 workshops on Yantra Yoga, one for Beginners and the other for those who have already had some practice experience, in Singapore. It was the first time we have had an authorised yantra yoga teacher come to conduct workshops and the initial response was extremely encouraging. Just 3 weeks before the workshop for Beginners, the organisers had to change the venue to larger premises to accomodate those who were registering on the day of the workshop itself.

Yantra Yoga for Beginners, which was also open to non-members, drew 21 participants and even though the workshop was conducted in the evening hours to faciliate those who were working during the day, every-



Yantra Yoga in Singapore with Emily Coleing, January 29–February 3, 2013.

one who attended looked forward eagerly to each session, inundating Emily Coleing, a Level 2 Yantra Yoga teacher from Australia, with numerous questions during the break. If interest can be measured by the Yantra Yoga books and dvds ordered and sold, then it must have been successful as more than half the group participants placed orders for the Level 1 dvd and

books. We ended the workshop with a pre-celebration of Chinese New Year with special homemade cookies, mandarin oranges, cake and lots of lively banter between DC members and non-members, united by their shared interest in Yantra Yoga. As a follow-up, the scheduled weekly group practice at the Ling for members was also

extended to non-member participants to support their fledgling practice.

If the tone for Workshop 1 was light and exploratory, Workshop 2, held over the weekend, saw a markedly different group. 9 participants, all DC members, had already been practising this work for some years. Emily lost little time in going over the preliminaries explanations with this group. The programme offered Deepening the understanding of the Preliminaries and Levels 1 and 2 of the yantra series, but it was clear where the interest of the group was. The practitioners seized the opportunity to clarify breathing details and Pranayama with the teacher. Cheh Goh, our SMS teacher and long-time yantra yoga practitioner kindly facilitated the translation into mandarin for several of the participants.

As the mood for Chinese New Year was in the air, the group decided that Emily should be initiated into the “lo-hei” tradition of tossing high all good

and auspicious wishes for the forthcoming year with a special preparation of salad. We ended the workshop with a brief Ganapuja at Namdrolling.

And we end here with an email quote from Emily, who is at the time of writing, in Malaysia giving a yantra yoga workshop on the island of Penang:

Thanks for your warm hearts dear sangha.

What a lovely time we shared, teachings and Chinese New Year salad with lashings of laughter.

May it be an auspicious year ahead for all the sangha here and Namdrolling.

May the depth of the precious teachings be easily integrated by all Rinpoches students worldwide.

Thank you, Emily and we hope you will come back again to Singapore very soon! Happy Losar to everyone!

Namgyalgar South



Mandarava Retreat at Namgyalgar South with Elise Stutchbury, January 2013.



Yantra Yoga camp at Namgyalgar South with Emily Coleing and Amare Pearl, January 2013.

New Zealand



Introduction to Yantra Yoga at Nyima-Tashi Centre, Auckland with Oni McKinstry February 2–3, 2013.

Namgyalgar North



Song of Vajra dance part 2 with Cosimo di Maggio from 11 to 16 Jan, 2013.



Mandarava Chudlen Retreat, Namgyalgar North Feb 2013.

A small group of practitioners had the idea to take advantage of the Mandarava Chudlen retreat with Rinpoche, being webcast from Tenerife, by having an intensive collective practice at Namgyalgar North at the same time. With an ‘Ok’ from Rinpoche, 4–10 people practiced 3 tuns of long Mandarava practice with Chudlen each day as well as following the webcast in the evening – a fantastic experience of practicing together in this way! How little we need be limited by distance in being with Him in our practice!

Australia, Cairns



Khalong Dorjeikar, the Vajra Dance of the Space

taught in Cairns by Cosimo Di Maggio on March 2, 2013

One by one we arrived at the place, the day and the time. We were there to learn the precious Dance of Khalong Dorjeikar taught by our beloved Vajra Dance teacher Cosimo de Maggio. Kacho Yulo Ling Buddhist Centre held all twelve of us in its beautiful cool space in the heart of Cairns city deep in the tropics of Far North Queensland, Australia.

Cosimo taught us with patience, clarity and preciseness the intricate and profound movements of this simple but extraordinarily powerful practice suited for our time. We learned with enthusiasm, the meanings, movements, mudras and the timing. Our hearts soaked in the advice given to us by Cosimo, on transmission and the three considerations to remember during the practice of the Dance of Space.

The energies of Dharmakaya, Sambhogakaya and Nirmanakaya weaved in us and around us as we entered into the magical space of contemplation and the unborn. What a wonderful gift our Master has given us! We are incredibly fortunate to have Cosimo residing in Cairns, Australia. Our heart-felt gratitude to the Cairns Gakyil, Namgyalgar and all our Teachers. Long Live our Precious Rinpoche. ©

Tsegyalgar East



The Drajyor Course at Tsegyalgar East

Fun course...and now we can finally pronounce things the correct way!

Tsegyalgar East hosted a weekend Drajyor course with Mr. Fabian Sanders. The course was taught to those present at the Tsegyalgar East Gonpa and to others who had the opportunity to connect via internet. A feeling of relaxation and enjoyment permeated the whole course as we learned the proper pronunciation of the medium Ganapuja, as well as the Serkyem practice.

Drajyor is a fantastic tool and now we can finally pronounce things the correct way!



Level 2 Santi Maha Sangha with Jim Valby at Tsegyalgar East February 8–10, 2013.

Peru, Lima



Chöd Retreat with Steve Landsberg February 2013 in Lima, Peru.

Tashigar Sur



TashigarSur, Tibetan language course with Fabián Sanders January 5–11th.

Tashigar Sur



January 12–15, 2013 Course on the Base of the SMS with Ricky Sued.

Chile, Santiago de Chile



Santi Maha Sangha Retreat with Elias Capriles in Santiago de Chile, January 11–13, 2013. Nineteen persons attended.

Passages

Died

Merigar West



Giovanna Conti

Giovanna Conti passed away early in the morning of January 25, 2013 at her home in Milan, Italy after three years of illness that she endured with courage and strength. She had been supported by numerous vajra brothers and sisters and by friends and relatives who practiced frequently at her home up to her last days.

Giovanna joined the Dzogchen Community in 1983 and had a deep devotion to Rinpoche and a strong bond with the Teachings that were the central focus of her life. She followed Rinpoche's retreats all over the

world and lived for a while in Isola di Margarita and Australia. She was one of the first yantra yoga teachers in Italy and relentlessly taught it in Milan where many people joined the Community through her Yantra Yoga classes. She had reached the third level of the SMS and was actively involved in the Milan gakyil several times. In addition she was a skilled Kunye practitioner.

Giovanna was warm and welcoming: whenever you went to her home she always invited you to stay on for a meal. She had a fine sense of humor and will be greatly missed by all the Community in Milan and everyone who knew her.

Czech Republic



Vladimir Petr

Vladimir Petr passed away on the day of the Dakinis, 5th February 2013, after a long struggle with cancer, which he had had for many years, ungoing many

cycles of chemotherapy since the age of 14. Vlada, as we all called him, was very active in the Community in the last two years, following many retreats with Rinpoche. He was very aware of impermanence and was grateful for every day of his life and every possibility to do practice. He often said in the remaining time of his life he wanted to be as helpful to others as possible. He gave talks at the University about life with cancer etc. At the end, despite his effort in long life practices, the disease spread more and more causing much physical pain. He died peacefully at home.

Tsegyalgar West



Rick Marinelli

By Jonathan Schaeffer

Rick Marinelli passed away on January 22, 2013. He met Chögyal Namkhai Norbu at a retreat in Portland, Oregon, USA, in 1999. He was diagnosed with cancer eighteen months ago, and since then he devoted most of his energy and time to practice. I am offering a few excerpts from our email communications in the last year, as they are very inspiring.

“...That is it brother. All I have been doing and practicing. It’s funny that when I talked to you back when I couldn’t find the thun book, finally did, and from what you said and I read, all I did was short or very short thun. It has been so fulfilling and complete feeling I didn’t want to do many other practices and felt the trechöd transmission was a perfect addition. I do wish I had a retreat on thögal but I know it’s not necessary. I sleep and rest doing guruyoga, trechöd for waking time. Niiice.....”

“...Thanks, brother, for nudging me along. I’m going to stay awake as along as I can this time till spontaneous presence is all there is.”

“.....The gifts of disease have tuned up attention to spontaneous natural presence actually allowing me to merely observe and experience the perfection of the moment. An odder juxtaposition would not have occurred to me before to have such physical impairment and sense of per-

fection. The three precepts live with me constantly and Chögyal Namkhai Norbu’s descriptions of them in the Crystal and Way of Light are my pith instructions. I feel so very fortunate and blessed and my compassion has been overflowing for all the suffering in the world. Much of the time I was in severe pain (felt like the limit of tolerance) I was able to transform it by feeling others suffering and sending out the healing Buddha rays to all the sentient beings. Then I was able to experience natural presence and hang there.”

Rick kept his practice simple, and practiced until the end of his life. His faith in our Precious Teacher and the Dzogchen Teachings was iron clad. He will be missed by many.

Om A Hum
Long Life to Chögyal Namkai Norbu Rinpoche and Homage to the Three Jewels!
Sarva Mangalam

We are all connected through our Vajra Relationship, and I felt something of his Vajra commitment should be shared, as he was quite busy balancing work, teaching, family, and occasional kite surfing.

As an additional note, Rick was a member of Tsegyalgar, for participation and webcasts, and practiced alone. He had always felt his life was “in service” as Naturopathic Doctor and Oriental Medical Practitioner. He treated successfully many people who had extreme chronic pain, cancer, and other serious ailments. I know as I did spend many days with him in his clinic over the years. In 1999 I gifted him with a few books such as Crystal and the Way of Light, Supreme Source, and the old Dzogchen Ritual Handbook, as he had gifted me with the Tibetan Book of Living and Dying – (Sogyal Rinpoche), over 20 years ago. The retreat in Portland was the only time he met Rinpoche, and at that time we did have the occasion

to casually “hang out” with the Maestro at Donatella Rossi’s house one afternoon for tea with a dozen or so practitioners.

Though Rick had just that brief time with the Maestro and Dzogchen Teachings, he did clearly understand the base, path, and fruit, with Total Confidence.

His partner Dhairi, his two daughters Arianna and Aysia, and his son Aidan survive him.



Programs

Merigar West

Workshop on Tibetan Songs and Dances

with Adriana Dal Borgo
24 to 28 April 2013

Over the last year our precious Master has dedicated himself to selecting and collecting some modern Tibetan songs and dances. While attending retreats, even in webcast, many of us have had the opportunity to be involved in this activity.

At present there is a collection of 108 songs that have been chosen by the Master for their texts that are a means to express the news and the mood of the current situation in Tibet. Many of these songs are associated with popular styles of dances that are simple to perform. They can be danced in groups and are a great reason to spend time together for everyone.

Teacher Training Courses

Teacher Training – Dance of the Vajra First Level

Led by Prima Mai
July 13–19

This course is open to all those who already know well the steps of the female (Pamo) and the male (Pawo) part of the Dance of the Six Spaces of Samantabhadra and who want to deepen their knowledge and experience of practice.

Following these courses is a great experience for all those who are really interested in the Vajra Dance. It is also a prerequisite to become a First Level Vajra Dance Instructor.

Cost: € 280 without discounts

Teacher Training – Yantra Yoga First Level

Led by Laura Evangelisti and Fabio Andrico
August 26–September 1

This course is open to all those who have knowledge of the First Level of Yantra Yoga and would like to deepen their knowledge and experience and become instructors.

It will be led by the main teachers who will have the time and the opportunity to guide each student.

The idea of this workshop is to have sessions to learn how to sing these songs and to dance these dances. It is important to train groups of people who will become expert and can involve others in their cities.

Everyone can participate – you do not need to be particularly athletic.

There is no particular fee to participate in the workshop but donations will be appreciated.

For organizational reasons, those interested in participating should enrol in the workshop by sending an email to office@dzogchen.it.

The workshop will begin on Wednesday, April 24 at 19.00.

On April 25–26–27 sessions will be from 17.45 to 20.00.

On Sunday, April 28 from 15.00 to 17.00 There will be space available for those who wish to practice at other times.

Following these courses is a great experience and a prerequisite in the training of Yantra Yoga Teachers.

Cost: € 280 without discounts

Teacher Training – Dance of the Vajra Second Level (Dance of the Song of Vajra)

Led by Adriana Dal Borgo and Prima Mai
September 14–22

This course is open to all those who already know well the steps of the female (Pamo) and the male (Pawo) part of the Dance of the Song of Vajra and who want to deepen their knowledge and experience of practice.

The course will be led by the two main teachers who will have the time and the opportunity to guide each student.

Following these courses is a great experience for all those who are really interested in Vajra Dance. It is also a prerequisite to become Vajra Dance Second Level Instructor.

Cost: € 360 without discounts

To sign up for any of these courses you should fill out a form which can be obtained from the Shang Shung Institute.

For information and registration please contact Salima Celeri.
s.celeri@shangshunginstitute.org

Germany

SMS Basis

with Jakob Winkler
March 15–17 in Dargaling, Cologne
Registration: leapabst@gmx.de

Yantra Yoga, course for beginners

with Saadet Arslan
March 15–17 in Bielefeld
Registration:
Rico Aurich, 0049 177-159 36 03
rico.aurich@dzogchen.de

Mandarava Retreat

with Sasha Pubants
March 15–17 in Höfen

Kunsangar South

Santi Maha Sangha Base exam and First Level Training

It should be recalled that July 27–August 1 there will be the Santi Maha Sangha Base exam and from August 2 to 9 Chögyal Namkhai Norbu will conduct the SMS First Level Training at Kunsangar South.

Only those who have passed the SMS Base Exam Take can take part in the SMS First Level training.

If you intend to take the exam, information on filling out your application form and the exam procedure is on the Kunsangar South website.

<http://kunsangar.org/en/sms/>

The candidate must complete an official form, including the admission request and the karma-yoga accounting form 1–2 months before the exam date. Completed forms should be sent by the candidate to their local Gakyil.

All the best,
KS Gakyil

New Zealand

Refresher Course of the Vajra Dance of the Song of the Vajra and Khalong Dorjeikar: Vajra Dance of the 12 A closed course

March 29th–April 1st – Auckland

For those who have done at least one complete course of the VD of the Song of the Vajra.

This course will be focused on the updated changes, arm movements and timing of this VD. There will be also instructions and practice of the Vajra Dance of the 12 A – Khalong Dorjeikar.

Mandarava, practice

with Sasha Pubants
March 17–27 in Höfen
Registration:
Heike Engerer, 0049 160-99 02 85 35,
heike.engerer@dzogchen.de
Accommodation:
Hans-Joachim Vogel, 0049 9166-564

Yantra Yoga, course for advanced

with Saadet Arslan
March 29–April 1 in Dargyaling, Cologne
Registration: dargyaeling@dzogchen.de

Ukraine, Kiev >>Tobgyalling

Khyentse Yeshe Evolution Workshop on Vision

We are happy to announce that Yeshe Namkhai will hold the next Evolution workshop on Vision with the title “Beauty of the Invisible” in Kiev at the beginning of May 2013. Don’t miss this unique opportunity.

All the detailed information is available in booklets, in English, Italian and Russian, which can be downloaded from the internet. Contact Kiev Dzogchen Community kiev.dzogchen@gmail.com for the link.

Best regards
The Gakyil of Kiev Dzogchen Community Tobgyalling

Vajra Dance

with Karin Heinemann
April 29–May 9, Höfen
Registration:
Rico Aurich, 0049 177-159 36 03
rico.aurich@dzogchen.de
Accommodation:
Hans-Joachim Vogel, 0049 9166-564

Mandarava, Tsalung, Sogthig, Kumbhaka, Yantra Yoga

with Nina Robinson and Marc van Westreenen
May 20–June 2 in Dargyaling, Cologne
Registration: dargyaeling@dzogchen.de

Kunsangar North

Dzogchen weekend

March 29–31 combined retreat on practice of Vajra Dance and Yantra Yoga with instructors Mira Mironova, Yana Sokolova, Tatyana Pronicheva, Olga Nimachuk and Maria Stepanik

Retreat on Santi Maha Sangha and Yantra Yoga

May 1–5
“The knowledge of emptiness in Sutra, Tantra, Dzogchen and Yantra Yoga” with Igor Berkhin and Victor Krachkovsky

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu Dzogchen Retreat

June 27–July 5

Retreat on Gomadevi practice

with Enzo Terzano
September 1–10

Retreat on Chod practice

with Tsultrim Allione
October 17–18

Tsegyalgar East

Upcoming Retreats with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu in North America

Mexico City, Mexico: April 25–28
Baja, Mexico: May 8–12
Los Angeles, CA: May 17–19
New Mexico: May 22
Pagosa Springs, CO: May 24–26
New York, NY: May 31–June 2
Conway, MA: June 7–12
Conway, MA: June 14–21, Level Two Training

For more information go to www.tsegyalgar.org

Tsegyalgar West

Course in the Vajra Dance of the Six Spaces of Samantabhadra

with authorized Vajra Dance instructor Carisa O’Kelly
March 22–24th, 2013

Studio 2 @ Zoomtopia
810 SE Belmont
Portland, Oregon
Registration is now open.

Tashigar Sur

Retreat with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

March 22–28, 2013

Cost:
US\$250.
Membership discounts for retreat:
Welcome Members (those who are taking a retreat for the first time): 50% discount
Reduced Members: 50% discount
Ordinary Members:
From Tashigar: 30% discount
From other Gar: 20% discount
Sustaining Members:

From Tashigar Sur: 80% discount
From other Gar: 40% discount
Meritorious Members: Free

Dance Competition Tashigar/ Kunsangar

March 30

Exams on the Base of the SMS

March 29, 30 and 31

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu Training of the First Level of the SMS

April 1–8
For those people who passed the exam on the Base of the SMS.
Cost: US250
No membership discounts.
People who already did the SMS Training on the First Level have 50% discount

Yantra Yoga Teacher’s Training on the First Level

with Fabio Andrico.
April 9–15
For those who have a good knowledge of the first level of Yantra Yoga and

want to become instructors or deepen their practice
Cost US 280. No discounts.
For more information: secretaria@tashigarsur.com

Alienation and Communication

Elio Guarisco

The Dharmakaya nature is that of being alone with oneself, a dimension that is open only to one's eyes, and is not seen by others. It is the domain of subjective experience, and whatever is done in this domain is for oneself and not for others, for this reason in Buddhology, the Dharmakaya is explained as the fulfillment of one's own aim. In the creation phase of Tantric Buddhism this is represented by the male and female deity melting and remaining in a sphere of seminal potential, until four goddesses, Mamaki, etc., symbols of the four measureless thoughts, urge them to rise in a dimension of form.

In accordance to their Dharma-kaya nature, most spiritual practitioners try to learn different techniques of spiritual development from their master. And this is perfectly legitimate, for most people work in a framework in which the goal is envisioned as an objective to be realized gradually in some distant future. For this techniques are indispensable.

Theoretically they know that, as the Buddha said, a rafter is useful for as long you have not crossed a river, once the other shore has been reached it would be meaningless to carry the rafter with oneself. Likewise, although they know that technique in themselves are just means of discovery and not the aim, for most practitioners learning and becoming proficient in the techniques seems to have become the goal of their spiritual endeavors. Having reached proficiency in the techniques they only acquire a status in front of others, and when there they cling to that status, and spiritual stagnation sets in. This means that their Dharmakaya nature is disjointed from their Sambogakaya and Nirmanakaya nature.

This is what happens at the individual level, but this reflects also in the spiritual group or organization the individual belongs to. How? These groups and organizations although may grow and expand, their growth is measured in terms of the numbers of followers, buildings and places they have around the world, not in terms of the evolution of the individual. When these achievements are exalted within the group as being really important and fundamental for the existence of their spiritual message, this brings great sadness to the one who looks with eyes and the understanding that evolution is mainly that which transpires from living individuals, not from lifeless buildings, temples, and reliquaries. These can be washed away in a moment by an earthquake, by a revolution, by a sudden political and social change. But individual evolution remains despite outer changes, and can even expand under constrictive conditions.



This understanding is symbolized by the original Karmapas of Tibet, who did not have a fixed residence and monastery, but moved around in tents, and with them entire populations of followers, like birds following migratory cycles. This does not mean that buildings and all that is material is necessary negative for a spiritual group. It is useful in as much it can the support of the spiritual evolution of the individuals. Material things, as we know from the principles of Chöd practice, become demons only when we grasp to them as ultimately real.

As they grow in that way, most spiritual groups remain involuted and quite isolated from society. They become alienated. In fact, to the individuals belonging to the group or organization, what happens within their group is of paramount importance. It seems to be much more important than what happens in the 'outer and bigger world' or universe. The problems of the group, such as the financial situation, etc., are much more critical to them than the world economic crisis, or the problems the environment is facing at a global level, etc. In the extreme cases we know that these developments can lead to a confrontation between the group and the society, who is sometime perceived as a threat to the very existence and beliefs of the group. As this confrontation turns bitter the group can even resort to violence, as it has happened with various spiritual groups in the past. Also the acolytes, as society is perceived as aggressive to them, may want to plan out a speedy exit from the world through mass suicide with the promise of a live in paradise. This also has happened, not only once.

Spiritual groups gradually develop a peculiar language of their own, which means a lot to the 'inner' people, but that is difficult to understand, and at times means nothing to others. In the worst case, such peculiar language becomes an object of scorn of 'normal' people. Language becomes simplified into slogans, and what the spiritual teacher says, which make sense from the perspective of his role, and his charisma become just a parroting words when repeated by the acolytes.

The development of a peculiar language is paralleled by closeness of the spiritual group, that almost become a sect; a sect quite closed and unwelcoming of others. In fact, others find it difficult

to penetrate into the layers of individuals with different positions and powers in which the group has structured itself. Closeness, suspicion, paranoia, protectionism, exclusivity, and power allotting become the characteristic traits of the group or organization. And the strangest thing, is that this situation can happen, also when the spiritual leader has an opposite attitude, that is open, has no suspicions, is not protective, not exclusive, and not power seeking.

As long as the group and the organization have grown onto itself, there is no problem, because the circle of the acolytes, knows that peculiar language and also the peculiar behaviors of the people within their group. The problems start when the individuals of the group or organization growing in maturity want to communicate with the 'outer world' in which is has grown but from which is somewhat alienated.

But why does one need to communicate with others beyond the obvious need of survival? Because in addition to the Dharmakaya nature, we have the Sambogakaya and Nirmanakaya natures, and these are the dimensions of being with others, of what is shared with others, of what is seen and perceived in common with others. Needless to say that communication is the domain of the Sambogakaya and the Nirmanakaya dimensions, for in the Dharmakaya nature there is no actual communication whatsoever. For this reason in Buddhology, the form dimension of enlightenment, which comprises the Sambogakaya and the Nirmanakaya, are said to be the dimension of the fulfillment of the aim of others.

Most spiritual practitioners do not reach the maturity of seeing that being with others is part and is important to their spiritual development and growth, for they are caught up in the ego-oriented pursuit of knowledge and realization. They are thinking in Mahayana terms that just like to help the subjects you must become a king, one must first become enlightened to in order to interrelate with others. The most they can think of is that others can be useful to their ego-centered spiritual development. Thus they become stuck in their Dharmakaya nature, fixed on themselves. It is only when maturity develops that one realizes, that the authentic state is the intersecting dynamic of being alone and being with others. These two have an equal importance. You are not anymore in the fantasy that may envelop you when you are alone with yourself. Others espouse your fantasy in a way you can recognize and get rid of them. Thus we can say that the 'others' are one's other half.

Paralleling the growth of the individual, when the group or organization, grown in maturity, needs to integrate with the external environment, with society, with the world, with others. Maturity means that some knowledge has developed along with the awareness that one can actually

give something to others, something that others don't have and they need. We can consider that being with others in this way is a super boost to our authentic way of being.

There is no really complete spiritual practice if there is no integration with the external environment and its people. At this point communication becomes the most important thing.

So how then communication has to take place? Communication starts to take place when the awareness that we are living with others, and others include everyone in the world, not just our fellow practitioners in our group. This is exemplified by the Tantric commitment in which each sentient being is one's own indestructible sibling, even though he or she may be distant. But in order to communicate one needs to drop the peculiar language used to communicate within one's group. For example, a group of animals use language to communicate with the same group, but are unable to communicate with another group of animals, or only at a basic level. This incapacity to communicate brings isolation, fear, and aggression. So to communicate one must use a language that is more universal than the one of one's group. And for that one must learn the language of others, and give up the attachment for one's own peculiar language and behavior.

Of course communication can occur at different levels. Real knowledge can be communicated beyond language, just like in the mind transmission. The mind transmission is the first transmission that occurs, and does not need anyone who pronounces something, or anyone who listens. This is a communication from within the *dang* energy.

But real knowledge, we are not talking of information, can be

communicated with any kind of language or with coined language as the historical Buddha Shakyamuni some times did by choosing words and attributing them a particular meaning. However, for this communication one must be in a total state of knowledge, and this state has a kind of naturally manifesting charisma. It is with this charisma that several outstanding Tibetan teachers of old could travel and teach in the West and have a great following. Their charisma was somewhat more important than what they were saying. The charisma broke through cultural barriers and conceptual limitations.


But a spiritual group or organization cannot communicate at the primary level of internal and external creative energy, only single individuals can. Other communication occurs at the internal and external creative energy levels. In particular the level of external creative energy implies a split into subject and object, into oneself and others.

Adopting a language that is more open and lay can be challenging because one may have the impression of watering down the spiritual message. Certainly something will be lost, for quantity reduces quality, this is a simple truth that anyone who has worked in a kitchen knows: food for few people is tastier and for many people is more difficult to make tasty. Or as a Tibetan proverb say: smaller is the fireplace, warmer is the fire. But we are always losing something anyway. And what we lose may not be fundamental. Maybe it is our attitude that keeps us anchored to certainties and what we know, which make us afraid of losing something.

Elio Guarisco is a long time student of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu and an authorized 2nd Level Santi Maha Sangha instructor. ©

b o d h i
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How I Met Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

Libor Maly

I had studied some sutra teachings in my life but I had never met any other teacher before Rinpoche and never followed any other teacher. The most important sutra for me that I read was called Lankavatara Sutra and after reading it many, many times over many days, I realized that I do not exist, I am just empty. This was life changing for me. This happened in 1998; I was around 30 years old.

At that time in the Czech Republic there was a husband and wife who were giving esoteric teachings and they had a TV program, and they were teaching a mixture of Hinduism and Buddhism, some strange things, and I attended a few of their public teachings, and I was not so convinced but I bought a book about the life of a Hindu mystic called Ramana Maharshi. Ramana Maharshi was very special. I was just amazed by him. When he was 15 years old he left his parents house and moved to the south of India and he found the place on the Arunachala hill. I was amazed by his story as he went to this place and sat there his whole life and they basically built the temple around him. That is the short story. So I went on the internet and found a very wonderful photo of him and put it on the desktop of my computer. I had the picture there for around 2 or 3 years.

At the beginning he was just an interesting guy. Then I got a connection with him, and I started to ask the picture questions. He gave replies through the photo and if the decision was ok he smiled and agreed and if not, he said no by moving his head. Basically this was a bitmap on the desktop but I had this strong feeling. At the end he started to talk with me and in the way that I would ask him a question in my mind and the answers would appear in my mind. He was really helping me to understand many things. I was also studying Taoism at this time.

In February 2002, Ramana Maharshi indicated that I must find a living master and he could not help me anymore and the communication stopped and he was just a bitmap on the desktop. So I thought what should I do? I went to several meditation centers in Prague and I would tell them I was looking for a master and they would say oh yes sure we have this and that master so which one do you like? I said I have no idea I am just looking for my master...and they said ok but you have to know how to find your master and I said ok and they showed me books and photos, etc. So I ended up with five different

booklets with five different people. And then I did not know how to make a decision. It was not like I could go to the center of the town with a sign saying, "I am looking for a spiritual master, please call number such and such."

Then a sentence came to me, "There is no way to find a master, this is impossible, the master will find the student." Then I gave up looking and worrying and I said ok, the only thing to do is to wait and be open and not have doubt he will find me. That was March 2002. Then this chain of coincidences starting happening and it was amazing really. With my wife we were just walking in a part of Prague where I have never been in my life, before or since, and we were just walking down the road and there was a restaurant. So we decided to have dinner there. That was the first and last time I was ever in that restaurant. In the lobby of the restaurant there was a table with newspapers and flyers and there was this spiritual magazine that I would buy once a year. So I bought the magazine. Then we went home and I opened the bag and saw the magazine and put it on the table. After three weeks I had nothing to do at home so I read the magazine. There was nothing very extraordinary. Then at the last page there were three book reviews. The first and second book books were not interesting but the third was called Dzogchen and I said, wow, a strange name. So I read the review and I was quite proud because I thought I knew about all the schools of Tibetan Buddhism and then there was something called Dzogchen that I had never heard about, and I thought it is not possible because I am a studied one so I should know about it. So that stayed in my mind as something strange.

Then after months I went to an esoteric bookshop and right in front of me was the book on Dzogchen, the same book I had

read about in the magazine. So I said well that is the book, and I bought it. I opened the cover, put the book on the table and after some days I started to read the book and I understood nothing. But inside the book was small paper insert and there was the information that said Chögyal Namkhai Norbu is coming to Prague. For more information go to www.dzogchen.cz If you are interested to attend fill out this form. So I remember no thoughts, nothing, I went to my computer and filled out the form. I just did it without thinking. In a few days an envelope came to my home with information, and I was still reading the book and not understanding anything, and there was the green paper inside that we used to use in Czech Republic at that time for paying for things, so I went to the post office with the paper and paid 5000 crowns which was quite a lot of money for me at that time, and they stamped it and it meant that I paid.

So I had the small green paper with the stamp on it and I was waiting for the time of the retreat which I think was the end of August or beginning of September. When Rinpoche came there was a huge flooding in Prague, the biggest flood in thousands of years, and there were meters water everywhere. The subways were closed because they were full of water...It was not even possible to cross the river because of flooding or fear of structural damage to the

bridges, etc., it was not easy to get around and that was the moment Rinpoche arrived in Prague. I thought maybe he brought some cleaning to the town. So I went to the place of the retreat, which was in the garden of the Prague castle, a beautiful place, the best place you could have in Prague.

I was waiting in the queue in front of the doors, and up until this time had been reading many Buddhist books, so I remember thinking while looking at all the people walking around, "Do you know, people, that we do not exist?" Then I get inside and show my small paper, and I enter through the first hall before the main hall, and there were a lot of books and thankas. There was some thankas of Guru Draghpur, Simhamukha and Ekajati, and I thought, "Where am I? This is some strange sect. What do these pictures mean? This is so negative. Maybe I will leave." Then I opened the thun book and I thought these are just random letters generated by a computer. Then I thought, well I will stay and listen, I already paid all this money, and see what he has to say. What message he has. So I enter the main hall. I sat down. Rinpoche was not well at all. Rinpoche decided to give transmission the first day and the people said that was a very good thing and I should just follow what was on the paper and be present and open and not to worry. So I tried to do that. Then the transmission was over. Then he started the lungs for all the texts.

It was when he started to read the lungs that something unbelievable happened for me. I was sitting on the floor and everything around me changed, like a mirage, so that happened all around me, and everything was moving like hot air, and I was unable to move. Then everything was over, Rinpoche left and I was just sitting on the floor. So they said ok it is over, time to go home, see you tomorrow, so I left the main room and went to the room where the pictures were that previously disturbed me, now it seemed I knew them. I stood there and opened the thun book again, and this time it all seemed so familiar. I was totally shocked. Since that time I have been in the Community. That was the first and last time Rinpoche came to Prague until now. So the Master came to me. ©

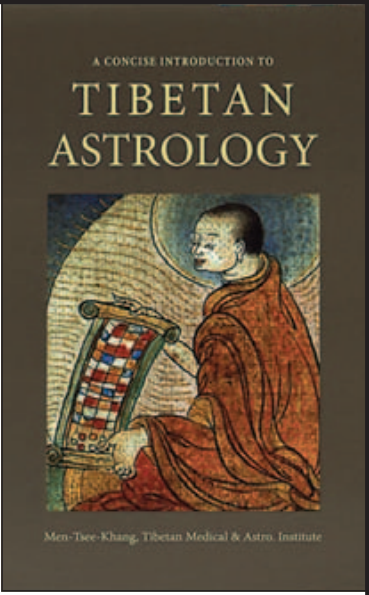


Tibetan Astrology

In this age of rapid globalization, Tibet's ancient and valuable culture – its language, arts, medicine, and astrology – is facing extinction. The publication of *A Concise Introduction to Tibetan Astrology* from Men-Tsee-Khang in Dharamshala is an important step in helping to preserve this rich and valued heritage, which offers tremendous benefit for all humanity. This comprehensive edition, the first to be published in English since 1995, insures that the treasure of Tibetan Astrology can be preserved and disseminated in the world. It is a great resource for any scholar of Tibetan Astrology and culture as well as a valuable introduction to those interested in Tibetan heritage.

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

The book is available from the Men-Tsee-Khang Tibetan Medical & Astro. Institute exports branch www.tibetan-medicine.org



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