

THE MIRROR

Newspaper of the International Dzogchen Community

No. 98
May, June 2009

Upcoming Retreats with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu



Photo: G. Horner

2009–2010

Italy
August 10–16
Dzogchen Medjung,
The Marvelous Retreat

Oct. 2–10
Bepai Gumchung, The Hidden
Collection of Buddhagupta Retreat

Oct. 23–30
Shitro Khorde Rangdrol Retreat

Spain
Nov. 13–17
Dzogchen Teaching Retreat

Venezuela
Dec. 4–11
Dzogchen Longsal Longde Teaching Retreat

Dec. 26–January 3
Mandarava Tsedrub Chülden Retreat

January 16–30
The Drubchen of Mandarava and Vajapani

Argentina
Tashigar Sur
February 12
Inauguration of Tashi Sur's Gompa

February 14
Tibetan Losar festival with a Mandarava
practice

February 16
Sang and Serkyem Offerings

February 12–24
Dzogchen teaching and practice retreat

Venezuela
March 8–12
Tashigar Norte retreat

March 19–25
Teachers' trainings: SMS base, 1st Levels;
Vajra Dance, Yantra Yoga 1st and 2nd levels

Trinidad
April 23–25
Weekend teaching

Venezuela
Tashigar Norte
April 30–May 2
SMS Base Level Exam
May 3–9
SMS 1st Level training

>> continued on page 26



Sang offering at Merigar East.

Photo: G. Ladra

The sunflowers are now budding

The retreat at Merigar East with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu
June 12–21

Harri Jäälinoja

Greetings from Merigar East! For the third year now, our Master Chögyal Namkhai Norbu is giving Dzogchen teachings here near the village of 23 August. And for the second year now, the normal teaching retreat, this time focusing on the essence of the teachings of Garab Dorje, is followed by Santi Maha Sangha Base Level exams and the First Level training. In addition to Rinpoche's teachings we have a kumbhaka course by Fabio Andrico and teachings on the Kunjed Gyalpo by Yeshi Namkhai, which means that altogether we have one month of very intensive activity.

To some, coming to Romania may sound like an exotic East European adventure, but when you make the trip once, you notice it is not so different than coming to the West

End of Merigar. In fact, getting here may be even easier. Most likely, you first fly to Bucharest and take a taxi downtown. When you tell the driver you want to get on a bus to Mangalia (a holiday resort near 23 August), he will drive you to a bus depot near the Gare de Nord railway station. Then you simply enter the bus to Mangalia (which seem to go very often, I never had to wait for more than 15 minutes), and after some 4 or 5 hours in a comfortable air-conditioned bus with video entertainment you arrive! Once you know your way around, you may want to save the taxi fare (which depends on how stupid a tourist you are), and take bus 790 instead, that costs only 1 euro. Or if you arrive in a group, you may notice it is actually a feasible idea to take the taxi all the way to the Black Sea. Italians are the most fortunate ones, they can

just fly with Ryanair from Pisa or Bologna directly to Constanta, only about an hour away from 23 August.

The easiest accommodation in Merigar East is the Romanian "cazare" system, which means that you come to stay with a local family in their house. This is used by the native tourists as well. On the roadsides near tourist areas there are people, usually elderly ladies, dangling keys as a sign that they have rooms for rent. In the internet age, we don't need to make the daring move of making direct contact with the key person. Instead, the Merigar East office can help you arrange the accommodation beforehand. And when you've done it once, it just gets easier: you can just call your hosts and tell them you are coming again (ok, for this to work you maybe

>> continued on page 8

Teaching



Chögyal Namkhai
Norbu
The Origins of the
Dzogchen Teaching

» Page 2

Teaching



Yeshi Silvano
Namkhai
The Seven Line
Prayer

» Page 3

News



Retreats in
Moscow and
Germany

» Pages 14–15



The Origins of the Dzogchen Teaching

An excerpt from a Teaching at Merigar East, Romania, June 12th 2009

I want to explain to you why Dzogchen teaching is considered to be Buddhist teaching. This is something useful that you should know.

You see, in the Buddhist teaching, it is always considered that Buddha Shakyamuni taught it. If we check in the teachings that Buddha Shakyamuni actually taught to see if there is Dzogchen teaching or not, we will see that no type of Dzogchen teaching exists. So how should we consider Dzogchen teaching?

For example, in the sutra style of teaching, some traditions of Hinayana are very convinced that their way is the only teaching of Buddha Shakyamuni and they also do not accept Mahayana teaching. After Buddha manifested Parinirvana, most Mahayana teachings were not widespread in that period. Most Mahayana teachings were also not received by human beings. Of course, there were some human beings but mostly they were received by the class of Devas and these types of beings who invited all the Mahayana teachings into their dimensions. Most of the teachings that were widespread were Hinayana. Especially when Buddha manifested Parinirvana or death, the Hinayana tradition divided into 18 different schools each of which debated and only believed what they understood to be the real teaching of Buddha. They did not agree and argued, so teaching developed that way. There was no possibility to develop Mahayana teaching and even though there were Mahayana teachings somewhere, they were negated and it was said that they were not really Buddha's teaching. For that reason they did not accept Mahayana.

But then after more or less 300 years, there was a famous Buddhist teacher called Nagarjuna as well as many other scholars and important teachers who were not only scholars but also realized beings with a high level of realization. Many of them invited Mahayana teachings from different dimensions into the human condition and finally Mahayana teachings started to become really widespread.

Of course, people who are very much convinced about sutra do not accept tantra or Vajrayana. They say that Vajrayana is not the true teaching of Buddha. But when you learn Vajrayana, and in particular Dzogchen teaching, then there are explanations about how we should consider the teachings of Buddha.

Teachings of Buddha Shakyamuni

There are different ways of considering the teachings of Buddha. For example, in Tibet today we have all the original teachings of Buddha translated from Sanskrit etc., and they are contained in 108 volumes. All of these are considered to be the teachings of Buddha Shakyamuni, not just one or two volumes. So how can we consider these?

We are Vajrayana practitioners and we approach this in the way that Vajrayana is presented. First we consider 'zhalne sungpai ka (zhal nas gsungs pa'i bka')' that means the teaching of Buddha Shakyamuni, how Buddha taught by mouth, which means oral teaching. This is sutra, Hinayana and Mahayana. Buddha taught both of these orally. Buddha also taught some of the Mahayana teachings in the dimension of the Devas. Not all Mahayana teachings were taught in the human condition but were introduced into the human condition later. In any case, these kinds of teachings called the oral teachings of Buddha Shakyamuni are related to his physical body. However, this is not the only type of teaching, but in the Hinayana, they only know this type and do not accept others.

Another type of teaching is 'jesu nangwai ka (rjes su gnang ba'i bka')' which means that Buddha gave permission. This also means giving the teaching of Buddha. 'Jesu (rjes su)' means that Buddha was not teaching orally but asked one of his good students to explain something. Or someone asked a question and another person replied after having received permission from Buddha who was simply in a state of meditation, not giving that teaching. But later that came to be known as a teaching of Buddha Shakyamuni. We have many teachings like this.

Perhaps you have seen the film called 'The Little Buddha' in which there is a lama chanting a sutra saying 'There are no eyes, there is no nose, there are no ears' and so on. He is chanting a very important Mahayana sutra called the 'Prajnaparamita Hridaya' which means the essence of the Paramita. This sutra exists in Japanese Buddhism, in Tibetan Buddhism and so on, and it is chanted in all Mahayana and Vajrayana traditions. Everybody chants this and gives great importance to it because it is considered to be the words of Buddha. In the real sense there is not a single word in it that Buddha explained orally. Buddha only gave permission. There was Shariputra – in thankas and paintings you can see two figures standing with the Buddha sitting in the centre, the standing figure on the right is Shariputra who was one of his very important students – and then you know the Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara. And Shariputra asked a question to Avalokitesvara who replied with these words. When we say 'There are no eyes, there is no nose, there are no ears' and so on, these are the words of Avalokitesvara but they have now become the words of Buddha Shakyamuni because he gave his permission. This is not the only sutra like this, there are many kinds in the Mahayana.

Then another type of teaching is called 'chingilab kyi ka (byin gyis brlabs kyi bka')' which means that Buddha empowered it, he did not go and explain it to people or in the

countryside. Buddha was omniscient and sometimes he knew that there were some problems and for this reason he empowered things like a tree, like a stupa, like a rock, from which the sounds of the teaching came out. People could hear and could understand and knew what they should do to overcome these problems, for example. One of these very important Mahayana sutras is called 'Ngawo Che Chenpoi leu Do (nga bo che chen po'i le'u'i mdo)' which means the sutra of the Devas' Drum. In the dimension of the Devas there was a very big drum, but even though nobody was sounding this drum, a teaching came out from it which is called a sutra and is very long, not just a few words. This is also considered to be the words of Buddha Shakyamuni. So there are also these kinds of teachings of Buddha.

Another is called 'lung du tenpai ka (lung du bstan pa'i bka')' which means that the Dzogchen Teacher Garab Dorje gave Dzogchen teachings. Dzogchen teaching goes beyond cause and effect, but what Buddha taught is karma, cause and effect, and they are different. At the time of the Buddha, the Buddha understood that it was most important to teach cause and effect because most people couldn't understand what going beyond cause and effect meant. So then Buddha said that one day there would be a teacher just like him who would give teaching going beyond cause and effect. That is called 'lung du tenpai ka (lung du bstan pa'i bka')' which means predicting about the Buddha to come in the future.

Garab Dorje

Garab Dorje was the first to teach Dzogchen teaching in our dimension in our epoch and he was born and taught at more or less the same period as Nagarjuna, which means around 300 years after Buddha manifested death. And so that teaching of Dzogchen developed and then everybody, particularly scholars of the Buddhist tradition, immediately understood that Garab Dorje was a manifestation of Buddha Shakyamuni and that Dzogchen teaching was the most important teaching. Why is it the most important? When you talk about cause and effect, this is the relative condition and ordinary people do not have much knowledge or understanding or capacity to go beyond that. Of course if people know how to go beyond that, it means they have a high capacity so for that reason in that period there were many scholars who knew and taught that knowledge and understood that it was an essential teaching and needed high capacity.

When Garab Dorje was a small boy, he chanted one of the important Dzogchen texts called 'Dorje Sempa Namkha Che' which means the 'Total Space of Vajrasattva' and explains in a complete way how to go beyond cause and effect. When Garab Dorje chanted it as a small boy, many Buddhist scholars heard about this and were worried because he was chanting a teaching going beyond cause and effect. They thought that cause and effect was the essence of Buddha Shakyamuni's teaching. That was in Oddiyana and they sent messages to India – in that period there was the very famous Nalanda University in India where there were many scholars. They discussed the situation and considered that it could be dangerous and should be eliminated which meant that some scholars would go to Oddiyana and have discussions and then eliminate the problem. They chose five or six pandits who were very erudite, one of the most famous at that university was called Manjushrimitra. It was he who led the group and they went to Oddiyana.

When they arrived, Manjushrimitra immediately started to debate with Garab Dorje. He began to ask him some questions to which Garab Dorje only replied with a few words. And Manjushrimitra woke up. He understood that this was really the essence of the teaching of Buddha Shakyamuni. Then he apologised to Garab Dorje saying that he had done a very negative action and that he wanted to follow his teaching. And he asked Garab Dorje to accept him as his student. Of course, Garab Dorje accepted and Manjushrimitra became one of the first and most important of his students. Then for many years Garab Dorje taught those teachings.

Oddiyana – the source of the Dzogchen teachings

The place where Garab Dorje taught and which was the origin of all the Dzogchen teachings and the Vajrayana teachings was called Oddiyana. It was a very famous country for the Vajrayana teaching and everyone considered it to be a very sacred place. Later on, Westerners and scholars did a lot of research to discover the location of Shambala and of Oddiyana etc. and they found that Oddiyana was in present day Pakistan and that the most important

>> continued on the following page

Yeshi Silvano Namkhai

Excerpt from a teaching on The Seven Line Prayer of Guru Padmasambhava

Moscow May 17, 2009

Regarding the Seven Line Prayer of Guru Padmasambhava, which is a very famous text, you know very well that on the 10th day of the Tibetan calendar, the day that Guru Padmasambhava did many important things, he promised to be visible in front of those who have devotion. In this case, we need to better understand how to pray. We understood how we relate to the three paths of liberation as far as how we understand our reality. So we understand the idea of existence is very important for us.

Also the idea of ownership is very important. Why do we need to give a gift to our girlfriend? Because we want to move from girlfriend to ‘my’ girlfriend because when it is ‘my’ girlfriend it feels different. But to do this it is not enough to enter into the state of ownership. We have an illusion that we have to make an action. Like we buy water, we have to give ring. Then we apply ownership. Then we don’t say, “I met a girl”, we say, “I have a girlfriend”. It means you are applying the verb to have, ownership. This is our attitude. First we are, then we have, and everything is connected at this level.

Then what does praying mean? It means we want to get something. But praying is not asking for something, because what we really need is to discover our real condition. So we need someone to help open this understanding. Where is Guru Padmasambhava? He promised to be there on this special day, but in what form? His form is his real nature, which is the rainbow body. Unfortunately we cannot see it like this, we don’t have this capacity. How does this work? It works through the power of transmission because we have a teacher. Then we discover that as we need water, we need a teacher. We don’t need a fancy

teacher; we just need a teacher, like we drink any water when we are thirsty. We don’t need ‘our’ teacher. We don’t apply being, having, owning and so on.

If the teacher is introducing the mirror symbolically, it means we can’t have any knowledge without this interaction. Whatever we learn is double. That is why it is called dualistic vision. It is always a reflection. Whatever we perceive is just like a mirror, we are in this illusion and we never know which one is the mirror and which one is the object in front. You see this immediately in your language. We have this attitude of first discovering existence, then not losing this discovery, because when we say we have, then we own. Then we are afraid to lose what we own. Then we have projection. At this point we have, we can do something, without owning. We don’t have to do anything. If we need to own it means we are working with our limited vision.

Our main limitation is that one day we will die. And so if we are afraid of losing something, we are afraid of the past. The characteristic of the past is being afraid of losing something. Projection is the future, like desire. Just today Rinpoche explained attachment and desire, which is like past and future. But the key point in Dzogchen is the present. I have to be happy with my girlfriend now. I can’t always talk about how happy I was, or how I can’t be happy now because of something that will arrive in the future. Since it is something I perceive, if it is something I perceive now, then I am happy. I will die alone. If I discover a little bit, I can discover that I am feeling happy, because I have this potentiality of karmic vision.

Because I am in this projection of dualistic vision like a mirror, then I think I am happy because of



my girlfriend or a brand of something. But I am feeling happy. It is my capacity, my potentiality of feeling happy. If I understand the nature of being happy, then I can be happy in any circumstance. So when we say instant presence, it is connected with this understanding: entering into the nature of things. It’s very difficult to enter directly into something connected with nature of mind because we have a tendency to create fantasy. It is better to discover through experience and then when there is something in front of you, and you have a clear understanding, then it can be a real experience. Then you ask yourself, for example, do I need this, is this something real or is its nature emptiness, and if it is emptiness why give it so much importance. When I discover this, this tension liberates. For example when we say we are praying, we understand that it cannot be about being or having. Also we can discover it is not about action, because doing something means working with our limitations and our limitations are time and space.

For example, our limitation manifests very simply. I always give this example. If I ask about flying, everyone has his/her own idea. Then I say, think about the nature of flying. Then you understand what the nature of flying is. Observe your thoughts. Some people think about angels, like someone has wings and starts to move like angels. Maybe they like angels, so they have this idea. Someone thinks flying like poetry, flying and being in space and so on. Some others have more science fiction style of going into space in a starship and so on. But in the real sense I never said you should be limited by your vision. But if I say focus on the nature of flying, the nature of flying is moving and if we are limited by time and space it means we are in one place and then in a few seconds in another place. We are moving in the air in this way. But if I want to go into the nature of flying, then I am like God because I can be omnipresent. So when I am in the

nature of flying, there is no need to fly. Because in the Dzogchen teaching, we go into the nature and when nature is revealed and we discover our real condition, there is no action. There is no need of action. When there is no need, and I think about flying, I am like God. But why don’t I think about God? I don’t think about God because I am limited. I think that my energy and my capacity are limited by my physical body. Then someone starts to think they will fall down. We fly a little and then the one with more stress thinks about falling down. Instead if I have this understanding that the nature of flying is like God and I am everywhere, I don’t fall down.

There are two limitations of time and space. Time means going beyond death. Space means being everywhere. When we mix these two things it is like God. This is a limitation of my human vision. If I am expanding this understanding and awareness there is a lot more. Not only humans exist. Even animals have different perceptions, also humans among themselves have different perceptions, and children have different perceptions from adults. So you can imagine that all these things are connected but our vision; a vision that is very limited and immediately we think about flying in an ordinary way. When someone is asking the difference between perceiving an object and entering the nature of an object, then always I give this example. The mind is same. It is when you focus on the object of mind that you get distracted. The object of mind is all this thought that creates all these emotions. But the nature of mind is totally different.

We need experience to discover and then to connect to the correct understanding to make this stable. If we are dealing with discovering our real nature, then we can have devotion and pray. But what are we are praying in this seven line prayer to Guru Padmasambhava? We pray that we do not have this limitation; that we can be confident in ourselves. That we don’t create limitations

like when we think about flying that we can’t think like God. Having devotion for a statue is very simple. But having devotion for the teacher is totally different, because we should always remember we have three dimensions – of body, voice and mind. But for example, if Guru Padmasambhava is manifesting in his real nature, we cannot see it because it is pure manifestation and only connected with the need of manifesting, nothing else. It doesn’t go into this dualistic relation where there is reflection. We cannot recognize it. Then there is the physical level, which is the human dimension. If we talk about Nirmanakaya, we have this form. But that can be only a teacher. Because how do you communicate with a statue? You cannot. If you try to make a connection with wisdom through the statue, it is very difficult. Or if you try to connect with something totally abstract. Then you try to do it with teacher. The teacher represents all this wisdom at this moment and what we are praying for at this point. We pray that we have the opportunity to discover our real condition.

This experience is not something we receive. First we need to discover that we have primordial wisdom. This we can discover by observing our lives and seeing that we are limited. The more we discover we are limited, the easier it is to have a relation with teacher. We are all similar. At the end there is this symbol of crystal. The crystal means we have the same essence. According to our dimension and circumstance it can change. But it is just presented differently. The essence is the same. We can be born in a situation where the brand of water is very difficult to overcome. And then discovering that the brand is not important can take also a whole life. But the moment we arrive in front of the teacher means we have this capacity. Praying means we want to confirm this. Then it will take the time it takes, but at least we try to be confident. If we are not confident in our real nature then it is very difficult to realize something.

Then we discover that everything in our reality and what we perceive is relative. If we can be conditioned by a brand of water you can imagine how our life is totally conditioned. But remember when you close your eyes and observe all, someone is observing these thoughts. If you don’t go after what is around you and you stay in your situation as it is, then there is presence. This presence is forever. That’s why for example in Tibetan Buddhism we don’t talk about being alive and being dead. In the real sense there is not even this idea. There is no problem of existence, there is no problem of ownership; existence and ownership are connected with action. If we are in our presence then everything is fine. So this ends today. ©

Transcribed and edited by N. Zeitz

>> continued from previous page
area of Oddiyana called Dumatala, (dhu ma tha la), where Garab Dorje was born and from which originated all the sources of the teaching, was recognized as the Swat Valley. Today there are the Taliban there. So this is Oddiyana. And they also discovered that Shambhala was in Afghanistan. It corresponds with research into the biographies and the histories of many teachers who traveled to Oddiyana and Shambhala and wrote down about their journeys.

But if Shambhala and Oddiyana are such sacred and important places, why have they fallen into this condition? It depends on circumstances. We live in circumstances and circumstances are impermanent. Today is not tomorrow. We don’t know how tomorrow will be. That is an example of how circumstances change, particularly in those places on the earth where energy is more concentrated, such as the energy of the five elements. Not all places are the same. There are some energy channels, some important points etc. and they become very important places spiritually, or even in a contrary way. So we can understand about this and shouldn’t be surprised about it. In any case, these are the origins of the Dzogchen teaching. ❁

Transcribed and edited by L. Granger



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

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

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

Reconstruction of Galingteng College

An update from Tibet

Andrea Dell’Angelo

Dear Friends,
I am writing from Tibet where I am carrying out a mission for monitoring ASIA’s projects. On June 9 I arrived in Chengdu, the capital of Sichuan, to meet the local staff of ASIA coming from Derge. Unfortunately, after the revolt in March 2008, we “foreigners” are no longer authorized to go into this county or into the whole territory of the Autonomous Prefecture of Ganze.

In Chengdu, Sonam Wangmo who is in charge of the Derge office, brought us some estimates from local carpenters based on the designs and specifications prepared by one of the most famous Tibetan architects who is an expert in religious buildings. The negotiations, which unfortunately had to be done by telephone, were rather long and complicated. At the same time, Khempo Tashi Choepel in Derge who is in charge of Galenteng College was following the work and the talks between the carpenters and ASIA.

In the end a contract was signed for the construction of two buildings.

The first is the building that was completely destroyed by the fire last February and will have 18 rooms to accommodate the students. Like the previous building, it will be built on two floors, using local seasoned wood and then painted in traditional local style.

The second building – also on two floors – will consist of a hall of about 150 square metres on the ground floor, and eight rooms – to be used as accommodation for masters who are invited to teach at the college – some rooms for retreats and a library on the upper floor.

The work will finish in December 2009. The total cost of the contract is 77,000 euro to which will be added the costs for the reconstruction of the old wing of the college which was partially destroyed, the purchase of all the furniture and the equipment for the college such as beds, tables, bookcases, and the costs of building a plumbing system.



After the fire.

bles, bookcases, and the costs of building a plumbing system.

Together with the Khempo we have also decided to include in the project some training for the monks on the security systems and fire prevention and to equip the building with all possible measures in order to be able to deal with this type of accident.

After signing the contracts we informed Khempo Tashi Choepel who communicated the news to the monks and the people of Galinteng. He was very moved and called us back to thank all the people who, up to today, have taken the trouble to support this important place linked

to the practice and Teaching of Dzogchen.

We express our most grateful thanks to all those who are helping so generously. ©

Xining, 18 June 2009,
Andrea Dell’Angelo

Raffle to support translation of Tibetan texts

One of the pillars of the tremendous work of the International Shang Shung Institute for the preservation of Tibetan culture is the translation of various Dzogchen texts written in Tibetan.

This translation work is a very delicate process. As each publication guarantees a precise and correct translation of the real meaning of the contents of the text, in general it takes more than three years to finish each translation and to publish it as a book. Each translation is revised about 20–30 times before it is sent to the publisher. In the last years many books of the “Ka-ter series” (for example “Birth, Life and Death”, Longchenpa’s Advice from the Heart”) or the “Complete works series” (all Longsal books) have already been published and at least two more books will be published in 2009.

All this work on translations not only requires great dedication towards the Teachings, but also an extremely long period of time and a huge amount of money.

All translations are ONLY financed by donations.



In 2009 we did not receive many funds and for that reason the International Shang Shung Institute is organizing a RAFFLE to support the translation of Dzogchen texts.

There are only 100 tickets and you can win 10 fantastic and fabulous prizes. You can win extraordinary statues, which you cannot find in any shop around the world. The prizes are:
1st prize: a statue of Samantabhadra Yab Yum. Seated, excellently formed, fully gold plated. 16 inches or 40.5 cm high.
2nd prize: a statue of Rigdzin Changchub Dorje, the master of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu. Seated, fully gold plated. Height: 22 cm or 8.7 inches, width: 16.5 cm or 6.4 inches.
3rd prize: a statue of Adzam Druppa, former incarnation of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu. Seated, fully gold plated. Height: 21.5

cm or 8.4 inches, width: 16.5 cm or 6.4 inches.

4th prize: a statue of Dorje Yudrönma, the Melong-Dakini riding on a snow-lion. Height: 31 cm or 12.3 inches, width: 28.6 cm or 11.2 inches.

5th prize: a statue of Machig Labdron. Standing, fully gold plated. Height: 12.7 inches or 32 cm, width: 7.7 inches or 20 cm.

6th prize: a statue of Vajrapani. Standing, fully gold plated. Height: 27 cm or 10.6 inches, width: 24 cm or 9.4 inches.

7th prize: a statue of Jigmed Lingpa, one of the most famous Dzogchen masters, Yogi and tertön. Completely gold plated. Height: 22 cm or 8.7 inches, width: 16.5 cm or 6.4 inches.

8th prize: a statue of Yutog Gonpa, known as the “father of Tibetan Medicine Tantras.” Fully gold plated. Height: 21.5 cm or 8.4 inches, width: 17 cm or 6.3 inches.

9th prize: Longsal Donation Package. Includes: the booklet “A Dream from the Display of the Moon in the Water.” Also included in this package are a round silver Longsal symbol pendant, and a golden Vajra with antique gold plating, 8.6 cm long.

10th prize: Santi Maha Sangha Donation Package. Includes: the book “The Precious Vase” by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, the



Changchub Dorje.



Adzam Druppa.

“The Three Paths of Liberation - The Essence of the Base of Santi Maha Sangha” DVD set: Vol. I–III, the Santi Maha Sangha Base Level MP3 by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, the “Santi Maha Sangha: Preliminary Practices of the Base” CD, a round silver Longsal symbol pendant, and a golden Vajra with antique gold plating, 8.6 cm long.

Each prize will also include a crystal with an A inside.

We would be very happy to hand one of these prizes to you, so don’t hesitate to get your tickets now. Get them at the Shang Shung Institute-Austria’s online shop.

You can donate by credit card or get the tickets for this raffle by bank transfer:
Bank Name: Raiffeisenbank Ilz

Bank Address: Hauptstr. 39,
8262 Ilz, Austria
Bank Code: 38151
Account Name: Shang-Shung Institute Austria.
Account number: 30387
BIC (= SWIFT): RZSTAT2G151
IBAN: AT19 3815 1000 0003 0387

On behalf of the Shang Shung Institute we want to thank you in advance for your support, and we wish you luck for the drawing,
Oliver Leick
Director of the Shang Shung Institute Austria
Gschmaier 139
8265 Gr. Steinbach Austria
Tel.: 0043 676 3221365
www.shangshunginstitute.org
www.SSI-austria.at

The Archive Transcription Program

Oliver Leick

Since its inauguration in 1989 the international Shang Shung Institute has engaged in three main initiatives, each of which corresponds to one of the three existences.

The preservation of Tibetan Medicine is the SSI's initiative related to BODY. We have achieved great success in all aspects of this project, including the creation of a four-year training for those who wish to study this authentic and ancient healing system in depth, the production of Tibetan herbal medicines according to traditional formulas, and the training of students in Ku-Nye, traditional Tibetan massage.

The translation of Tibetan wisdom texts into western languages is the SSI's initiative related to VOICE. Books for the public such as "Birth, Life and Death" and "Longchenpa's Advice from the Heart" were published this year by the international Shang Shung Institute, and several more will be published in 2009. Addition-

ally, we offer a special Tibetan translation training program.

The work we have done to expand and preserve our archives is the SSI's initiative related to MIND. This is probably the most important asset and responsibility of the Shang Shung Institute. The Archives' aim is to collect, preserve, and disseminate materials on all aspects of Tibetan culture.

The International Shang Shung Institute is now ready to start a new campaign called THE ARCHIVE TRANSCRIPTION PROGRAM. Most of the recorded Teachings of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu have not yet been transcribed. This work must be done in order to make these precious Teachings available in their written form. Everyone is welcome to participate in this new initiative, and thus contribute to the preservation of the Teachings.

We are looking for People who want to collaborate

We are looking for collaborators who:

- have been active members of the Dzogchen Community for at least 2 years and
- have followed or attended at least 3 retreats of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

Work to be done

The retreats should be transcribed word-by-word, exactly as Rinpoche speaks.

How to apply

If you know how to work with a computer, you fulfill the requirements mentioned above, and if you think you have enough time and capacity to do this work, please send your CV to the Shang Shung Institute.

After checking your qualifications we will send you precise guidelines on how to transcribe correctly, and a contract to be signed between the transcriber and the Shang Shung Institute.

When the Institute has received your signed contract the audio file of one retreat will be sent to you.

If we receive your completed transcription within the pro-

Video Journal 17

We are happy to announce that the new issue of the Video Journal number 17 is already on its way to subscribers.

This issue covers Rinpoche's travels and Retreats in Peru, Tashigar Norte, Kundrolling, Tsegylgar, Khandrolling and Toronto as well as Teachings by Yeshe Silvano Namkhai in Russia in the first half of 2008.

The price is 50€ for 2 issues in a year, including shipping expenses, while for sustaining members of Merigar West the price is 25€.

Payment can be made:

1) By credit card directly on our webshop (service secured by Paypal, no paypal account required; our paypal account – paypal@istitutoshangshung.org),

posed timeframe, you will receive a certificate that can be used for Karma Yoga, and 100 Euro.

Please send your replies to Oliver Leick

2) By Bank transfer
Account n.: 000 000 576448
To: Istituto Shang Shung
Bank: Monte dei Paschi di Siena
Branch: 58031 Arcidosso (GR)
ABI: 01030
CAB: 72160
Swift code: PASCITM1G99
IBAN: IT 60 Q 01030 72160 000 000 576 44

3) Visiting our online-shop:
<http://shop-it.shangshunginstitute.org>

For information on how to subscribe please write to:
orders@istitutoshangshung.org or l.velasco@shangshunginstitute.org

With the deepest gratitude for our Master and our thanks to all subscribers, we send you all our warmest regards! ©

The Video Journal Team
The Shang Shung Institute

(o.leick@shangshunginstitute.org), director of the Shang Shung Institute Austria and coordinator of the Archive Transcription Program. ©

Tibet-Day with the SSI in Bucharest Romania

9th of May 2009

Gino Vitiello

On the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the international Shang Shung Institute, the Austrian branch of the Institute organized a Tibet-Day event at the Central University Library in Bucharest, Romania. The main aim of this event was to present the unique treasure of Tibetan culture to the Romanian people, as up to now they have had little information about the richness of the various aspects of this marvelous culture.

The organization and carrying out of this happening was a wonderful example of functioning collaboration between all the institutions founded by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu – the international Shang Shung Institute, the international Dzogchen Community and A.S.I.A. (Association for International Solidarity in Asia). Although at the beginning it seemed it would be quite difficult to organize such a special event in Bucharest as none of us live in the Romanian capitol, in the end it worked out really very well and more than 150 people enjoyed a fantastic afternoon.

The program started with some Tibetan music by three young Tibetan singers and dancers from Austria who played (Tibetan) guitar, sang excellently and danced very beautifully. After a short introduction by Dr. Gabriella Schneider from the Dzogchen Community, the direc-

tor of the Shang Shung Institute Austria, Oliver Leick, gave a talk on "The unique treasure of Tibetan culture and its value for our everyday life" followed by Dr. Gino Vitiello from Italy who gave a very informative talk on Tibetan Medicine. In between the talks our Tibetan friends entertained us with Tibetan songs and dances.

In the break between the first and second part people were able to sample Momo, traditional Tibetan dumplings, made by our Tibetan friends – and everybody really enjoyed them. After some Tibetan music Oliver Leick spoke about the history, the aim and the work of the international Shang Shung Institute. Then Aldo Oneto from Italy gave an introduction to Tibetan Ku-Nye massage and also demonstrated it on three people.

In the entrance hall of the Central University Library, besides an exhibition of beautiful photos of Tibet contributed by ASIA, people could also get precise information about the activities of the Dzogchen Community in Romania and about Merigar East, and purchase some of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu's books in Romanian.

There was some very positive feedback from the people who attended this event and hopefully some of them will also come for the retreats. We all did our very best and we hope that we were able to plant a seed that will manifest some fruit in the future. ©

Thank you to everybody who helped this special event take place.



Dr. Phuntsog Wangmo and Aldo Oneto.

Standardizing traditional Tibetan massage

Aldo Oneto

Last April, over a period of two weeks, I had the pleasure and the opportunity to meet the lady doctor Phuntsog Wangmo at Tsegylgar, Conway to verify and compare the techniques of Ku-Nye as they have been adopted in Europe and in the USA, in the "on the ground" format and the "on the table" one.

The first part of my stay which was during the Easter holiday period for the traditional Tibetan Medicine school organized by the doctor, we discussed the main points for an eventual global standardization and integration and spent many hours examining the audio-visual and printed material that the Italian Shang Shung Institute has.

Job at the Shang Shung Institute of America

The Shang Shung Institute of America dedicated to the preservation of Tibetan culture, is looking for an independent, self-motivated administrative assistant, who is committed to help building a strong future for the Institute.

Required Qualifications:

- Administrative background with experience in general office operation, proficiency in word, excel, file maker pro [or other equivalent database]; Experience with QuickBooks or similar accounting software is preferred.

- Ability to work with web and graphic applications welcomed;

- Ability to both work independently and interact with the Shang Shung USA Board of Directors and staff;

- Excellent communication skills, facility in multi-tasking and communicating with a diverse population.

Tasks will include, but may not be limited to:

1. Maintaining accurate accounting records of the Institute's activities.

2. Revision, consolidation, and update of the Shang Shung office data bases.

3. Managing communications, such as emails, phone calls, mail, faxes, etc.

>> continued on the following page

Working with Fire

Moxibustion with Elio Guarisco

Susan Schwarz

Arriving at Tsegylgar East just after sunset, the darkness and the quiet of the small town of Conway, Massachusetts, made it seem like late at night. Inside the light was on, the giant wooden staircase creaked as I walked up and into the heart of the old schoolhouse: the kitchen. It already felt like home. The Gekö explained where the dorm is, a Tibetan woman was making tea, and a big guy sitting at the table introduced himself with a long, hard-to-remember Greek name. Two little girls were running from room to room, laughing and delighting in their new-found companionship.

Somehow the house filled up by the next morning and nearly every seat in the classroom was taken. We had come here to participate in an intensive seminar on moxibustion given by Elio Guarisco. The course happened to begin just as the first graduating class of The Shang Shung Institute School of Tibetan Medicine was leaving for Tibet.

Our group included Dzogchen Community members and non-members, from countries ranging from the USA to Greece, Italy, Germany, Iran, Argentina, and Australia. There were several second- and third-year students from the SSI School, also located in the old schoolhouse. Many vocations were also represented. Among the participants were a TCM practitioner specializing in acupuncture, tuina, and qigong, an aspiring acupuncturist, a student of Tibetan medicine training in India, an herbalist, several yoga teachers and massage therapists, an EMS nurse, a midwife, and one or two people with no background in the therapeutic arts.

Moxibustion is a method of healing practiced for centuries, if not millennia, in many Asian countries. It uses the targeted application of heat to specific points on the body to rebalance the elements and the humors when they are either in excess or deficient. Called “moxa” for short, the word may have origi-



Learning cupping

Photo: S. Schwarz

nated from the Tibetan *me btsa* or “fire points,” but then again it may also come from the Japanese *mogusa*. It works on energy and blood is particularly effective for wind and phlegm disorders (*rlung* and *bad kan*).

For two weeks, fifteen of us received a transmission of sorts of *The Silver Mirror: The Concise Guide to the Practice of Moxibustion* by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu. Elio is ideally suited for the presentation of this manual as he has been working on translating it for many years and has gained much direct knowledge of the subject in the process. The book covers 500 moxibustion points that Rinpoche has selected as the most important of a total of 3,000. When it is published in the near, but not yet foreseeable future, it will be a definitive reference resource for moxibustion. It is a condensed version of Rinpoche’s 3,000-point compendium drawing on his research of several different manuals as well as the visionary teachings of his Root Master Changchub Dorje. None of the other Eastern healing arts has a system covering nearly that many points.

The course was structured into three three-day sessions with classes in the mornings and afternoons and two two-day recesses in between. In the mornings and part of the afternoons, Elio

went over the individual points one by one. He used drawings on the whiteboard to help us locate the points, and when there was any ambiguity one of the classmates served as a model. Some points are for treating multiple indications, not necessarily related to their position on the body. Others might be for a single indication only. Moxa is good for phlegm, wind, lymphatic, and nerve disorders (ranging from symptoms of the common cold such as coughs and respiratory infections to pains in the back and limbs), edema and other instances of water retention, “cold” tumors (benign or malignant), cysts, abscesses, poor digestion, gastric disorders, mental instability, epilepsy, depression, forgetfulness, illnesses caused by provocations, gout, and any kind of arthritis.

The points are divided into groups: the back, the front, and the limbs (including the head). In general, the area of pain can also be treated, even when there is no specific point there. There are several principal methods of applying heat. For horizontal points, Elio’s preferred approach is to use small, hand-rolled cones of dried mugwort herb placed directly on the patient’s body. The cones are then lit and allowed to burn as close as tolerable to produce as much heat as possible.

As soon as the temperature becomes too hot to bear, the therapist removes the cone. As a rule of thumb, we would apply about seven cones in a row to each site. Another, more common, method is to use a moxa stick made of compressed mugwort. The stick, usually a little less than two centimeters in diameter, is lit to produce a glowing tip, and then held about two centimeters from the relevant location on the patient’s body. Again the key is to time the process of warming so that you get as close to the threshold of

pain as possible. The heat stimulates the point and produces a therapeutic effect.

Elio also gave us an introduction to “Mongolian” moxa (a method using small cloth bags of herbs heated in oil) and cupping (the use of glass jars to create a suction effect). In the afternoons, we had a chance to practice treatments on each other with the cones, sticks, cups, and Mongolian moxa. Nearly all of us came up with plenty of indications for experimentation, occasionally with some success.

Our days off were filled with karma yoga, an expedition to Khandroling, where we enjoyed one of the first swims of the season, and shared dinners at local restaurants. The therapists among us generously offered their time and expertise to classmates needing treatments, usually combining massage, acupuncture, and moxa. As a group, we became very close, sometimes sitting around the kitchen table until well after midnight. There were two birthday parties and several Ganapujas. Yeshe cooked wonderful Tibetan lunches and also provided breakfast with home-roasted tsampa and homemade bread.

Oh, to stay, and taste the potatoes we planted in the garden that last day. But we all had our tickets to elsewhere, and so we dispersed, taking with us what we had learned from the Master through Elio and *The Silver Mirror*, and from each other. ©



Moxa students with Elio at SSI USA.

Photo: N. Zeitz

>>Job continued from previous page

4. Collaborating with directors to create and implement marketing plans, including design and production of publications (brochures, posters, ads, flyers, on-line announcements, & newsletter); direct mailings, and press releases;

5. Collaborate with directors on development and consolidation of office procedures for the maintenance of the Institute’s records and documents, including donors and members database, and related correspondence;

6. Participation in the recruitment of students for the 4-year Tibetan Medicine course: sending out information to prospective students answering inquiries, processing applications.

7. Being the office liason to students of the School of Tibetan Medicine, including maintaining student records on file.

8. Attending and keeping track of all board meeting minutes and distribution of formal board communications and in general being the point person for students, faculty, and BOD.

9. Support in managing events, managing registrations, etc.

10. Support the coordination of grant proposals and other development activities.

11. Assist in the support the activities of the Mirror (advertising, mailing, etc.)

12. Provide support for the SSI bookstore

Part Time, 20–25 hours per week.

To apply please email your cover letter and resume to Anna Bartenstein at a.bartenstein@shangshunginstitute.org, or fax it to 413-369-4473.

The position will be filled as soon as a qualified candidate is found. In your cover letter please refer to your date of availability. Also please include the contact information for professional references. Applicants must provide their own lodging and be able to work legally in the United States.

Shang Shung Institute of America
PO Box 278
18 Schoolhouse Road
Conway, MA 01341 USA

Fourth Year Tibetan Medical Students go to Tibet

Shang Shung Institute, US
Two reports from Qinghai University Tibetan Medicine College (QUTMC)

Joey Mella, Matt Schmookler

Taken from email letters of Joey Mella and Matt Schmookler, both students from the first graduating class of the unique program of Tibetan Medicine headquartered at Shang Shung Institute, Conway Massachusetts, US. This program has been developed and is directed by Dr. Phuntsog Wangmo. As the final part of the 4-year study, all the medical students do an internship in a hospital in Xining, Qinghai Province, China.

“We have been running all over the place, receiving teachings, medical *rlungs*, and working at the clinic. It is really cool here. Everyone is very nice, the Tibetans and Chinese. There are many young students here, so the energy feels very active and inquisitive. We are being treated to dinners and sharing time with the professors, learning more about the culture and status of Tibetan Medicine in this now melting pot of a city.

From what I gather the Tibetan Medical Program and hospital are very professional and currently in a state of rapid growth. There are still some rough ends at the hospital, but the knowledge of healing is really working. There are many patients who really benefit from these treatments. For example, the medicinal bath department receives a majority of arthritis patients, some of whom have received Western Medical Treatment (they call it Bio-medicine) or Chinese medicine and have had no relief. However, after about seven days of baths, twice a day, and a specifically tailored regimen of Tibetan Medicine, the swelling, pain, and inflexibility is really completely gone. There are extreme cases that need longer treatments, and sometimes people come back in 3 or so years for

about \$511 US. That includes two baths a day, a room for the duration, Tibetan medicinal herbs, and any additional external treatment (acupuncture, moxa, cupping, etc.) that may be needed. This is really good. Also there are sliding scales for the poor, and sometimes the patient does not need to pay, and the hospital pays for their transportation back home – cool!

The classes have been really great. We have had the opportunity to sit with really old and skilled doctors, all of whom have received us so warmly and have offered so much wisdom. We covered an essential teaching on *rlung* diseases and treatment, where the Teacher emphasized the uniqueness of the “*rlung*” concept, and really how beneficial it is to know it well. He included many of his personal experiences and suggested the use of par-



Aku Nyima giving the transmission of the *rgyud bzhi*.

ticular formulas. Then we have been learning more about *rlung*, but more related to the formation of the body, universe, and its subtle roles in health related to



This is us with some of the Monks/Doctors at Sku ,Bum monastery/hospital.

Photo: A. Weil

and in its correct place (accomplished with medicine and external treatments in extreme cases, but with yoga and pranayama in general) then there is health, strength, and longevity.”
Joey Mella

statue of Than Thong Gyalpo, preserved herb plates of hundreds of herbs and so on. There were two incredible things. One was the world’s biggest *thangka*. It took us about 35 minutes to walk along it and look at each of its features. It is so long at 680

We were then taken to the hospital where we are doing our internship. There we were taken to every department and introduced to every department head that we will work with. It is really happening! We got to see the medicine bath process, the external



Metsa (moxa) by Aku Nyima.

“Everything is going fantastically. We were greeted very well and stuffed full of Tibetan food in the first 2 meals here. Everywhere we go we are treated with great respect. The people are truly flattering, kind and loving. We are in a big dusty city, nevertheless, the heart of the ancient history and power of the land here can be felt underneath it all.

On the weekend we were invited to a Tibetan cultural celebration put on by the Tibetan Medical students of the college here. They sat us in seats of honor with the all the department heads and teachers. They fed us tea and *tsampa* in the traditional way while presenting traditional dances.

Yesterday we were taken on a fantastic tour. We got to see the Tibetan Medical Museum, which was opened in 2007 and is the only Tibetan Medicine museum in all of China and the world for that matter. It was unbelievable. The museum had ancient medical artifacts, a life size realistic

meters. Breathtaking! It took 400 artists 4 years to make. It had every single king, deity, all the cultural features, medical, and astrological images you could imagine. There was also the world’s biggest *rgyud bzhi*, which also took four people four years to make. It was so big. Then we were taken to the top floor (4th), which we were told only special guest were taken too. It was a roof top pinnacle-like room. As we walked up the stairs we could here the chanting of a monk. When entering the chamber, we a huge golden statue of the Medicine Buddha. Along the walls were 100’s of Buddha statues.

We then were taken for a short tour of the pharmaceutical factory, ARURA, which makes tons of medicine daily. We didn’t get to see the processing of herbs because it is under construction, but we did get to see huge rooms where the raw herbs were stored as well as the finished products. We will go back another day when the construction is done to see more.

treatments department, the liver and gall bladder department, the heart and brain department, the women’s department and the hospitals own medicine production facility. We even saw the ovens for detoxifying metals and so on. Afterwards we were once again treated to a huge banquet with a couple of the heads of the hospital. They really, really insist that you eat and eat and eat and drink and drink and drink.

Today we had class at the school all day for the first time. Our teacher is Rgan Karma Tsho Gnyis. He has been teaching us the *Zin Tig*, which is the doctor’s experiential knowledge. It is basically the really practical simplified knowledge on causes, symptoms and treatments. Rgan Karma Tsho Gnyis teaching has been very wonderful and made many things that seemed so hard to understand and deal with in the *rgyud bzhi*, much easier to understand. It is very practical for the clinic. Even *Bad Kan Smug Po* (brown phlegm) is easy to understand now.”
Matt Schmookler



Tibetan dance performance.

more sessions, but most are really cured. This is fantastic!
In addition, it is really inexpensive compared to western treatments. The high-end treatment for 10 days is 3500 Yuan, which is

all humors. Basically *rlung* is the most important, it is the prana that governs our lives, we need to control and have a concrete idea of that. That class was one of those, aha of course, kind of classes – if the *rlung* is balanced

Summer Intensives

Dear all,
On the heels of our very successful course of Tibetan Moxibustion with Elio Guarisco, The Shang Shung Institute School of Tibetan Medicine in Conway, MA is pleased to announce further intensive courses this summer on the topics of Tibetan Herbs and Tibetan Astrology in Conway, MA. Details are below.

For more information or to register for these summer intensive courses, please contact the Shang Shung Institute secretary, at secretary@shangshung.org or (413) 369-4928. Limited accommodations are available on-site for a nominal fee, and we will be offering Tibetan meals at a reasonable price during these courses.
American Branch, Shang Shung Institute
www.shangshung.org
www.shangshunginstitute.org

Please pass this information on to all who may be interested. These courses are open to the general public.

Tibetan Herbs I & II
Instructor: Menpa (Dr.) Yang Ga
Herbal Medicine is one of the four lines of treatment in Tibetan medicine; diet, behavior, external therapies, and medicines. This course will present an overview of the theory and practice of Tibetan herbal medicine including plant identification. 30% of the course will be spent in lecture and 70% of the course will be spent in the field, outdoors.

Please make sure to bring and wear appropriate clothing for the weather and time that will be spent in nature.

Session I: Beginners
Fri, July 24–Sun July 26, 2009
8:30am–12:30 pm, 2 pm–6 pm
Price: \$250 for Public
\$75 for Students of the SSI School of Tibetan Medicine

Prerequisites: This course is open to the Public

>>Sunflowers continued from page 1
need to learn a little Romanian, and even if you think you have learned, it is still nice that your hosts can verify your intentions at the ME office). The rooms cost between 10 and 15 euros, and that usually includes the use of kitchen. And in case you don't like cooking, maybe your landlady can cook for you?

If you think staying in other people's home is too strange for you, you may opt for staying in a hotel in one of the nearby holiday resorts. However, this has the drawback that you are dependent on bus timetables or a car to get to the Gar. From 23 August it is easy to hitchhike to the Gar in the morning when many practitioners come by car. And it is also quite possible to walk. The

Session II: Advanced
Mon, July 27–Wed, July 29, 2009
8:30 am–12:30 pm, 2 pm–6 pm
Price: \$250 for Public
\$75 for Students of the SSI School of Tibetan Medicine

Prerequisites: Tibetan Herbs I
Offered for SSI Medicine Program Students and previous herbal course attendees.

Discount for those who take both Herbal sessions:
\$450 for Public
\$125 for Students of the SSI School of Tibetan Medicine

Tibetan Astrology I & II
Instructor:
Menpa (Dr.) Lobsang Namkha

Tibetan Astrology is a traditional practice used by Tibetan doctors and Lamas. The study of the Five Elements, combined with trigrams, numbers, and animal signs, form the basis for astrological calculations. Participants will learn how to accurately read Tibetan astrological calendars for their personal use.

Session I: Beginners
Fri, August 28–Sun, August 30, 2009
8:30 am–12:30 pm, 2 pm–4 pm
Price: \$225 for Public
\$75 for Students of the SSI School of Tibetan Medicine

Prerequisites: This course is open to the Public

Session II: Advanced
Mon, August 31–Wed, September 2, 2009
8:30 am–12:30 pm, 2 pm–4 pm
Price: \$225 for Public
\$75 for Students of the SSI School of Tibetan Medicine

Prerequisites: Tibetan Astrology I
Offered for SSI Medicine Program Students and previous Astrology course attendees.

Discount for those who take both Astrology sessions:
\$400 for Public
\$125 for Students of the SSI School of Tibetan Medicine

distance is only some 3 kilometers, and it is not uphill like when getting to Merigar West from Arcidosso. Walking through the outskirts of the village can also be quite a lively experience for a city-dweller: I have upset many little dogs, been myself upset by a snake; I've been hoping to pet a scared little kitten, been myself slightly scared of walking through a cow herd and a bit more worried when passing a flock of geese with protective parents aggressively claiming their space; and the absolute highlight, I have made friends with a donkey!

You have probably heard Rinpoche's description of ME, how it is like a mandala of earth and space. And that the architecture of the Gar will follow Yeshe's vision. The main element of this

4-Year Course in Tibetan Medicine

Now Accepting Applications for the Fall, 2009 Semester

The American branch of the International ShangShung Institute is now accepting applicants for the Fall, 2009 class of our four-year School of Tibetan Medicine.

With a history going back over 2,500 years, traditional Tibetan medicine is one of the oldest continuously practiced healing systems on earth. Regarded as science, art, and philosophy, Tibetan medicine is an ancient form of holistic health care indigenous to the Tibetan people, which integrates the core Buddhist principles of altruism, karma, and ethics. Over thousands of years, traditional Tibetan medicine evolved and incorporated medical knowledge from China,

Persia, India, and Greece. Since this time it has been practiced continuously throughout Tibet, the Himalayan regions, India, Mongolia, and Siberia, as well as in the Western world wherever Tibetans live in exile.

In the Fall of 2005, the American branch of the Shang Shung Institute initiated the four-year program in Tibetan Medicine under the direction of Dr. Phuntsog Wangmo. This program closely parallels the training of a traditional Tibetan physician culminating in a supervised internship and final exams.

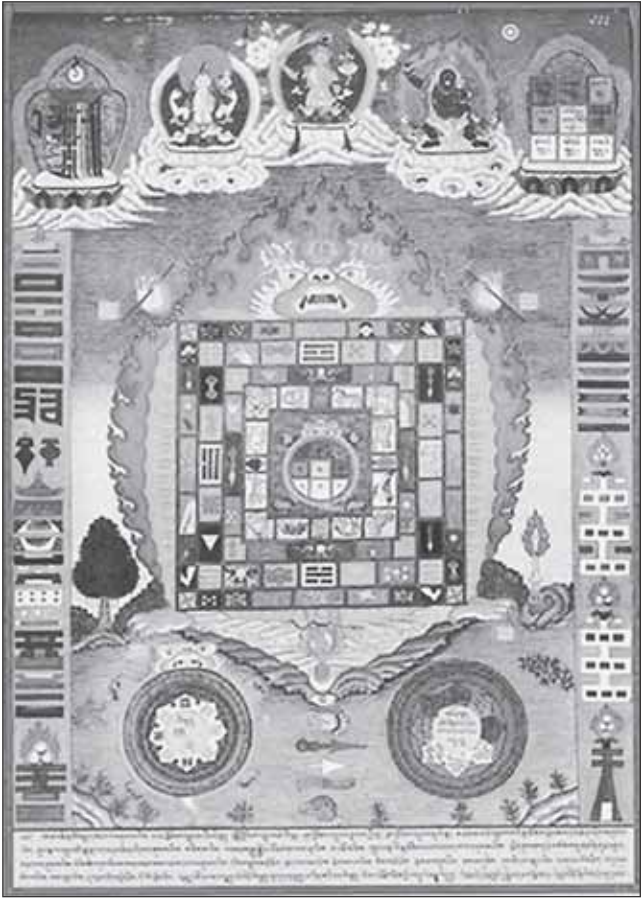
Each semester of the four-year curriculum combines a tripartite approach to the study of the Tibetan medical tradition that



includes foundation core studies based on the topics of the Four Tantras, complimentary studies in Tibetan language and culture, and clinical practicum. Students in the Shang Shung Institute School of Tibetan medicine can expect to receive training that thoroughly covers all the traditional topics, presented in English. For those students who complete the first seven semesters onsite, an optional internship at the Northeast Traditional Tibetan Hospital in Qinghai, China will be available at the conclusion of their studies.

The Shang Shung program offers eight consecutive semesters, each consisting of 300 total hours. Each week, students will participate in 20 hours of classes. Among these 20 hours per week; 16 hours are used for lecture, 2 hours for Tibetan language and culture studies, and 2 hours for a clinical practicum. There are no electives or part/time study options in the Tibetan Medicine four-year program and students are expected to participate in all aspects covering each semester's topics. Classes meet for two and a half consecutive days a week. This way, students have time during the week for study, work, and time for other obligations.

More details, and an online application are available on our website at www.shangshung.org. The secretary of the American branch of the Shang Shung Institute can also be contacted at secretary@shangshung.org or by phone at +1 (413) 369-4928.



vision, the GoogleEarth-sized Longsal symbol is now written with white sand on a background of black earth and some green shrubs. This element is flanked in the north, south and west by a green sea of sunflowers, the symbol of ME. The sunflowers are now budding; will they bloom while we are still here? On the east side, uphill from the Longsal symbol, are the rented tents where we have the teachings and courses, and the only permanent structure so far, the Meribarn. That's where the tentless karma-yogis sleep, and where the gekos will live throughout the year from now on. And for sure there will be much more need for karma-yogis after these retreats. All the paper work required for construction is done, and the real work can begin (not to downplay the big work done by the people who stood tall against the bureocrazy). Maybe you have heard stories about the beginnings of Merigar West? How Rinpoche was work-

ing there with his first students? If those stories ever made you feel a longing for contributing, really participating in person, well, here is your chance! For me, even painting a road sign meant overcoming my limitations, so I can only extrapolate from there how great an experience it could be to work here for a longer time. If you get interested, Greg Ladra (geko@dzogchen.ro) will be happy to hear from you.

This year less people are attending the first retreat, and the tent is correspondingly smaller, so it is a very nice family atmosphere, everybody is close to Rinpoche, without squeezing. The teaching is now very practical, as we are receiving detailed instructions for the Rushens, and then practicing them together with Rinpoche. For aspiring vajra dancers this retreat is an especially good occasion for learning the Three Vajras Dance, as there are two mandalas and not many people at all,

so most of the time we can be on the mandala. And not only that, since this is now teacher training for Zoltan Czer, under the supervision of Adriana Dal Borgo, we have two teachers to keep an eye on our steps. And this for a whole week, possibly followed by a course on the Six Spaces dance. Nice! Those interested in Yantra Yoga are also served well, in the mornings by Tiziana Gottardi and in the afternoons by Fabio. All this activity has also caught the interest of the local media: many reporters from television and newspapers have been to the Gar. Yeshe's public talk in Constanta on the 21st will be another possibility for the local people to find a connection to the teachings.

Plenty of space, strong winds, Black Sea, hot sun, hard soil: in the words of the t-shirt, "Enjoy ME!"

A Spring Journey to Power Places in Bhutan

Lidian King

In the early eighties, when I first became a Buddhist practitioner, I read about a famous sacred site in Bhutan called Paro Taktshang (“Tiger’s Nest”). Nestled in the forests and clinging dramatically to the side of a cliff some 900 m above the floor of the valley, it was here that Padmasambhava reputedly flew on the back of a tigress (a manifestation of his Tibetan consort Yeshe Tsogyal) to subdue a local demon named Singey Samdrup. The famous Guru subsequently stayed at the hermitage three months in meditation. A seed was planted in my mind back then as a wish to go to such a “ney” (sacred place). When our vajra brother Michele Salvatore recently organized a spiritual journey to Bhutan, I knew this was my opportunity. The itinerary included many sacred sites in Western and Central Bhutan as well as the intention to do thun practice and ganapujas when possible.

Our group arrived in Paro valley by air from Delhi on a clear April day when the spring apple blossoms were in full bloom. We had several weeks of travel in this remarkable country of ancient cultural traditions and spiritual mystique before our final excursion to Paro Taktshang. Onboard the tour bus, our Bhutanese guide Sonam gave us a running account of Bhutanese history while our driver Shatu skillfully navigated the endless zigzag turns, driving us through narrow valleys with rushing glacial rivers and up and down steep mountain slopes of pine and other conifers. Now and then we saw pink, red or yellow flowering rhododendron trees. We stopped to take pictures of a herd of yak along the road, watched a few monkeys playing in the trees, spotted a wild pheasant. At the national animal reserve outside Thimpu we gawked at the “taken”, Bhutan’s national animal. The story of its origin goes that when the crazy yogin Drukpa Kunley arrived from Tibet in the 15th century, local devotees asked him to perform a miracle. Instead he asked to be served a whole cow and goat for lunch. Feeling satisfied, he let out a large burp, took the goat head and placed it on the cow bones, and commanded the strange beast to rise up and graze on the mountainside. Much to everyone’s surprise the takin stood up and loped into the woods.

The religious sites we visited were many. They ranged from the massive and impressive fortress-like dzongs with their grand lhakhangs (temples) and state-supported monastic institutions; to the more intimate smaller and poorer temples in out-of-the-way goembas (monasteries) that are equally steeped in legend and history; to entirely remote hermitages and magical hidden power

places that require dedicated effort to reach. Colorful fluttering prayer flags and chotens (offering receptacles) grace the sites. Chotens of varying sizes are also found at any kind of juncture like the confluence of rivers, near bridges, on mountain passes etc., where they are considered to ward off negative energy. I would like to describe some of the sites that impacted me.

Punakha Dzong (constructed in 1637) is one of the most important and impressive dzongs of Bhutan. Located at the confluence of the Po and Mo Chu (father and mother rivers), its architectural splendor includes massive white washed walls, three central towers, and extensive wood décor painted red, black, and yellow. Its towering height provides a magnificent backdrop for the delicate lilac-colored jaracanda trees we see in full bloom. We access the dzong by foot across a cantilever bridge, then up enormous retractable stairs to a heavy entry door designed to deter enemy invaders. We turn huge prayer wheels and view beautiful painted murals of the guardians of the four directions before entering one of three large courtyards. The busy daily life of the sizeable monk body is evident everywhere, but the resident monks are friendly and tolerant of visitors. I was moved by the beauty of the artwork including many outstanding murals and gilded larger-than-life deity statues important to the Drukpa Kagyu lineages prevalent in Western Bhutan. (Central and Eastern Bhutan

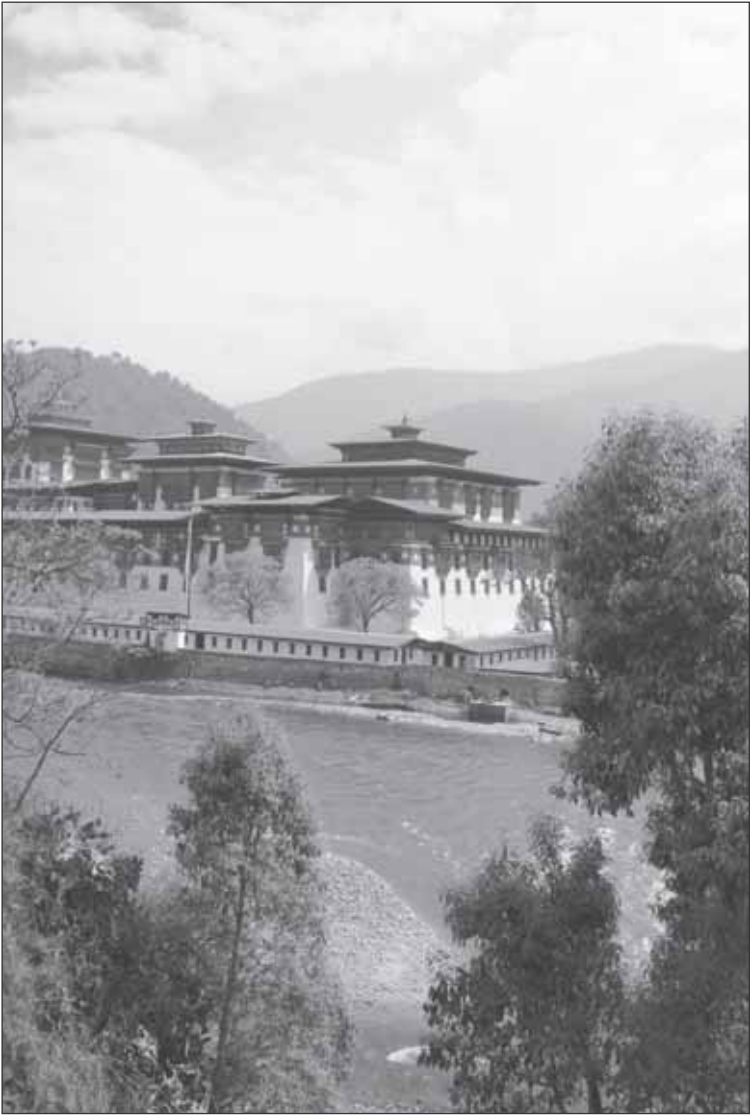


Photo: M. Salvatore

in their traditional colorfully embroidered cotton skirts and short silk jackets. One of the girls explained that her friend suffered from a difficult stomach ailment and had been granted permission to sit in the room with the “mache” to receive their blessings for healing.

Of the many smaller temples we visited, my favorite is the fabulous Jampey Lhakhang located in the Chokhor Valley of Bumthang in Central Bhutan, and built by the first Tibetan King Srongsten Gampo in 659. According to

beneath the lhakhang. Entering the temple, I experience the powerful presence of the ancient masters. The inner korwa (circumambulation path) is dim so we use flashlights to view incomparable murals under silk coverings. Behind the altar of the inner chamber of the oldest part of the oldest temple in Bhutan we see the luminous statues of Jampa, Buddha of the future flanked by Guru Rinpoche and Shakyamuni. Here, a monk holds a basket with dice for us to shake. After making a small offering he will read



Photo: M. Salvatore

favor the Nyingmapa tradition.)

In the southernmost courtyard of Punakha Dzong is a special temple (off limits to visitors) where the “mache” (sacred embalmed bodies) of the famed tertön Pema Lingpa and the first Zhapdrung (spiritual ruler) reside. Near the temple I chanced to meet several Bhutanese girls

legend he ordered 108 temples to be constructed in one day to subdue the various body parts of a gigantic demoness whose limbs stretched all the way from Tibet to Bhutan and other outlying regions! Guru Rinpoche, who visited Bhutan three times in the 8th century, is said to have hidden several termas in a lake

our spiritual fortune based on the numerical outcome of the three die. Luckily my numbers are favorable and he nods his head to indicate auspiciousness! Later we light dozens of butter lamps elsewhere in the complex.

Another special smaller temple across the river is Tamshing Lhendup Choling, an important

Nyingma monastery established by Pema Lingpa in 1501. It is said that the khandroma helped build the unusual temple. Inside we view beautiful ancient murals reputedly painted by the tertön himself. The innermost sanctuary contains a statue of Guru Rinpoche (also said to be sculpted by the dakinis), and behind it is a natural spring seeping holy waters. On another altar are other sacred objects connected with the lore of Pema Lingpa. In the korwa Sonam invites us to don chain mail armor (25 kg) forged by Pema Lingpa, and to circumambulate as quickly as possible, traditionally believed to burn off bad karma! A few days later we go to Membartso, the “flaming lake” where the famed tertön retrieved several termas. Innumerable tsas are tucked in nearby rock niches and prayer flags flutter to mark the gorge where he dove into the deep waters with a butter lamp in one hand and returned some time later with the butter lamp still burning, and a terma in the other hand! Eyewitnesses confirmed the miracle.

The sacred site that touched me most deeply was also the most difficult to access. A strenuous all-day hike following the Tang Chu through the green barley and buckwheat fields, then up a steep trail through the forests and even further up ancient stone steps led to Thowadrag, a gem of a monastery perched high on the rocky ledges of the mountain. More than two thousand years ago a leper nun from Paro made a pilgrimage here to drink the holy waters and was cured. Later Mandarava came here to practice, as did Guru Rinpoche and his Tibetan consort Yeshe Tsogyal. It is said there is a concealed gateway to a bey-yul, a hidden paradise in the upper reaches of the valley. The hermitage itself was built by the great tertön Dorji Lingpa in the 14th century. After an adventurous climb we finally arrive and are invited inside the Gonpa where the Khenpo, young monks and visiting nuns are reciting from a thick Tibetan text I recognize as the Prajnaparamita: “all form is Emptiness, all sound is Emptiness....Everything is Emptiness.”

Later we hike above the hermitage to see some sites and sit in silent mediation in a cave where Padmasambhava meditated. I separate from the group to eat my sandwich, but I find myself with some young nuns who pull me up another path to see their friend meditating in a cave about four feet above the ground and barely big enough to contain her form. Then they show me a rock with knee prints of Padmasambhava, and up another steep path are several stone steps of the khandroma and some dakini script on a rock face. Next we arrive at a more open space where several large flat stones form a grand seat where they tell me Padmasambhava taught disciples in the 8th century. A short distance beyond is a clear imprint

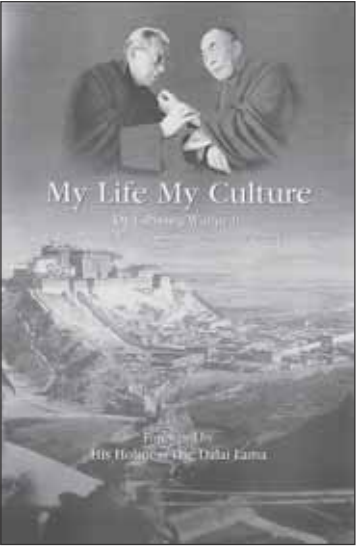
>> continued on the following page

My Life My Culture: Dr. Lobsang Wangyal, Personal Physician to His Holiness the XIV Dalai Lama

Adam Adrocco

His brief autobiographical text presents the incredible life of Dr. Lobsang Wangyal; a lifetime of steadfast determination, moving forward through unthinkable hardships to amazing accomplishments. The text is divided into two parts: a personal account of Dr. Wangyal’s life, and a series of remarkable excerpts from his many lectures on traditional Tibetan Medicine and related topics. In his own words, Dr. Wangyal describes his traditional medical training, studying under some of the highest regarded physicians of his time in Tibet. He graphically depicts the traumatic years he spent in prisons and forced labor. With his eventual arrival to India, Dr. Wangyal provides accounts of his years of service to His Holiness the Dalai Lama, the community of Dharamsala, and his many travels in the West.

Lobsang Wangyal was born in 1920, in the Yarlung Valley. He entered the Chongye Tashi Dechen Gon Monastery at the age of 13. In 1944 he began his formal studies at the Lhasa Medical School. Dr. Wangyal provides touching and inspiring details of student life in the traditional Tibetan Medical School. These brave students arose at four in the morning, recited many prayers and also memorized lines of text each day, which they had to recite accurately before receiving any breakfast. There was very little leisure time, with a full schedule of rigorous activities year round. They memorized thousands of lines of text, and learned to identify and apply hundreds of medicinal herbs. At graduation, the top students were highly lauded, while the lowest ranking students were compelled to act like donkeys, paraded around carrying heavy loads at the graduation ceremony. It is in this way that



Tibet produced many generations of some of the most qualified physicians the world has ever known. Dr. Wangyal himself excelled to become the personal assistant of the famous physician Kyenrab Norbu. Under his guidance, Dr. Wangyal learned many advanced therapies including the “eye opening” technique of surgically excising cataracts.

Dr. Wangyal’s life changed drastically with the onset of Tibet’s foreign occupation, beginning in 1949. Following the unsuccessful Tibetan uprising in 1959, Dr. Wangyal was removed from his position at Lhasa Medical School,

and sentenced to years in prison. His list of official crimes included being a traditional physician, as well as being from a land-owning family. Dr. Wangyal’s account of the next many long years of prison and forced labor are heartrending indeed. Yet also he portrays many instances of great heroism, and human endurance through unthinkable suffering of starvation, torture, and oppression. Dr. Wangyal applied his medical skills throughout his years in prison, benefiting the misery of many who suffered under inhuman conditions. Even during the time of the Cultural Revolution, when prisoners were severely punished even for using a spoon instead of chopsticks, he managed to continue to provide medical care to save many lives.

In 1983, Lobsang Wangyal and his wife Saldon journeyed to India for the first time. His Holiness the Dalai Lama invited them to stay and serve the community. In the following years, Dr. Wangyal would become one of the personal physicians to His Holiness. He traveled the world, giving many teachings on traditional Tibetan Medicine in the West. Dr. Wangyal’s extensive work to bring the rich science and culture of Tibet

to the Western world is truly remarkable. His writings are like gems for Western students of Tibetan teachings.

To conclude the autobiographic section of the book, the reader is treated to an intimate, heartwarming and surreal account of His Holiness’ last instructions to his trusted friend and dear physician Dr. Lobsang Wangyal. Here we are invited to share the detailed heart advice on the Great Eight-fold Lower Instructions for the Transference of Consciousness. This poetic and beautiful essay imparts the dreamlike serenity and bliss, the boundless compassion and love with which His Holiness guided his close student through his last stage of life. I was touched and amazed, as well as deeply inspired by this story from one of the most accomplished and beloved Tibetan Physicians of our time. His life story, along with the fantastic excerpts from his unique lectures, makes “My Life My Culture” a wonderful contribution to the modern works of Tibetan Cultural literature. ©

>> Bhutan continued from previous page

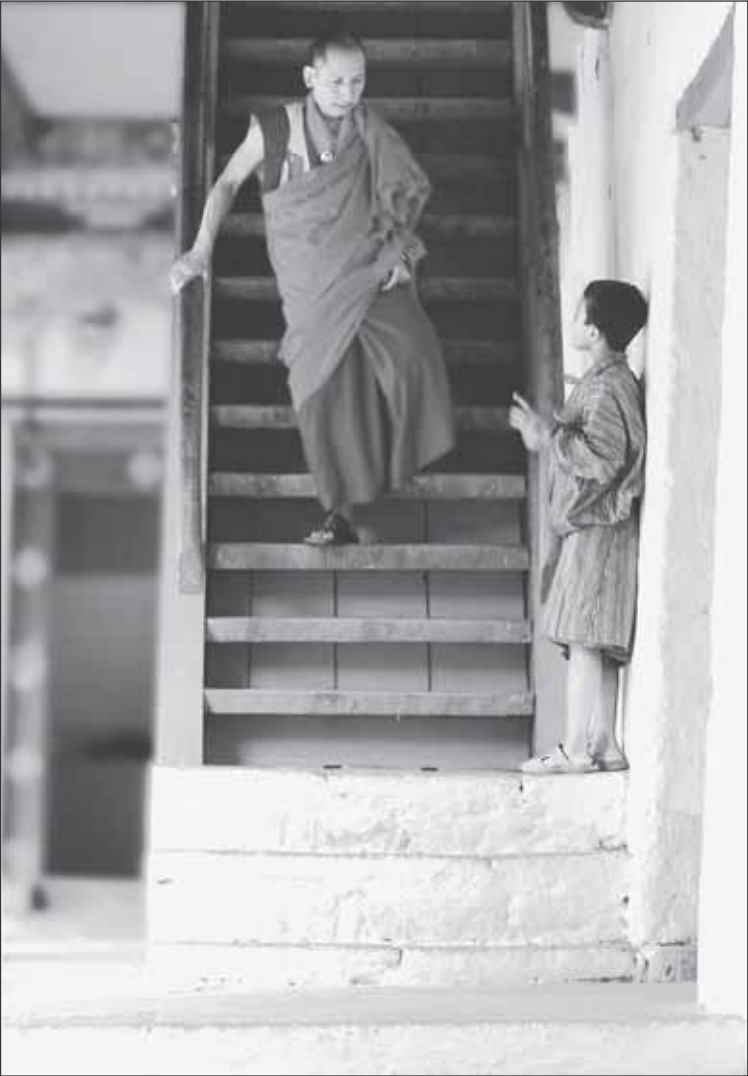


Photo: M. Salvatore

of the Guru’s right foot in a large rock. I am quite overwhelmed. So many wonders! So much powerful energy in this magical place! At the end they point out a building above the hermitage where monks are engaged in a three-year retreat program. But back at the hermitage our group meets with the Khenpo, who explains how difficult it is to fund the monks’ trainings and to get

food and supplies to this remote place. We leave what monetary offerings we can and begin the long descent to the valley. The next week we return to Paro valley and end our journey with a visit to the famous Taktshang monastery, the “ney”/sacred site that inspired my wish so many years ago. It is another challenging hike, but only half as far as Thowadrag. Sonam kindly



Photo: P. Paolo

provides us with horses for the first leg up the mountain. The final 45 minutes we climb up ancient stone steps, then drop steeply down into a gully, cross a bridge and climb back up more steps before reaching the hermitage. At the bridge a shimmering

ethereal waterfall is visible cascading down from the top of the cliff into the deep gully below. I am not surprised when I later learn it is the crystal light of one hundred thousand dakinis. Although the original monastery was destroyed in a fire in 1998 it

has been carefully rebuilt as before, each stone painstakingly carried up by devoted monks and each mural drawn and painted exactly as before. The murals of the life of Guru Rinpoche, his twenty-five disciples and eight manifestations are incredibly beautiful. We are fortunate to do a short tun in the upper lhakhang. Needless to say, I am very happy my wish came true and I was able to travel to the Land of the Thunder Dragon to directly experience power places whose history and legends have inspired my own practice for over twenty-five years. To have made this two-week pilgrimage was a practice in itself. But to absorb the inner richness will take a much longer time! ©



Tuscanary
REAL ESTATE

feel at home

**Are you looking for a house in Tuscany or in Umbria?
Contact us. We will find the place for you.**

Rita Renzi e Riccardo Giuntini
ritarenzi@tuscanary.it - Tel. and Fax: +39-0564967255 - www.tuscanary.it

Kunjed Gyalpo Series

Ornament of the State of Samantabhadra: Commentary on the All-Creating King of the Pure Perfect Presence of the Great Perfection

Vol. One: Commentary on Chapters 1-10 of the Kun.byed rgyal po by Khenpo Zhenphen Öser

Translated from the Tibetan by Jim Valby

Jim Valby Publications, 2008, 315 pages

How to begin to “review” Jim Valby’s translation and publication of Volume One in his *Kunjed Gyalpo* Series – as though this is an area I am qualified to speak about publicly, let alone comprehend. As always, I find myself awed by the profound depth of the Dzogchen tradition and the loving certitude many masters have expressed in their efforts to clarify for us the ‘literature’ of these ancient texts so that we – mere ordinary individuals, might attain greater understanding and thus arrive at our own realization – sooner or later. Being of the later version myself, I remain deeply indebted to all those past and present facilitators and translators without whom my own understanding would falter. Jim’s commitment to translate and publish both this difficult root text accompanied by the Khenpo’s commentary serves a great need towards this end to all practitioners and scholars interested in the Dzogchen teachings.

In general, the Tibetan language is rich in the nuances of the science of mind. We are very fortunate that we live in an era where there is not only literacy but also the circumstance where we can have access to rare bodies of knowledge such as the root tantras, hitherto difficult to access. But more importantly we have Dzogchen teachers in our era who are living embodiments of the transmission. As students of the Dzogchen Master Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, who has himself, perfected his own knowledge of these texts through extraordinary efforts and unwavering dedication, we are indebted to him for delivering into the chaos of western life for the first time a river of unbroken energy and knowledge of the primordial state elucidated in the root tantras. Without such a master or masters, reading these texts remains nothing more than mental exercises.

In all honestly, my limited experience of the *Kunjed Gyalpo* is that is difficult to read and often incomprehensible. Translations fall flat for what we are relating to is an extreme abbreviation requiring the golden key of a master capable of unlocking the jewels within like one of those small sponges which, when dropped into water, unfurl their complex

garden. Reading Khenpo Zhenphen Öser’s commentary on this most important of root tantras will be familiar to those who have studied the *Precious Vase* by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu.

Jim has organized the material so that we can read the original text, and then commentary of each word or syllable, followed by extensive quotes from other scholars such as Longchenpa. His English is clear, fresh and consistent with a vocabulary already familiar to practitioners in the lineage of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu. Catherine Ishii, Jim’s partner, has done a marvelous job of editing the manuscript resulting in remarkably lucid prose.

Jim Valby has dedicated his life to translating the original root texts – an extraordinary feat by a measure. Heroically, he has plowed ahead despite obstacles. At last, the fruits of his labor can be seen here is this impressive fist volume in the series. We look forward to many more in the coming months and years.

An Interview with Jim Valby by Jacqueline Gens for the Mirror

Mirror: Jim, can you talk a little about how you came to translate this particular Dzogchen text?
Jim: In January 1983 Chogyal Namkhai Norbu said, “In the United States we will do big translation projects” and he ‘assigned’ 21 chapters of the *Kunjed Gyalpo*, the principal Dzogchen Semde Tantra, to each of 4 interested American disciple-Tibetologists. I translated my 21 chapters, and then also the other 63 chapters by about 1987. But I never published the translation because there were so many passages I did not understand. In 2005 some Ukrainian and Russian sponsors of our Dzogchen Community translation projects purchased thousands of Adobe-readable PDF digital Tibetan texts from the Tibetan Buddhist Resource Center founded by Gene Smith. Volumes 4010 to 4012 of W25983 are the 2400 page commentary on the *Kunjed Gyalpo*. Now there is the real possibility I can complete my Master’s first assignment.



Mirror: Why has there been so little attention paid to the root tantras among Tibetan scholars and western translators?
Jim: Dzogchen root tantras and lungs form the basis of Dzogchen Kama teachings, which were re-transmitted on this planet by Guru Garab Dorje about 300BC. The concepts and language in these texts are very difficult to understand. Also their contents are controversial and self-secret. For example, many narrow-minded masters and practitioners do not recognize the immediacy and totality of primordial enlightenment, so they create some fantasy ‘enlightenment’ which depends upon their struggle, practice, acceptance, rejection and karma. Also, many modern masters and practitioners focus exclusively on particular Terma teachings, like the Longchen Nyingthig, which are only tiny pieces of the totality of Dzogchen transmission. Some modern masters have never seriously studied the root Kama texts and have not applied the related practices. But some masters and practitioners seriously study the magnificent texts of Longchenpa written about 1600 years after Garab Dorje. Longchenpa often quotes page after page from the Kama teachings of Garab Dorje to explain and support his important points. This means that Longchenpa understands that Garab Dorje’s Kama teachings are the essential source of oral transmission.

Mirror: What is the style and purpose of the Tibetan tradition of commentaries?
Jim: A traditional Tibetan commentary assumes that the reader is already a little familiar with the teaching in the root text. A small circle placed underneath a syllable in the commentary indicates that this syllable occurs in the root text. In English translation, I indicate this syllable with **bold** print. Each syllable of the root text occurs in the commentary. The commentator emphasizes the meanings of all topics by using the syllables of the root text in an expanded explanation. Then the commentator quotes one or more other tantras, lungs, sutras, or great masters to support, defend and amplify his interpretation of the profound meaning.



Photo: G. Horner

Mirror: Who was Khenpo Zhenphen Öser and how did he come to write this commentary, which seems very ambitious with 2400 folios.
Jim: The commentary named *Ornament of the State of Samantabhadra* was begun by the 19th century Khenpo Thubten Pema Rabgye with his student Khenpo Zhenphen Öser, who completed the text after his teacher’s death. The seat of Khenpo Zhenphen Öser was the mgo tsha dgon Nyingma Monastery founded in 1182 in ser shul rdzong county, dkar mdzes khul prefecture, Sichuan province. At the end of the massive 2400 page commentary, Khenpo Zhenphen Öser explains how he came to write it. He says that he and his teacher composed the basic outline together, but they found it very difficult to ‘implement the execution’ so the text remained incomplete for a long time. Just before he ‘went to the space state’, Thubten Pema Rabgye’s last instruction to Khenpo Zhenphen Öser was ‘you must complete the *Kunjed Gyalpo* commentary’. Khenpo Zhenphen Öser was also repeatedly encouraged by another spiritual friend to complete the *Kunjed*

Gyalpo commentary’, but he had to perform his many monastery duties for years. Eventually the necessary conditions appeared, like people to assume his administrative jobs, free time, the hermitage named ‘pleasure grove of immortal attainment’, and paper. Although he felt his intelligence and skill were insufficient to even pay lip service to the profound meaning of the *Kunjed Gyalpo* tantra, he invoked the lineage, made offerings and requested permission from the guardians to write the commentary. He asked that the guardians not punish him for his arrogance. He completed the commentary, and made the wish that the definitive secret essence of the teaching spread everywhere in all times and directions, and remain for a long time.

Mirror: When can we expect Volume Two?
Jim: Volume two is the commentary on Chapters 11 to 29 that will be printed in August 2009 after Catharine Ishii & I complete the editing.

Mirror: Thank you, Jim. ©

b o d h i

THE VOICE OF VAJRAYANA BUDDHISM

BODHI MAGAZINE is dedicated to providing

genuinely **practical** teachings & practice instruction from a **Kagyu Nyingma Vajrayana** Buddhist perspective. It is published under the direction of The Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche.

Profound, Challenging and Rewarding.

SUBSCRIBE or GIVE A GIFT
subscriptions@nalandabodhi.org

Books

12

‘Gods Attained The Human Realm’

Primo Pensiero
Jacqueline Gens

Shivastan Publishing
Cooperative
54E Tinker Street
Woodstock, NY 12498
www.shivastan.org

Louise Landes-Levi

“There’s nothing stable in the world; uproar your only music”
John Keats

I who dismiss or certainly resist, fiercely at times, authority, am drawn, like a moth to light, by Jacqueline Gens **Primo Pensiero** almost for its authority – authority, in the garb of constantly shifting metaphor, smile, rhyme & even reason. Jacqueline’s poems are post modern, yet traditional & linguistically, in their depth, extremely elegant:

*I beg you to pierce my pride with your katvanga.
In olden times, I would burn, left out on a mountainside at birth,
whipped, subdued, or crushed. But I was rescued
through knowledge of you.*

From Primo Pensiero
Authoritative emptiness sustains the elocution – transforming tumors into lost children, masters into loyal friends and the grime of the underground into the portal of lapis. Emptiness masquerading as eloquence is very attractive. Why, because poetry is non-didactic instruction, a kind of spiritual anarchy. Canons of instruction migrate from one cultural milieu to the other, our potential, in poetic or other endeavor. It does not depend on the forms a culture produces.

Jacqueline is well known for her administrative skills, her kindness, her years of devotion to such luminaries as Allen Ginsberg, to such beloved lamas, as the doctor Trogawa Rinpoche. A long time student of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche, she chose, having studied (for decades) Tantric view & practice, the path of ATI. She walked out, she integrated, she became – a poet. She is creating new forms, inspiring us w. her efforts, when most feel their work is done, to begin anew (as founder & co-director of the MFA Program in poetry at New England College). She served on the board for the Shang Shung Institute. She holds an MAT in Innovative Technology from Marlboro College – see her site ‘poetry-mind’ tsetso.blogspot.com.

PRIMO PENSIERO is a must for those who aspire to the Written Word, eloquent & dense with scholarship, a vocabulary that is a pleasure:



*“First, sound; light;
then rays riding waves
of endless becoming,
Your golden vowel
Calls us home.
We want you to stay.
Always one foot in another realm nothing to tempt us with
Except the small map of our world
Calling you back.*

From Uproar’s Music – For Chögyal Namkhai Norbu on His Birthday
To this pauper, to this traveler,
picking up phrases in a dozen

countries ‘she (LLL) speaks Merigaresque’ said the master one night at the Aiuole [Hotel]. I greatly admire the honest New England diction & the erudition we encounter in the poetry of Jacqueline Gens:

*The real miracle year after year
The leeks grow only in this one place.
Each spring I try to remember
Their irony taste drawn from deep soil humus,
decayed pine, juniper, crushed maple leaves,
Moss, and rotted wood –
Often I forget the wild leeks of Keats Brock Road
I can’t remember how we ended up
in this New England Neighborhood –*

From Wild Leeks
The mother (‘she’s here in the woods now’) the greater Mother, the labyrinth, the river of death, the subtle relation between master & disciple presented in its modern format – Jacqueline & her publisher/book designer Shiv Mirabito have outdone themselves with this volume that feels, to the touch, like a flower, like a heavily scented flower, Anthurium, or Cymbidium. Its parts fit perfectly together. One feels this even before opening its orange, red & black which bears a line drawing of Machig Labdron, (commissioned by Gens in 1994) from Glen Eddy to whom the book is dedicated.

In memory of Glen Roger Eddy (1946-2006)
*In dreams, they come with out
In dreams, they come with out stretched hands, the color of malachite
giving, magnetizing
palms formed by lead and wind,
torrential waters –*

*As they pass to me the white lotus bud
Grown up from mud,*

Its stainless bloom opens.

From Dedication
Then the poems: **Primo Pensiero**, for Gelek Rinpoche, **Visitation** for Allen, **The Butterfly Lover**, every Dakini’s dream of liberation, **Wild Leeks**, **Visiting Tzintzunsan** for Tsultrim Allione (known for her ground breaking book Women Of Wisdom): ‘The place where fire ends, marked in bronze, said gods attained the human realm outside the village of Tzintzunsan’, with subtle metaphors from the Western canon ‘the slow arrow’, ‘guardians at the gate’ (with a reference to a ceremony 20 years after the death of Chogyam Trungpa), subtler

still the lesser-known metaphors (but no less familiar for scholar Gens) from the oriental world. **The Final Poem** for Allen is a tour de force, evoking the great man, without mention of him, a final mockery for his & our obsession with fame & glory, at the same time, respecting the ultimate humility, even anonymity of the poet & his work ‘this is as far as you are allowed to go. I don’t have the water rights for your passage’ he says in dream to his loyal assistant.

*I stood quietly to your side waiting to assist you
yet not disturb your concentration.
Finished, you handed me a sheaf of papers,
Here, these are for you, for translation*

From Visitation
Behold Jacqueline, the scholar, the householder, the gardener (Gens amazes with her knowledge of the natural world, the poems suffused with names of plants, minerals, geologic & ecologic phenomena) the teacher, the student, who yet has within her heart a treasury of verse, a veritable treasury.

In general, one whose work is part of a series of books, at least in the ‘law’ of the literary world, cannot review another in the same series.* So once again, I break with tradition & salute my fellow poet & traveler, scholar & muse. The wish-fulfilling gem has created a bouquet of verses, which in their brevity seem as light as the heaviest tear shed on the site of pilgrimage. I say, without hesitation, that of the 50 or more books Shiv Mirabito has produced, this one is, for me, one of the most remarkable. He is to be saluted for bringing Primo Pensiero to the attention of the international poetry community.

Jacqueline Gens has addressed herself to this community, beyond hesitation, ‘beyond doubt’.

Poetry has been suspected (see above) of ‘spiritual anarchism’. Jacqueline comforts with her light authority but as we peruse the elegance of her work, this same authority transforms into blessing, that is, into the message that will liberate us from the tyranny of our minds, our judgment, our dualistic view.

One cannot say that transmission is lost, no, as the master said, ‘the wings of the birds of Mt. Meru were clothed in gold’. We carry this transmission. Jacqueline has carried her understanding into verse of shocking richness. Dzogchen goes beyond bhumi, we do not apprehend the steps, (the 10 bhumill, as in the Mahayana). Behold Jacqueline: single bhumi – ‘first thought, best thought’ – she has drawn her arrow & she has hit her mark.

“Rely not on Nethartha (indirect meaning/language) but on Nithartha (direct meaning/experience).” The Buddha

Louise Landes Levi NYC
31.12.2008–4.1.2009

* Ms. Levi has also published w. Shivastan, Avenue A & Ninth Street, 2006 & forthcoming The Deep Diamond, a broadside, 2009.

NOTES:
Dzog-chen: Ati yoga, highest of the 9 vehicles of the dharma.
Bhumi: the 10 steps of liberation, in the Mahayana school of Tibetan Buddhism.

To order Primo Pensiero: write Jacqueline Gens at jgens@sover.net for instructions. Price of \$ 12.00 includes international postage and personal signing. ©

Kunjed Gyalpo Series

*Ornament of the State of Samantabhadra:
Commentary on the All-Creating King of the
Pure Perfect Presence of the
Great Perfection of All Phenomena*

*Volume One: Commentary on
Chapters 1-10 of the kun byed rgyal po*

*Written in Tibetan by
Khenpo Zhenphen Öser*

*Translated into English by
Jim Valby*

Dzogchen Atiyoga Book Available

Ornament of the State of Samantabhadra

Volume One: Commentary on Chapters 1-10 of the Kunjed Gyalpo

Written in Tibetan by Khenpo Zhenphen Öser
Translated into English by Jim Valby

jimvalby@gmail.com
<http://sites.google.com/site/jimvalbythings/>

Available shortly from Shang Shung Editions

Togden Shakya Shri

The Life and Liberation of a Tibetan Yogin

Kathog Situ Chökyi Gyatso

Translated from Tibetan and compiled by Elio Guarisco
Preface by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu and foreward by Sey Rinpoche, Lineage Holder and great grandson of Shakya Shri.
2009 Shang Shung Institute, Italy
info@shangshunginstitute.org
www.shangshunginstitute.org

This *namthar*, or traditional Tibetan biography, welcomes the reader to the extraordinary dimension of a realized yogin. Its pages recount the inspiring milestones in the life of the revered Togden of Drugu (1853–1919), a portrayal which is also precious as the mirroring of a vanished world. The chronicle glows with inspiring facts and miraculous happenings, as well as insights provided by numerous letters between the Togden and some of the greatest masters of that era.

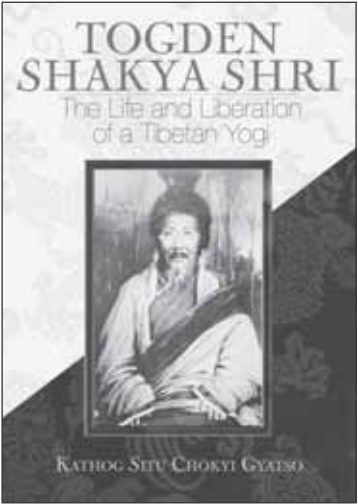
This book has been translated as part of the Ka-Ter project.
The following passage is excerpted from the book.

In this age of disputes, Shakya Shri stands out, the apex of a victory banner rippling over an ocean of realized beings, the crown ornament of millions of masters of the doctrine of the essential definitive meaning.⁶³ In his lifetime he appeared as a powerful yogin who, following the exalted path, had gained the direct realization of reality.⁶⁴

In truth, he had already awakened in the primordial ultimate realm countless aeons ago. However, moved by unlimited compassion, he continued to care for infinite beings afflicted by suffering whose minds, unhinged by the demons of both intellectual and innate clinging to a self,⁶⁵ remained in the prison of samsara, tightly bound by the ropes of negative karma and the ob-

scuring states of mind. In this age, worse than the age of degeneration, Shakya Shri unreservedly displayed a magical charisma through the three secrets (body, voice and mind) of his embodiment. With his deeds, like a white parasol towering over the three worlds,⁶⁶ he planted the seed of the liberating path in everyone he met, in accordance with his or her capabilities.

From an early age Shakya Shri Jnana was infused with a deep interest in dharma and manifested a marked disengagement with the worldly. His outer behavior was that of a king of wandering yogins who sees all marvels of the world like bubbles of water, devoid of intrinsic value. Inwardly, he lived in a state of undivided contemplation by the grace



of which, in this lifetime, he ascended to the highest throne of realization.

Here we shall briefly recount the story of his liberation, embodied in the three cycles of the life⁶⁷ of this great sovereign of ascetics, indivisible from the primordial buddha.

His Previous Lives

Shakya Shri lived an extraordinary life, and the recounting of it not only has great meaning, but brings significant benefits as well. Reading his life story will inspire faith in those who have not had the fortune to meet him directly, and will increase the devotion of those who have actually been his disciples, so that their faith will not fade but remain unswerving.

Accordingly, Chandragomin⁶⁸ said:

These good deeds, the signs of great renown,
Unveil the path of those gone to bliss,⁶⁹ and
Those lacking in conviction will develop faith;
Thus, virtuous stories are a source of joy.

damentals and History, Gyurme Dorje, translator, Wisdom Publications, p. 471. This work will be henceforth cited as NSH).

74 Avalokiteshvara, the deity symbol of the compassion that lies at the core of the mind of all living beings and of the buddhas. Here he is called mig mi 'dzum or 'the one who does not close his eyes' before the suffering of others.

75 Naropa (956–1040) was one of the foremost of the eighty-four tantric adepts of India. Following the advice of a dakini who appeared to him in the semblance of an aged woman, he left the monastery where he had been an abbot in order to search for his guru, destined to be Tilopa (928–1009). After subjecting Naropa to years of trials, Tilopa finally revealed the ultimate teachings to him. See Herbert V. Guenther, *The Life and Teachings of Naropa*, Oxford University Press, 1963, 1978.

76 Vikramashila (*nmam gnon ngang tshul*), a renowned university for Buddhist studies in India during the eleventh century. It was probably located in present day Sultanganji at Bhagalpur in eastern Bihar.

77 Tib.: knowledge holder.

78 Rigdzin Dorje Düdjom of the Nanam family (*rig 'dzin sna nam rdo rje bdud 'joms*), one of the Tibetans dispatched by king Trisong Detsen (*khri srong lde btsan*) to invite Padmasambhava to Tibet. Later, he became a disciple of the master and an adept who could pass through mountains of solid rock; he was one of the twenty-five great accomplished masters of Chimphu (*mchims phu*).

79 Ngamdzung Bodhiraja (*ngam rdzong bo dhi ra dza*), known as *tönpa* (teacher), was learned in the five Treatises of Maitreya. He was from eastern Tibet and became a disciple of Milarepa, receiving from him all instructions. He made a compendium of Milarepa's teachings.

80 *The Oral Transmission of the Dakini* (*mka'gro'i snyan brgyud*) or *Cycles of Teachings of the Formless Dakini* (*lus med mkha'gros'i chos skor*) that Milarepa entrusted to Ngam Dzong Bodhiraja (*ngam rdzong*

The names of the previous incarnations of the Lord of the Mandala⁷⁰ Shakya Shri, whose embodiments as scholar and saint greatly benefited beings, are as follows:

At one time in this age of wrangling, he was born as the arrowsmith Brahmin Saraha,⁷¹ who was the forefather of an ocean of realized beings, an accomplished yogin whose fame still today is widespread in Tibet.

Another time, he was born in India as Mitrayogin,⁷² inseparable in his nature from Garland of Skulls,⁷³ and a magical emanation of Avalokiteshvara,⁷⁴ the supremely exalted embodiment of the love and compassion of countless buddhas.

Again he was born in India, this time as the scholar Naropa,⁷⁵ protector of the northern gate of the Vikramashila monastic university.⁷⁶

Later in Tibet he was born as Rigdzin⁷⁷ Dorje Düdjom of the Nanam family, one of the nine heart-sons or predestined favored disciples of the second buddha, Padmasambhava.⁷⁸

He was also born as Ngamd-zong Bodhiraja,⁷⁹ the mind-son of Milarepa who was like the source of a river for the lineage of attainments, and to whom Milarepa entrusted the lineage of the Oral Transmission of the Dakinis.⁸⁰

Once he was born as Lingchen Repa, called 'the Saraha of Tibet', for his fame as a highly realized being reached the plains of the Ganges.⁸¹

He was the disciple of Drogön Phagmo Trupa, also known as Desheg Khampa Dorgyal.⁸²

He was born as Nyagre Sewo, crown of all realized Kagyü masters, whose real name was Rinchen Gyaltsen.⁸³

bo dhi ra dza). These are actually *The Nine Teachings of the Formless Dakini* that Rechungpa (*ras chung pa*), another disciple of Milarepa, brought back from India. Bodhiraja's transmission of these teachings is known as the *Oral Transmission of Samvara*, that of Rechungpa as the *Oral Transmission of Rechungpa* (B.A. 437–449). It is said that Rechungpa went to India against Milarepa's wishes. There he met a dakini who said to him, 'How sad! You have just one more day to live!' Rechungpa, desperate, asked if there was any way he might avert this fate. The dakini then entrusted him with the teachings that Rechungpa brought back to Tibet (personal communciation from Umdze Sherab).

81 Lingchen Repa (*gling chen ras pa*) or Lingje Repa Pema Dorje (*gling rje ras pa pad ma rdo rje*, 1128–88) in his youth was an ordained monk, but later renounced his vows and took a consort. They continued their lives as wandering cotton-clad yogins until Lingrepa met Phagmo Trupa. Although Phagmo Trupa in general disapproved of married yogins, he was very pleased with Lingrepa and granted him the essential teachings. He attained realization after three days and Phagmo Trupa called him the Saraha of Tibet (B.A. 659–664).

82 Phagmo Trupa (*phag mo gru pa*, 1110–70), one of the four main disciples of Gampopa (*sgam po pa*). Thought to be an emanation of the Indian siddha Lavapa. He lived as a solitary meditator and never entered the houses of his sponsors. Whoever received teachings from him easily attained realization. (B.A. 522–563). He was also a disciple of Sachen Kunga Nyingpo (*sa chen kun dga' snying po*, 1092–1158), one of the five forefathers of the Sakya school. Phagmo Trupa was an exceptionally realized master endowed with the capacity to perform amazing miracles. His disciples were the origin of individual lineages known as the eight lesser Kagyü schools. He founded the monastery of Densatil (*gdan sa mthil*) in Lokha, southern Tibet.

He was then born as Kunpang Avadhutipa Sherab Gyatso,⁸⁴ the master of Pema Karpo, illuminator of the doctrine of the definitive meaning and holder of the secret treasury of profound instructions of the attainment lineage of the glorious Drugpa Kagyü.

He was the yogin Amkar Lhenkye Dorje who, in a single lifetime of practice on the secret path of the dakinis, the swift and blissful ultimate path, flew to celestial realms in his rainbow body without leaving physical remains.

He also took birth as the minister Denma Changtra or Denma Yulgyal Thogö who, fighting with bows and arrows, enacted the will of King Lingje Gesar,⁸⁵ subduing the enemies of the doctrine and dark, demonic forces. According to the needs of his disciples and beings to be trained, Shakya Shri, like a single moon reflecting in many ponds, manifested inconceivably infinite emanations both in sequence and simultaneously.

Shakya Shri's previous incarnations were revealed by indestructible prophecies of the great master of Oddiyana, Padmasambhava. They were partly remembered by Shakya Shri himself, and partly indicated by the two 'gentle saviors', Khyentse Wangpo and Kongtrul Lodrö Thaye,⁸⁶ by Drugpa Yongdzin,⁸⁷ omniscient in the age of decadence, and by other authentic masters, as stated in the long life prayers that they composed for him. To recount the lives of all his previous incarnations would take too long; those who wish to learn about them can read the individual biographies.

83 Nyagre Sewo (*nyag re se bo*) or Rinchen Gyaltsen (*rin chen gyäl mtshan*) was one of the four disciples of Phagmo Trupa who were known as the Four Sons of the Instructions (*gdams pa'i bu gzhi*). After having gained spiritual realization under the guidance of Phagmo Trupa, he went to eastern Tibet where he founded the monastery of Legön (*gles dgon*). See George N. Roerich, trans., *The Blue Annals*, 2nd ed., Motilal Banarsidass, 1976 pp. 563–565.

84 Kunpang Avadhutipa Sherab Gyatso (*kun spang a va dhu ti pa she rab rgya mtsho*). The Sanskrit term avadhūtipa, translated into Tibetan as *kung 'dar*, means total trembling, that is, a bliss which causes trembling. This term is used here to indicate that he was an adept of techniques related to channels (*rtsa*), prana (*rlung*), and vital essence (*thig le*), and that he engaged in this yogic practice with a secret consort.

85 King Lingje Gesar (*gling rje ge sar*, 1038–1124): the legendary warrior king who controlled a large area of eastern Tibet, the subject of many oral epic cycles.

86 Gentle Savior (*'jam mgon*), an epithet of Manjushri. Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo (*'jam dbyangs mkhyen brtse'i dbang po*), Kongtrul Lodrö Thaye (*'jam mgon kong sprul blo gros mthar 'yas*) and Jamgön Ju Mipham Gyatso (*'jam mgon ju mi pham rgya mtsho*) are referred to by this title, with its suggestion that they were emanations of this deity, the embodiment of wisdom.

87 Drugpa Yongdzin (*'brug pa yongs 'dzin*), a renowned incarnation lineage in the Drugpa Kagyü school. The seventh incarnation, Jampel Sheja Kunkhyen (*'jam dpal shes bya kun mkhyen*), is referred to here. The eighth incarnation was threefold, among whom was Apho Rinpoche (*a pho rin po che*), Shakya Shri's grandson.

FOOTNOTES

63 Essential definitive meaning (*nges don snying po*): in a general sense, definitive meaning (*nges don*) stands for the teachings which reveal the profound truth of emptiness, and that the ineffable, inexpressible luminous clarity, beyond conception, is the nature of all phenomena. Essential (*snying po*) refers to the core of such definitive meaning as taught in Mahamudra and Dzogchen. See also note 144.

64 Buddhism teaches a way to awakening structured into five paths: the paths of accumulation (*tshegs lam*), preparation (*shyor lam*), seeing (*mthong lam*), meditation (*bsgom lam*) and no-more-learning (*mi slob lam*). The exalted path (Skt. *oryamorga*, Tib. *'phags lam*) starts with the first direct perception of reality on the path of seeing and continues until awakening.

65 Innate clinging to a self (*bdag 'dzin lhan skyes*): the sense of self present in all beings, as opposed to a speculative grasping of a self (*kun brtags*) induced by philosophical views.

66 Three worlds (*srld pa gsum*, same as *khamas gsum*): the realms of desire, form and absence of form. "The three worlds or existences are the bases for the experience of suffering that beings undergo because of the deception caused by the duality of an observed and an observer. In an inner (secret) sense they refer to body, speech and mind. The body is the apparent level of existence composed of gross matter; speech is the semi-apparent level, a more subtle phenomena occasioned by the inner energies of the person; and the mind, a hidden phenomenon particularly when deprived of sense consciousness, is known as the invisible level of existence. Accordingly, the body is associated with the desire realm, speech with the subtler realm of form, and mind with the formless realm." Longchenpa, *The Great Chariot* (*shing rta chen po*), f. 4745–b1, Drodrukpen Publications, Gangtok, Sikkim.

67 Three cycles (*'khor lo gsum*): the cycle of words of learning and explanation (*bshad pa tshig gi 'khor lo*); the cycle of meditation that removes the obscurations of the mind (*spang ba bsam gtan gyi 'khor lo*); and the cycle of deeds (*bya ba las kyi 'khor lo*).

68 Chandragomin (*zla ba grags pa*), born in southern India in the latter part of the sixth century, became a lay master of exceptional learning. He taught extensively at Nalanda university. He and Shantideva are known as 'the two wonderful teachers.' He experienced a visionary meeting with Avalokiteshvara, who henceforth served as his source of mystic inspiration.

69 Those gone to bliss (*bde bar gshegs pa*): an epithet of the buddhas.

70 Lord of the mandala (*'khor lo'i mgon po*), the central deity in the mandala configuration from whom all surrounding deities emanate. Here it is a laudatory form.

71 Saraha, see note 53.

72 Mitrayogin (*mi tra dzo gi*, 1010–1089), an Indian siddha who received spiritual guidance in a mystical encounter with Avalokiteshvara. The transmission of his 'Six Vajra Yogas' can be found in volume sixteen (*Ma*) of the *gdams ngag mdzod* of Kongtrul Lodrö Thaye (1813–1900).

73 Lotus Garland of Skulls (*pad ma thod phreng*), one of the eight manifestations of Padmasambhava, known as Guru Pema Thötrengtsel (*pad ma thod phreng rtsal*) or the Lotus Guru Energy of a Garland of Skulls. When Padmasambhava, with the intention of converting the king of Oddiyana, travelled around begging in that land, the minister whose son had been slain by him tried unsuccessfully to immolate him and his consort on a pyre. Once the flames subsided, they appeared enthroned on a lotus flower in the center of the lake. A garland of skulls manifested around his neck, which symbolized his work to liberate beings from cyclic existence. Thus he was called Guru Garland of Skulls (see Dudjom Rinpoche, *The Nyingma School of Tibetan Buddhism, Its Fun-*

Russia

14

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu
Retreat in Moscow

Masha Stepanik

This year we were very fortunate that Chogyal Namkhai Norbu could visit Russia to give Dzogchen teaching. For the Russian practitioners it was an exciting week to host and attend the retreat and see the Teacher in person – especially for those practitioners who could not travel to retreats arranged in other countries and continents.

Rinpoche’s arrival brought many new opportunities to our Russian dimension. Five days before the beginning of the retreat, two international Vajra Dance instructors, Prima Mai and Adriana dal Borgo, held a long anticipated instructional dance retreat in Moscow where they taught essential aspects and dance techniques of this precious practice.

After the Rinpoche retreat, the principal Yantra Yoga instructor, Fabio Andrico, not only led the essential pranayama retreat, he also agreed to conduct supervisions of 4 candidates for Yantra Yoga instructors from the Ukraine and Russia.

This year the retreat took place in the “Izmailovo” sports complex within the vicinity of Moscow and it became our home for 5 days where we spent most of our time from early morning to late night. Retreat organizers did their best to provide great services and necessary amenities for all participants, including: a big hall for practices, catering and a café, free coolers with water, lockers, a store with Dzogchen materials and books, and even day care for children of the participants.

The retreat was a great opportunity to demonstrate collaboration of the participants on all levels, showing both efficiency and great work from the organizers, guards of the sports complex, personnel of the information service and many others. We also are very grateful to the Shang-Shung Institute for providing new DVDs with the Russian subtitles to the store during the retreat.

The retreat days were scheduled as follows:

Each day started with Yantra Yoga and Vajra Dance. This was followed by the teaching of the “Four Precious Malas of Longchenpa”, which Rinpoche gave for five days in Moscow. Rinpoche explained each of the mala one by one: turning one’s mind to dharma; practice of dharma as a path; overcoming delusions while following the path; and self-liberation of delusions into primordial wisdom. He also provided an explanation for each of these from the Dzogchen perspective.



Chögyal Namkhai Norbu teaching in Moscow.

Photo: A. Novgorodtsev

After each session people lingered in order to share their impressions. Many practitioners noted that whenever they had certain questions before the session, they found their answers during the sessions when the Teacher was explaining the teaching. Upon the end of each session the Teacher showing limitless kindness and patience by speaking with all participants who wanted to talk to him individually.

When the Teacher left the sports complex, Adriana dal Borgo started her training and explanation of the Three Vajra Dance. On 9 mandalas Adriana, other dance instructors and more advanced students helped the newcomers to make progress in that precious practice, whereas the others

learned the irregular version of it.

This was followed by Yantra Yoga for beginners as introduced to them by Fabio Andrico. At the same time students who were familiar with Yantra Yoga could correct their movements and advance their practice by using Fabio’s guidance which was provided there. The day usually ended with an explanation of the collected practices by Igor Berkhin who gathered not only beginners but also more experienced people eager to deepen their understanding of these practices.

In addition, we were also very delighted to have Yeshe Silvano Namkhai provide a teaching of the “Seven Line Prayer or the Sev-

en Verses of the Vajra”. He managed to present and explain the teaching in a rather simple yet contemporary way. For instance, he compared our primary potentiality as water versus the other relative staff by using an analogy of a bottle with a label. Everyone was impressed by his immediate reaction to the students’ individual and general situations and needs. When he was asked for advice regarding interactions between practitioners in Dzogchen community he immediately asked to gather all members of that community and he gave them essential instructions on this topic.

We look forward to new visits and retreats of Yeshe to Russia and Ukraine in the nearest future.

During his visit in Moscow, Rinpoche blessed the Gompa of the Moscow Dzogchen Community, even though he had to go up the rather steep staircase to the top floor (penthouse), as the lift didn’t go to the top floor at that building. After Ganapuja Rinpoche went out on the roof and looked at the view over Moscow going all directions. He knew that he liked that place and the atmosphere there and so he presented the Moscow Dzogchen Community with two thangka and a miniature statue of Buddha.

We eagerly look forward to more Rinpoche visits to Russia and to our great delight, he promised to return in the future. ©

WE ARE HAPPY TO ANNOUNCE
THAT THE NEW ISSUE
OF THE VIDEO JOURNAL
IS ALREADY ON ITS WAY
TO THE SUBSCRIBERS.

NUMBER 17

VIDEO JOURNAL 17

THIS ISSUE COVERS RINPOCHE'S TRAVELS AND RETREATS IN PERU, TASHIGAR NORTE, KUNDROLLING, TSEGYALGAR, KHANDROLLING AND TORONTO AS WELL AS TEACHINGS OF YESHI SILVANO NAMKHAIR IN RUSSIA IN THE FIRST HALF OF 2008. THE PRICE IS 50 EURO FOR 2 ISSUES IN A YEAR, INCLUDING SHIPPING EXPENSES, WHILE FOR SUSTAINING MEMBERS OF MERIGAR WEST THE PRICE IS 25 EURO.

For information on how to subscribe please write to:
orders@institutoshangshung.org or lvelasco@shangshunginstitute.org

The Video Journal Team
The Shang Shung Institute

Books by
Chögyal
Namkhai Norbu

- ◆ Yantra Yoga
- ◆ Dream Yoga and the Practice of Natural Light
- ◆ Dzogchen Teachings
- ◆ The Supreme Source
- ◆ Dzogchen: The Self-Perfected State
- ◆ The Crystal and the Way of Light

Tibetan Buddhist news and thousands of items online.
FREE quarterly newsletter and catalog on request.

800-950-0313
tibet@snowlionpub.com

Pointing to liberation

The retreat in Cologne, Germany with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

Martha Heinen

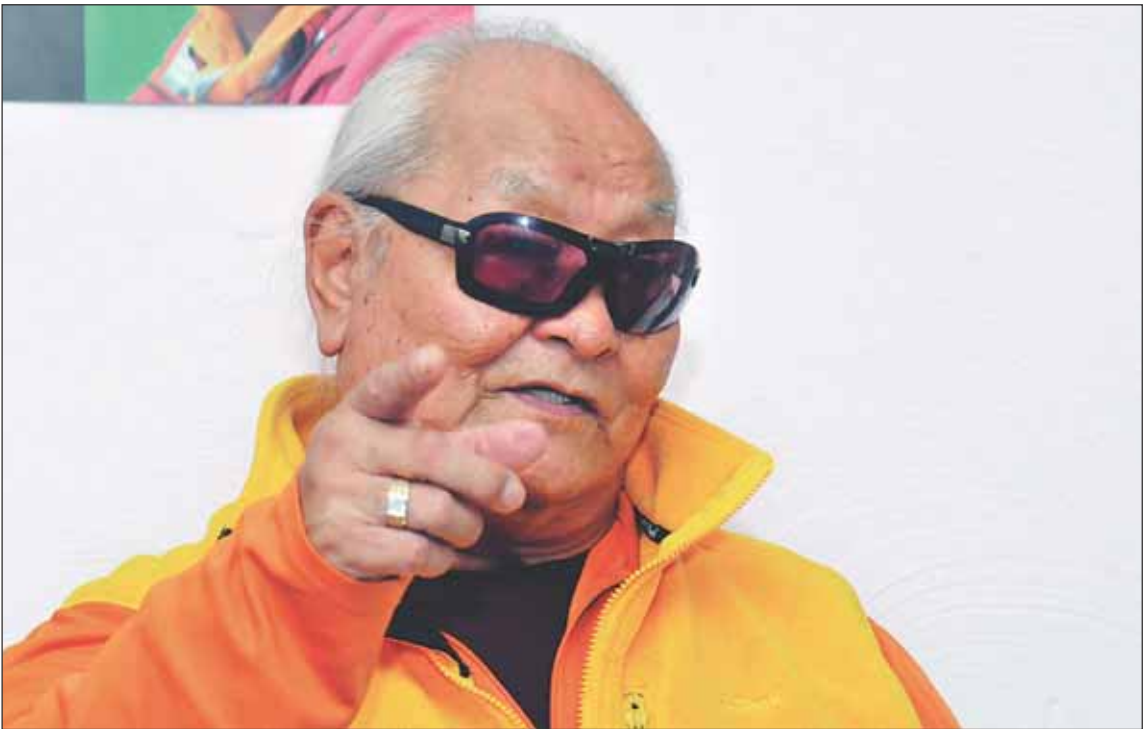
The majestic cathedral of Cologne in Germany was built in the 13th century. It is meant as a symbol of the greatness of the spirit within and beyond this world; it is meant as a finger pointing to heaven, at least for Catholics. And this church lies just beside the Rhein River, which is more of a broad stream and flows through this big city dividing it into two parts. For me, this stream that passes through the city is a strong symbol that represents ever-changing life itself: floating, always moving, always changing, nothing to grasp, a glittering dancing energy that never stops!

Altogether a perfect setting to meet a teaching like Dzogchen and one of its most dedicated living protagonists, Chögyal Namkhai Norbu. We are so lucky to have him as our teacher and

for us he is like the cathedral, a finger pointing to liberation!

This was certainly felt also by the more than 600 participants at this three-day weekend retreat held in a hotel hall right in the center of town. Although the German community has about 230 members and there were also members from Holland, Switzerland, Austria, Italy and the US, etc. participating, most people were new and had come for the first time.

The atmosphere during this retreat was very intense and strong, but at the same time smooth and guided by joyfulness – a rare and delightful combination. Naturally all this happened because of the incredibly beautiful teaching Rinpoche offered to us all. It did not have a special title, but was simply called a general introduction to Dzogchen. On Saturday especially, Rinpoche was like an



Chögyal Namkhai Norbu in Cologne.

Photo: Elena Ihlicik

artist drawing us a huge picture of the Dzogchen realm and making us look from the perspective of a bird down onto this map and the path – with all the high peaks and the abysses – which can lead us to pure knowledge. Great!

In between he told a lot of personal stories about, for example, how he met his Root Guru,

Changchub Dorje. Rinpoche opened the hearts of people in the hall by sharing with us all his own experiences of when he first met the true meaning of Dzogchen. We laughed! The ability of our master to talk to the audience as if talking to each person melts the ego. It is his ability, his not-only-talking but being

Dzogchen, which lets everyone taste what that really is. Pure direct introduction! By being so near to all of us in these rare moments he makes it clear that the goal of Dzogchen is reachable for everyone who undertakes it. There is nothing left to say. ©

Dargyaling – The first Ling of the Dzogchen Community in Germany

Inauguration of Dargyaling in Cologne by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche

Larissa Rieve

On June 5, the first day of the Dzogchen Retreat in Cologne, Rinpoche consecrated the first Ling of the Dzogchen Community in Germany and named it “Dargyaling”, the Ling or place from where the teachings spread or flourish.

Although the date and time of the consecration were communicated only one day before and many of the practitioners coming to the retreat had not yet arrived in Cologne, around 100 people came and welcomed Rinpoche to the new Ling. Even though the reconstruction had not been finished completely, the small courtyard decorated with lungta, with its rose tree and some flowers looked beautiful as well as the main hall of the Ling with a Vajra Dance mandala, an improvised altar and armchair for our Master.

Rinpoche took his seat and expressed his satisfaction: “First of all I want to say congratulations. You have a very nice hall.” Then he presented the name of the new Ling, opening a yellow envelope and showing a document in beautiful Tibetan characters: “The name is ‘Dargyaling’. You know what ‘dargyā’ means? Are you sure you don’t know? Do you remember, when we finish the Ganapuja or Thun we do the dedication. In one of the dedications there is the word ‘dargyā’. At the end, before we say ‘JAYA JAYA SIDDHI SIDDHI PHALA PHALA’ there is the expression ‘DĀR

GYĀS XOG’. So you know the meaning? ‘XOG’ means invoking. And ‘DĀR GYĀS’ – what does it mean? Spreading or developing greatly.” Smiling, Rinpoche added that in the spelling “Dargyaling” the name looked a bit like a German name – with the two little dots on the ä.

Led by Rinpoche, we practiced a short Guruyoga together followed by Sang and Serkyem for purification and as an offering to the local Guardians, creating hereby a good relationship with all potentiality and with the place.

In the name of the German practitioners, Saadet Arslan expressed our happiness about Rinpoche’s visit to Cologne and the new Ling as well as our gratitude to Rinpoche: “It’s like a miracle! It’s fantastic! Thank you!”

Once again Rinpoche expressed his contentment with the new Ling, a nice place prepared very well with dimensions that allow dancing on a mandala, but reminded us also of our responsibility: “You should practice, organise courses like Santi Maha Sangha.” Not to forget Vajra Dance and Yantra Yoga, which are very important and related to the teachings of Dzogchen.

Rinpoche reminded us that the Dzogchen teaching is one of the most important teachings and that it needs to be continued for future generations. “This means we must learn, we must practice.” And some qualified



Rinpoche in Dargyaling.

Photo: Elena Ihlicik



Rinpoche in Dargyaling.

Photo: Elena Ihlicik

people have to teach. But even if we are not becoming teachers, when we become good practitioners the teaching is developed and can manifest its potentiality. Rinpoche gave the example of the famous yogi Milarepa, who lived in the mountains and did not travel around to teach like Rinpoche does, but whose teachings have spread everywhere. Becoming a good practitioner does not mean learning words or remaining in intellectual understanding, but integrating the teachings in our real condition. Then we do not need to send Rinpoche e-mails

with lists of our problems any more, but, while still having problems in samsara, we will be able to integrate and liberate them.

“Sometimes”, Rinpoche said, “it is also important to do collective practices to develop the capacity of each practitioner.” This way we also learn any practice easily, repeating it once, twice or several times.

Besides the possibility to practice, the new Ling also has the function to increase the possibility for people to receive teachings as people who cannot travel to Rinpoche’s retreats all over the

world can still participate in the Ling via video webcast.

Finally Rinpoche invited Fabio to speak about Yantra Yoga and the need of more responsible people becoming Yantra Yoga instructors.

The Dzogchen Retreat with Rinpoche in Cologne had not even started, but we were already filled with happiness and gratitude – and maybe also a good portion of relief after months of search and preparation and hard work for many of us!

History – How the Ling was found, renovated and reconstructed (translated/adapted from an insert in the German Magazine of the Community “Dzogchen Brief”)

Previous History – A Review (by Saadet Arslan)

The wish within the German Dzogchen Community for a place owned by the Community where we could come together and practice was actually not a new one. Since the Community was founded in Germany in 1986, this vision had been expressed and worked on actively by many community members and Gakyils. Also funds had been raised for such a “retreat centre”.

Since the 1990s, the Community has had the possibility to meet regularly in Höfen (near Neustadt a.d. Aisch, Central Franconia), where Hans Vogel generously offered his seminar house for courses and retreats and for the yearly meetings of members. A comfortable solution which, on the other hand, had reduced the pressure to find a place of our own.

From 2006 on, with the reorganisation of the Dzogchen Com-

>> continued on the following page

>> continued from previous page
community initiated by Yeshi Namkhai, the idea of centres in the cities became a topic. Everywhere in Italy such lings were founded, places with active groups of practitioners focussing their energy. Also in Germany the Gakyil encouraged groups of practitioners in different regions to rent rooms.

During the yearly meeting of members in April 2007 the idea of a “retreat centre” in the countryside was going to be put forward, however a group of members resisted and a working group started to look for suitable locations in different areas of Germany.

The story got a new dynamic in late summer 2007 when we came to know that Rinpoche intended to come to Germany in 2008 or 2009 and that this would be a good opportunity to inaugurate a ling in Germany! The news surprised us very joyfully but also brought up some questions: Could we really find a place in Germany before Rinpoche’s visit? What did Rinpoche mean by a “ling”, a centre in a city or the retreat centre in the countryside we had been looking for for so long? And also, should we buy or rather rent it?

When it turned out in November 2007 that Rinpoche was coming only in 2009, this allowed us more time to discuss and plan further steps.

In January 2008, during a meeting of the German Gakyil in Cologne and Bonn, the regional group of practitioners in the Cologne, Bonn and Düsseldorf area approached the Gakyil with the idea to rent a room or apartment and asked how this project could be supported financially and who should rent the room, the Community or a private person? At that time the group was meeting mainly in private rooms which were becoming too small for 20–30 people. They could afford approx. 400–600 euros.

The Gakyil encouraged the regional group to think about the idea of founding the first national ling, a centre available to the German Dzogchen Community and financially supported by it. A group of four people was assigned to start looking for places in the Cologne/Bonn area and present the results and concepts to the assembly of members in April.

In March 2008 some German practitioners had the opportunity to talk to Rinpoche in Margarita about the situation in Germany and clarify some of our doubts, explaining that private rooms were getting too small and about the ideas of a city ling and a retreat centre in the countryside. Rinpoche replied that a city ling was a good idea as it concentrated the energy and could attract new people, especially to the webcasts. The rent should not be too high for the Community. And regarding the question as to whether we should rather rent or buy a place Rinpoche replied we should first rent a place and could later still think about buying one. After having found a place in a city, we could also still look for a



Rinpoche arriving in Dargyaling.

Photo: Elena Ihlicik

place in the countryside if we had the possibilities.

So then in April 2008 the assembly of members decided that the working group (now called the “ling search committee”) should look for a place to be rented as the first German ling in the Cologne/Bonn region.

“You can also find a place in the countryside later if you have the possibilities...” – maybe our next Step.

Searching for the Ling

(by Joachim Raack and Larissa Rieve)
When the “Search Committee” started to look for suitable places, it soon turned out to be a challenging task as the premises had to have enough space for a mandala and at the same time should be affordable for our budget. Furthermore the future ling should be accessible by public transportation, not be too far away from the city centre and also easy to reach from the neighbouring cities of Bonn and Düsseldorf.

One of the first places considered was a former dental laboratory. The spacious premises had nice roof lights and plenty of space for a mandala. But it turned out, it would be difficult to heat during winter, the area was not the best one, many buildings in the neighbourhood were untenanted. After visiting the place, half of the local practitioners and the Gakyil gave a favourable opinion, the other half an unfavourable one. Later it turned out the owner demanded a much higher rent than initially mentioned – so we decided to keep on searching.

The next serious possible place, a nice reconditioned industrial building, was located in one of the “hottest” quarters of Cologne. A large advantage here: the place had been completely renovated and therefore it found much approval by many people. In the long run, however, it remained by far not affordable.

Other visited and much discussed premises were ruled out – among other reasons – because, although we had hoped so at the beginning, the dance mandala did not fit in or because possible pollution by former industrial use could not be completely excluded.

As places in Cologne often turned out to be too expensive, from time to time the question came up about whether Bonn would be a suitable location for the ling. Bonn appeared to us however only acceptable for the Ling if the premises lay in proximity to the central station, since the transport connection would have become otherwise a problem. In the long run, however, we did not succeed in finding a suitable place fulfilling these criteria.

This search process, which also meant going through Internet offers and newspaper advertisements every day, was again and again interrupted by breaks characterised by disillusionment and moderate resignation. But these breaks also started up a new reflection process and led to the reorientation of our concepts and sharpened our view for what was really important. It became ever clearer: searching for a ling is a spiritual practice which can only lead to success if those taking part in this process completely submit to the goal. Any egoism or personal preferences had to lead inevitably to failure. So the search was also a process of sublimation.

And finally, when we had almost given up hope to be able to present a place to Rinpoche, we found some premises that were not very promising at first sight, situated in the backyard of a central and pristine area of Cologne, with two churches nearby. It was a building used as an apartment loft. With the experience of nearly one year of searching, we soon discovered that these premises had some potential. They consisted of many individual rooms and did not seem to offer enough space for a mandala, but it turned out that something could be created here, which corresponded to our needs. After some visits, which the previous tenant tolerated patiently, some advice from architects combined with the know-how existing in the Sangha, it became clear that this could become the new Ling. Not to forget an important plus: the monthly rent appeared affordable to us.

However, we soon realised that reconstruction work on a larger scale would be necessary. In the

following discussions it turned out that a broad majority, both in the regional Sangha and in the Gakyil, supported this place. The following voting showed a broad agreement, a few abstentions and only one dissenting vote. An inquiry initiated by the Gakyil and Search Committee regarding a first call for donations resulted in an overwhelming reaction we had not expected. Within only a few days German members replied that they would support the Ling with monthly donations of over 1,000 euros. Now we still had to find out what Rinpoche thought of this place. His answer was a joy and a relief:

“Dear German Gakyil, I am very happy you finally found a place. It is always good to have a base for the community and all the different activities. With many Tashi Delegs!!!! N.N.”

In the hard negotiations (concerning mainly the structural alterations to be made) which took place between the search committee and the owner of the place, in which also again and again the Gakyil was involved, we succeeded in finally coming to a good solution for all sides. So finally the rental agreement and contract regarding the alterations could be signed. We had actually reached our goal to find a place for the Ling four months before Rinpoche’s visit!

Of course this is not the end of the story: From the time the previous tenants moved out and Rinpoche’s visit we had only two months for the reconstruction. As our budget did not allow us to hire external workers, most of the work had to be done by Dzogchen Community members. So, thanks to all those who offered so much of their time and energy to make this dream come true!!

Dargyaling
Spielmannsgasse 14,
50678 Cologne
ling@dzogchen.de
www.dzogchen.de

©

In memory of Michau in Cologne

Martha Heinen

Many people may still remember Michau Babai-kov, a painter from Poland, who died quite young some years ago. He lived in Cologne Germany for many years and earned his money by painting large pictures on the pavement in front of the Dome (cathedral) of Cologne.

There is also a famous and very good Indian restaurant nearby, where Michau had beautifully painted all the walls in Indian style for his friend the owner. He also helped, together with some of us, to paint the inside of the Gonpa at Merigar many years ago. When he stayed in Cologne, he was always a little unhappy that there were no other practitioners in town and he had to go to nearby Bonn to meet a group.

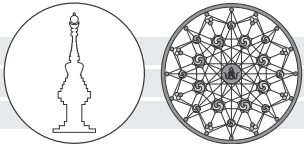


Michal Bajbakov (last row in the middle), in India, 1997.

And now the first Ling of Germany is there in the center of Cologne! He would have liked that. Someone told me that during the retreat a little group of Community people went to eat at that restaurant, to see his painting and to pay their respect to Michau posthumously. I heard that they told

the owner they had also come to see the pictures Michau had painted and then the owner invited them all for drinks. Also Louise Landes- Levi (I hope you don’t mind me mentioning you here) impressed the Indian owner with her Hindi capacities! In the end they toasted Michau with tea. ©

Merigar West



Merigar West

Arcidosso 58031
GR Italy

phone: 39 0564 966837
fax: 39 0564 968110

merigaroffice@tiscalinet.it
www.dzogchen.it

Calendar of Events 2009

July

July 1-5
Yantra Yoga and Pranayama
For members

July 8-12
Dance of the Song of the Vajra
Advanced Course with
Jnana Dakini practice
With Prima Mai

July 16-19
Xitro explanation and practice retreat
With Nina Robinson

July 24-27
Yantra Yoga First and Second series
in-depth course
With Laura Evangelisti

August

August 1-8
First Level Teachers' Training of
Dance of the Vajra
With Adriana Dal Borgo and Prima Mai

August 10-16
Chögyal Namkhai Norbu
Dzogchen Teaching Retreat

August 17-22
Dance of the Song of the Vajra
course part 1
With Margit Martinu with supervision

August 24-31
Teachers' Training of Yantra Yoga
With Fabio Andrico and Laura Evangelisti

August 28-30
Gomadevi explanation and
practice retreat
With Enzo Terzano

September

September 3-18
Yantra Yoga course on all
108 movements
With Fabio Andrico and Laura Evangelisti
For Yantra Yoga instructors
and on invitation

September 15-20
Dance of the Song of the Vajra
advanced course
With Adriana Dal Borgo

September 25-October 1
Dance of the Song of the Vajra
course part 2

October

October 2-10
Chögyal Namkhai Norbu
Dzogchen Teaching Retreat

October 23-30
Chögyal Namkhai Norbu
Dzogchen Teaching Retreat



Chögyal Namkhai Norbu Teachings at Merigar West

August 10-16
Dzogchen Teaching Retreat
Experiential Instructions on
“Dzogchen Medjung”, The Marvelous,
one of the most important Tantras of the
Dzogchen Semde

October 2-10
Dzogchen Teaching Retreat
Experiential Instructions on “Bepai Gumchung”,
the Hidden Collection of Buddhagupta, an ancient Dzogchen text
found among the Tunhuang manuscripts

October 23-30
Dzogchen Teaching Retreat
Practice and Teachings dedicated to those that have died,
Shitro, terma of Rigzin Jyangchub Dorje “Khorde Rangdrol”

Photo: E. Ihlicik

Upcoming
Yantra Yoga Course
on all the movements of Yantra Yoga
with Fabio Andrico and Laura Evangelisti
September 3rd–18th 2009

All 108 movements of Yanta Yoga will be covered and the Shang Shung Institute will record one or more videos. In the afternoon there will be three-hour teaching sessions. In the morning filming.

Who can attend? Yantra Yoga Instructors and on invitation.

The course starts on Thursday 3rd September at 5 pm and finishes on Friday 18th September at 1 pm. The course is free. Please register before the course starts, by e-mail or phone to the Merigar West Office.

phone:+390564-966837
merigaroffice@tiscali.it



Nina Robinson.

Photo: L. Graf

Mandarava Tsalung and practice retreat

The most recent event to be held at Merigar West was the Mandarava Tsalung and practice retreat led by Nina Robinson June 1–11. A Mandara-

va Ganapuja was held at the end of the retreat and, as you may see in the photo, apart from a light shower, a full Merigar rainbow also manifested above the heads of the participants!

This retreat was the most recent in a long series of retreats, courses and practice sessions held at the Gar throughout the winter and spring months in ad-



Umbrellas and rainbow.

Photo: I. Wagner

dition to the scheduled retreats and practices. Throughout this period, there have been regular sessions of practice almost every day. There has been a programme of practice combining Vajra Dance with the practice of Gomadevi on many mornings while in the afternoons sessions of Vajra Dance have been followed by sessions of Yantra Yoga

for both beginners and more advanced students on a daily basis. As well as this, there have been regular on-going meetings for in-depth study of the base of Santi Maha Sangha to help prepare students for this summer's exams. ©

Accommodations near Merigar West

Information for people who intend to come to Merigar for retreats or to follow courses
If you are looking for accommodation, airport transfer, local car hire or only logistic assistance, you can contact the following information and reservation service:

Accommodation Service

(Information available in English, German, French and Italian)
Information service and reservation of accommodation during retreats, local transport, & logistic solutions:

Christina von Geispitzheim

Email: accomodationservice@gmail.com
Phone: 0039 0564 957542
Mobile phone: 0039 339 1370739

We cooperate with local hotels, family pensions, residences, agriturismo, Community members who have rooms or houses to rent or sublet. Also we can advise on car rental (at airports or locally), on the best itinerary and time tables of trains and buses, and we have now a circuit of residents who offer various useful services like transfer from the airports, local taxi service, translations, baby sitting, etc.

MerigarEast



Merigar East

Asociatia Culturala Comunitatea Dzog-Chen

23 August 907005

Constanta

Romania

phone: 0040 746 26 08 61

office@dzogchen.ro

www.dzogchen.ro



Preparations for the summer retreat.

Photo: A. Zolkowski

Tibet Day in Bucharest, Romania

Gino Vitiello

Merigar East has been in existence for two years in Romania but the Dzogchen Community there is still an entity that has to be created. Over this period of time there have only been two people living at the Gar and there are actually only a couple of Romanian members of the Community so it seems important to start to have closer contact between the current situation in this country and various parts of the Dzogchen Community.

For this reason the Austrian branch of the Shang Shung Institute organised a meeting in Bucharest on May 9, similar to the one they tried out in Huettenberg

last September. This one, too, was entitled “Tibetan Culture, a unique treasure” and was organized by Oliver Leick, supported by the SSI of Arcidosso and with the collaboration of the highly efficient and very small local community.

Under the supervision of Oliver and in collaboration with Violeta Tanasa, a PR from Buchaest, Gabriella, Mira, Juliana and Greg, the Merigar East Gekos found an elegant hall at the Central Library of the University of Bucharest for the day dedicated to Tibetan culture.

During the event there was an exhibition of beautiful photos of Tibet supplied by ASIA, a pre-

sentation of the Dzogchen Community and the Shang Shung Institute given by Oliver, an introduction to Tibetan Medicine presented by Gino Vitiello and a combined theory-practice demonstration of Ku-nye massage given by Aldo Oneto.

The event opened with a musical performance by three young Tibetans who are recent refugees in Austria and who were surprisingly good. They played some traditional musical pieces and some new ones with professionalism, freshness and in a truly moving way. They performed several times between the different presentations, wearing traditional costume and receiving a lot of applause.

While we were waiting to begin, we wondered how an event like this would be received in a situation like the one in Romania which seems to lean more towards arriving at some Western

type of lifestyle rather than opening towards distant cultures like the one we were presenting. But we took heart when half an hour after the start, the hall quickly filled up with people of all ages. There were more than 150 people in the hall and they seemed to follow the different presentations with interest and definitely enjoyed the ‘momos’ and the Tibetan tea offered during the interval.

By the end of the day many of those attending had communicated with the speakers in English and in Italian in order to get more information about the various topics discussed, asking for bibliographies and exchanging e-mail addresses.

The general feeling among those who participated in the event was one of having taken an important step, of having brought to a new land already authenticated by the presence of

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu another seed of that marvelous plant that Rinpoche has been cultivating for years for the benefit of all and so that his people and the unique culture that he represents do not become simply a sterile piece of history.

We are not involved in Tibetan culture only because this is the land that our Master comes from or because each culture carries a particular value, even though these two reasons would be enough to justify our commitment. We are involved because we are convinced that if we lose this culture we will be losing one of the peaks that has been reached by the potentiality of human knowledge. ©

Europe

Estonia

New Gakyil

Blue: Pille Viires blue@dzogchen.pri.ee

Red: Maaja Zelmin red@dzogchen.pri.ee

Yellow: Katri Ojasoo yellow@dzogchen.pri.ee

you feel. The practice of Mandarava will be combined with the practice of Chulen, (which is connected to the long life practice).

The long life practice of the dakini Mandarava is for obtaining a prosperous and long life, but also a strong tool for discovering and recognising one’s provisional obstacles and limitations, and for overcoming them. This facilitates relaxing in our instant presence.

It is also a supreme practice to do every day because it helps to balance and harmonize one’s elements and energy. The practice of Chulen is a breathing practice, connected to the elements and one of its many benefits is that it increases and strengthens one’s health.

Finland

New Gakyil

Blue: Tuula Saarikoski blue@dzogchen.fi

Red: Harri Jäälinoja red@dzogchen.fi

Yellow: Kaisa-Liisa Puonti yellow@dzogchen.fi

All three colors: gakyil@dzogchen.fi

info@dzogchen.fi – This, too, goes to the whole gakyil, but some day maybe it will go to our secretary only, in case we get very busy and active.

France

Upcoming

Mandarava retreat with Vajra Dance with Annalen Gall

July, 1st–7th at Dejamling

It is possible for people who don’t know the Vajra Dance to participate, singing and being present in the Song of the Vajra, while the other practitioners dance. We’ll start on the 1st of July at 5 pm (17 h), with explanation and practice of Mandarava. 2nd–6th of July we’ll do 3 or 4 practices a day, including a very early morning practice. The 7th we’ll end with the Ganapuja of Mandarava at 12 o’clock.

To register, please contact Elisabeth Dong: elisabethdongparis@hotmail.com

*

Upcoming

Vajra Dance at Karma Ling 2009 with Cindy Faulkner

Dance of the Three Vajras

August 27–30

Dance of the Six Spaces

October 26–31

Contact: dreulma@rimay.net

*

Upcoming

Dream Yoga Program with Michael Katz

Paris, France July 25–27

Contact: Regina at regina.m@noos.fr

Montpellier, France July 28–30

Contact: Lorraine Gaultier at lorraine.gaultier@wanadoo.fr



Community Program Jerusalem August 8

Contact: Orit Kenan at oritkenan@yahoo.com

Tel Aviv Israel Public Program

August 14–15

Contact: Dani Moskowicz at dmoskov@gmail.com



Vajra Dance Supervision for Cindy Faulkner by Adriana dal Borgo at Karma Ling from 17th–22nd April 2009.

Passages

Died: On Saturday the 23rd of May at 10 pm, François Calmès, member of the Dzogchen Community of France passed away.

He was very active in the Dharma and was the French translator of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu at Merigar and in France and was an active member of the IPC for the translations of the texts of Teachings.

Always ready to help, his kindness to practitioners, his great gift to translate the Masters and his entire devotion to the Teachings will always be remembered by all those who have known or were in contact with him.

With those who wish, we can practice Shitro for François our Vajra brother every Saturday evening for seven weeks or every day for 49 days.

The French Community

Europe

>> continued

Italy



Brescia
Kunsalling the Place of Total Luminosity
Kunsalling is a retreat place situated in Valvestino, in the province of Brescia, in the Alto Garda Nature Park, Italy between Garda Lake and Idro Lake. It is a wonderful place at 1350 m. above sea level, in an isolated valley, surrounded by woods and protected by cliffs. It consists of a large barn which is used as a Gonpa (and at night becomes a dormitory) and a smaller house with a kitchen and a room that can be used even for dark retreats.
The Ling would like to inform practitioners that the Kunsalling website is now online complete with the calendar of retreats and other information about the place. Kunsalling is always open to all practitioners for personal retreats or

collective retreats for a limited number of people as well as for karma yoga. Please contact the Gakyil if you would like to come.
www.kunsalling.it
For further information, you can contact:
Paolo Fassoli, Red Gakyil: mobile +39 339 7409005 **rosso@kunsalling.it**
Lorena Bartoli, Yellow Gakyil: mobile +39 328 9617089 **giallo@kunsalling.it**
Fulvio Ferrari, Blue Gakyil and in charge of retreats: tel. + 39 0365 825165 **info@kunsalling.it** (for retreats) **blu@kunsalling.it** *



Gomadevi in Val Tidone
by Clara Louissetti
“Welcome stranger to this place,
where joy doth sit on every bough,
paleness flies from every face”
(William Blake)

There are places that hold a special energy, one of these is the nice villa of Valter Bianchini in the Val Tidone hills. You could say that it is due to the many practice retreats held here in the last years, from Mandarava to Green Tara, but it seems that this place is under the benevolent protection of Dakinis who foster spiritual practice, make nature joyful and paleness and sadness fly from faces. An atmosphere further enhanced by the presence of the green spot of an open-air swimming pool.
The weekend of June 13–14, this very enjoyable environment managed to attract some fifteen practitioners for a retreat of the short practice of Gomadevi, led by Enzo Terzano.
The schedule included two explanation sessions a day, followed by the practice including the Dance of the Song of the Vajra. Before starting the morning meetings, one could listen to the teachings of our Precious Master webcasted from Romania.
After having briefly introduced its lineage, Enzo explained this practice, which at once appeared quite deep in spite of its essentiality, with a wealth of details and using an interactive ap-

proach. That is, he involved the participants in a kind of performance, in what Enzo likes to call a “tableau vivant” (a living picture), as an educational tool to make us remember, through experience, the iconographical items of the visualization of the Dakini.
The same approach was used for introducing the Vajra Song Dance, that is the possibility of performing the melody live, adding musicians to the dancers. Thus, by means of a sundry array of musical instruments, from drums to small and big damarus, from bells to maracas, a small “improvised” orchestra played and chanted the Vajra Song. Of course one could not expect a flawless performance, but the enthusiasm of the new experience compensated for the lack of technical expertise of the players.
During the rest time between each explanation session, we had a plunge into the swimming pool, for fresh relief from the hot summer, especially after having danced on the open-air Mandala under a blazing sun.
At the end of the retreat, we had a Ganapuja with dance, for thanking the Guardians who protected us and treated us to two sunny days of full harmony, a “full immersion” experience from every point of view.
I also wish to express, on behalf of all the participants, our deep thanks to Enzo Terzano for his highly “creative” and interactive explanations and, of course, to Valter Bianchini for his generous and warm hospitality. ©



Venice
Dr. Namdol Lhamo in Venice
by Giuliana Giromella
May was a month that was full of meetings for the Venetian Community. May 4–6 we hosted Dr. Namdol Lhamo and Tiziana, who accompanied her to help with translations for the doctor’s patients, at Marco Baseggio’s beautiful bed and breakfast. The doctor was in Italy on the invitation of the Shang Shung Institute and the Venetian Community had the opportunity to welcome her to Venice and take her around to admire the city.
The doctor received a number of patients in a very professional way and with attention, showing that although she is young, she has considerable skill in diagnosis and wide experience in the medical field.
Her gentleness and presence were felt by us all and the group of Venetian practitioners who accompanied her were able to rediscover parts of the city through her eyes.
This opportunity also brought to mind the Congress on Tibetan Medicine in the early eighties which had brought

the Master to Venice and we hope in the future to have other opportunities to develop other projects of Tibetan medicine which already has a historical link with this city. ©
*
ASIA in Venice
On Saturday and Sunday, May 10–11, thanks to the collaboration of Nisa and Romina, two young students who are daughters of practitioners, ASIA participated with the non-profit associations of Venice in Campo S. Margherita and collected 300 euro. We hope to be able to establish a rapport of collaboration with the Venice Municipality for other activities in the future.
The Venice Gakyil
*
Contemplation in Venice
with Fabio Risolo
Saturday and Sunday, May 10–11, the Venetian Community invited Fabio Risolo to Venice for a course on Contemplation which was also open



Participants at the Ganapuja at the end of the contemplation course. Photo: G. Giromella



Rome
Yoga Festival
by the Gakyil of Zhenphenling
Once again this year the Zhenphenling Community of Rome took part in the Rome Yoga Festival and even though it was tiring and demanding, it was, however, fruitful and very satisfying. Our stand was one of the most attractive and many people stopped to get information on our activities and take flyers with programs of Zhenphenling’s and Merigar’s activities and sometimes to buy something.
A great many people have heard of Rinpoche, sometimes only by name, and were happy to see a representative of the Dzogchen Community and discover that there is a Centre in Rome, too. The atmosphere was much more friendly and relaxed than the first festival and we had more interaction with the other

stands and the organisers who we know quite well by now.
As far as Yantra Yoga was concerned, besides a free class that we presented, just like last year, which was well attended and received some very nice comments, this year we set up a paying seminar. This was led by Gino Vitiello, Sergio Quaranta and Fabiana Esca and had a fair number of participants, around 20 people, who were interested. It was useful to share the project and the setting up of this little seminar with our friends at Namdeling, Naples and, also, based on other experiences of practice together, we feel it is important to increase collaboration between the biggest Lings in Italy, Namdeling and Zhenphenling, more and more in the future.
We would like to thank all those who helped with the work as well as all those who came to see us during the three days of the Festival! ©
*



Naples
SMS Base retreat at Namdeling
by Fabiana Esca
A two-day retreat on the Base of Santi Maha Sangha with Fabio Risolo was recently held on May 16–17 at Namdeling in Naples, Italy. Here at the Ling a group has formed for the study and practice of the Base and practitioners have really felt the necessity to reach a level of knowledge based on concrete experience of the state, of our real nature.
The retreat came about from the need to go more deeply and in a more concentrated way into the essential points of “The Precious Vase”, from
>> continued on the following page

Europe >> continued

>> *Naples continued from previous page*

both an intellectual as well as an essential approach, with the help of a skilful guide. For this reason we asked Fabio to come back and help the group clarify these essential points and also do some of the practices together in order to have a brief but fundamental taste of collective experience, with the knowledge that practice should have a continuity beyond the retreat and mostly that the main point is to integrate the experience obtained during the practice in every moment of our lives until this condition manifests in a stable way.

The event took place in a very relaxed summery atmosphere at the splendid Ling that we have had the opportunity to create in Naples. Moreover the fact that there was the webcast of Rinpoche's Teachings in Moscow and those of Yeshi Namkhai in the afternoon at the same time, made the retreat rich yet intense, just like during a retreat at Merigar.

We feel very close and thankful to Fabio and feel great affection towards him not only because he is a vajra brother from our city but also because he has the precious gift of knowing how to present things in a simple and clear way, with patience and great presence. ©

Lithuania

Upcoming
SMS Base retreat
The Lithuanian Dzogchen community is happy to announce the SMS base retreat with Jim Valby in Vilnius from 10th to 19th of July.

Schedule: On weekdays there will be one session 7–9.30 pm;
At weekends:
9 am–12 noon + 4 pm–7 pm

Price: 90 euro for the whole course.

Jim kindly proposed that we could have also a few SMS 1 practice sessions on weekday mornings or afternoons if there are a sufficient number of SMS 1 practitioners.

Please send your registration to dzogchen.lt@gmail.com informing us about the dates of your participation in this retreat and also about your willingness to participate in SMS 1 practice sessions.

Please note that the retreat is only open to the members of the international Dzogchen Community and SMS 1 practice sessions to those who have passed the SMS base exam.

Accommodation: there is a possibility to stay in students' dormitory. A place in double or three bed-room costs 8 euro per day. Bathrooms and kitchen are available on the floor.
For booking a place please send the relevant information to dzogchen.lt@gmail.com

For more information please contact:
Valdas +37 061 21 38 39

Poland

News from Paldenling
by Jacek Machowski & Artur Zolkowski

The Polish Community has recently finished work at Paldenling to enlarge the existing house by adding an upper floor and completely renovating the roof which was originally in asbestos. This work was made possible by a substantial loan that the Polish gakyil took from one of their practitioners last year. However, funds for other projects will not be available for at least two years until the loan is paid back. With the extra space in the main building, the Polish Community plans to have more rooms for practitioners to do personal retreats.



Longde cabin at Paldenling.

At the moment the Community is collecting funds and gradually building a dark retreat cabin. There is currently a Dakini retreat house and a Longde cabin which are available for retreats. During the summer Paldenling also has a wonderful place for a Vajra Dance Mandala outside with splendid views of the countryside and mountains.

The Polish Community invites practitioners to come and use the retreat facilities.

You can read all about the Polish Community and Paldenling on their website – www.dzogczen.pl. If you would like to do a personal retreat there, before you come please contact the Gekos whose details can be found on the website. ©

Serbia

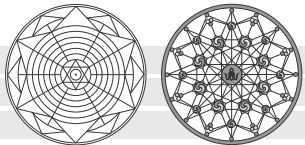
Seminar with Oliver Leick in Belgrade
by the Belgrade Serbian Gakyil

After many obstacles, we finally had the good fortune to meet with Oliver Leick on Friday, May 22nd. Our small Community and newcomers, approximately 25 people, gathered at the “Kagyü Shenpen Thaye” Buddhist centre. During the first session Oliver gave an introduction to general aspects of the Teachings like the value of Dzogchen and of the words of Buddha, the three statements of Garab Dorje, the meaning of being aware, the skill of relaxation and our daily life as our main practice.

The next day the morning session was held in the center at the House of dance and yoga, a modern space with mirrors on the walls. Oliver gave an explanation of the real meaning of Yantra Yoga, the general aspects of breathing as the means of being aware, with the basics such as 9 purification breathings and 8 movements.

The third session was in the afternoon on the treasure-house of Tibetan Culture and the work of the SSI. Oliver colored his talk with some memorable stories and his great sense of humor. The energy of Rinpoche was present, in the sounds of practices, the words of the Teachings, and Oliver's inspiring personal stories concerning Rinpoche. The retreat ended with a Ganapuja in the evening. It was a joyful and beautiful occasion. All of us went home with strong intention to practice regularly so that it will become a part of our lives. ©

Tsegyalgar East



DCA Tsegyalgar East

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

Upcoming
Retreat of the Inner Practice of Guru Wisdom Dakini
Practice And Explanation
Led by Enzo Terzano
July 7–12, 2009
On Khandroling, the Sacred land of Dakinis, Buckland, Massachusetts

Requirements: having received the initiation of Gomadevi or Jñānadhakini, or having received the transmission of the Mantra of the Essence (also via web-cast). The course is also open to those who don't know the Vajra Dance.

Note: The practices of each session will be combined with the Dance of the Song of the Vajra, performed once, twice, or three times, depending on the number of participants. People who don't know Vajra Dance can apply the Song of the Vajra.

Cost: \$200 US with membership discounts. \$40 US for sustaining members.
Preregistration and contact: Please contact the secretary Asruh Warner at secretary@tsegyalgar.org with any questions and register as soon as possible.

Accommodations: Please contact our Gekö, David Hayes, at geko@tsegyalgar.org

Camping on the land and places in the dormitory are available.

Lunches can be made available and will be prepared by our wonderful Tibetan cook Yeshe for \$8.50 a meal. Please contact our secretary beforehand if you are interested in lunch.

Summer Vajra Dance

July 18–19, 2009
Vajra Dance, Part of an ongoing course led by authorized instructor Anastasia McGhee
Cost: \$140
Location: Khandroling, Buckland MA

July 24–27, 2009
The Dance of the Six Spaces of Samantabhadra
led by authorized instructor Bodhi Krause

Daily Schedule: Friday: 7–9 pm
Saturday and Sunday: 9:30–11:30 am, 2–4 pm, 6–8 pm
Monday: 7–9 pm
Location: TBA

For more information and or to sign up for courses, please contact the secretary at (413) 369-4153 or secretary@tsegyalgar.org

There will be delicious meals cooked by our in-house Tibetan cook available. \$8.50 for lunch with optional dinner and breakfast if there is interest. For accommodations and meals contact the Gekö at geko@tsegyalgar.org

For courses pre-registration is required with a down payment. Tsegyalgar East reserves the right to cancel courses based on low pre-registration.

*

Upcoming
Tsegyalgar East is happy to announce the annual
Santi Maha Sangha Summer Intensive with Jim Valby
August 1–23, 2009
on Khandroling, the sacred land of the Dakinis in Buckland Massachusetts

There will be daily sessions of yantra yoga with Paula Barry and Naomi Zeitz

7:30–8:30 am Yantra Yoga
9 am–noon, 4–7 pm Saturday Aug 1 to Friday Aug 7: SMS Base
9 am–3 pm, Sat and Sun, Aug 8 & 9, Karma Yoga

7:30–8:30 am Yantra Yoga
9 am–noon, 4–7 pm Saturday Aug 8 to Friday Aug 14: SMS Level One
9 am–3 pm, Sat and Sun, Aug 15 & 16, Karma Yoga

7:30–8:30 am Yantra Yoga
9 am–noon, 4–7 pm Saturday Aug 15 to Friday Aug 21: SMS Level Two
9 am–3 pm, Sat and Sun, Aug 22 & 23, Karma Yoga

Cost: \$750 for the full retreat
\$300 each 7-day session
Membership discounts apply
Please register early. A 15% non-refundable down payment is required for pre registration. Enrollment is limited to 24 People per Session. Tsegyalgar East reserves the right to cancel the retreat 2 weeks before the program due to lack of sufficient participation.
To register or for more information Please contact the secretary at: secretary@tsegyalgar.org or 413 369 4153

for information about accommodations and camping, please contact the gekö at: geko@tsegyalgar.org

Food and meals: there are a few options for food. One is that Yeshe Tsomo, our resident Tibetan cook, will be preparing lunches for \$8.50 per person. We will not be able to

use the farmhouse kitchen because there will be renovation work being done there. People can bring lunches, there is a refrigerator in the bath house and people can make a fire and cook if they like. People could also carpool for going into town to eat and also collaborate to shop and cook together.



Weekend retreat with Elio Guarisco at Khandroling in June 2009.

Photo: N. Zeitz

TsegyalgarEast



Passages

Born: Julia Veronika Borkiewicz was born to the Borkiewicz Family on June 2nd, 2009 at 22:23 pm.

USA

New York

Upcoming

The Dance of the Vajra

A 2 part course taught by
Nelida Saporiti

Part 1: Fri, June 26–Sun, July 5

Part 2: Fri, August 28–Mon, September 7

Space is limited to 12 women & 12 men
2 sessions will be offered on weekends
& holidays and 1 each weekday evening

The cost of the complete course is
US\$ 500
Please reserve your space on the
mandala with a deposit of \$ 150

Make your check payable to The New
York Dzogchen Community and mail
to: Ed Goldberg 307 Prospect Place, 1c
Brooklyn, NY 11238
edw_goldberg@hotmail.com

We look forward to seeing you on the
mandala at Kundrolling, 151 West 30th
Street, Level 4, New York, NY 10001,
near 7th Ave and Penn Station

Canada

New Toronto Gakyil

Red: Yulia Jitkova

yjtkova@yahoo.com

Yellow: Deepak Ramachadran

deepak.ramachandran@yahoo.com

Blue: Andy Wai awai@ca.ibm.com



Beginners' Yantra Yoga in Toronto with Naomi Zeitz, June 12–15, 2009.

TsegyalgarWest

New Gakyil

Blue and President: Michael Hass from
Huntington Beach, CA
Blue and Vice President: Joel Crisp
from San Diego, CA
Blue: Miles Thomas from San Diego, CA
Yellow: Diane Sievers from Conway, MA
Yellow and Treasurer: Helen Thomas
from Portland, Oregon
Red: Carol Fields from Berkeley, CA
Red: Scott Schroeder, Baja Sur, Mexico

Please direct all inquires to our secretary,
Angelina Ibarquen at
tsegyalgarwestsecretary@gmail.com

Upcoming

Two Weekends of Yantra Yoga

July 16–19 and July 23–26, 2009

Led by Naomi Zeitz

July 16–19: **Introduction to Yantra Yoga**

July 23–26: **Advanced Yantra Yoga**

Cost: \$ 200 for both weekends with paid
early registration by Monday, June 29
\$ 250 for both weekends (after June 30)
\$ 130 for a single weekend (8 sessions)
\$ 20 for each session

To register, please contact Leticia
Receptor at 510 292-0960 or
leticiareceptor@yahoo.com.ar

Please make checks to Dzogchen
Community West Coast
And mail to 2728 Adeline St., Suite D,
Berkeley CA 94707

Upcoming

Save the date:

Tsegyalgar West will host a
SMS Base Level Retreat
with Jim Valby
November 18–24, 2009

Contact Angelina at
tsegyalgarwestsecretary@gamil.com
for information



Dream Yoga with Michael Katz, April 9–14 Tsegyalgar West – Baja Mexico.

TashigarNorte

Upcoming

Vajra dance course of the Song of the Vajra

with Bodhi Krause & Carmen Rivas
supervised by main instructor
Adriana dal Borgo

First part November 23th–28th, 2009

led by Bodhi Krause

Second part December 14th–19th, 2009

led by Carmen Rivas

To participate you must be a member of
the Dzogchen Community

Contact:

tashigarnortesecretary@gmail.com

Tashigar North /Finca Tashigar

Prolongación de la Calle Bolivar

Valle de Pedro González

Isla de Margarita

Tel: 0058 0295 2580332

secretary@tashigarnorte.org

www.tashigarnorte.org

Tashigarsur

Tashigar South

Comunidad Dzogchen Tashigar

Calle pública S/N

Tanti 5155

Pcia. de Córdoba

Argentina

Phone & Fax: 0054 - 3541 - 498 356

tashigarsur@gmail.com

New Gakyil 2009/2010

Blue: Daniel Barreto, Griselda Gálmez
Ana García (director)

Yellow: Griselda Olivera,
Claudia Corchero, Adriana Battisti

Red: Sergio Oliva, Paula De Raedemaeker,
María Elena Gastaldi

The email address to contact the Gakyil
is: gakyil2009.tashigar@gmail.com

Gekö: Luis Olivera
laao11@yahoo.com.ar

Elementary, Watson!

The election of a new Gakyil at Tashigar South

Griselda Gálmez

Here you are reading the
names and seeing the
smiling faces of the new
Gakyil of Tashigar South. The
member's assembly according to
the previous Gakyil's proposal in
April 2009 chose the Gakyil.

You can see ten people: the
gekö and nine Gakyil members.
They look happy but it was a lit-
tle difficult to find nine people.
Why?

During the meeting we heard
some ideas about: "The present
world's situation is very hard.
People must work very much, ev-
eryone is very busy" Some prac-
titioners have no consciousness

about the commitment to partici-
pate, the necessity to help each
other", "Maybe we will do some-
thing wrong and others practition-
ers are offended or upset with
us or with the Community".

I remained thinking about
the last idea. Many times I had
the opportunity to listen old or
new practitioners complaining
about another one or against
the Sangha. Sometimes I do not
share their reasons, sometimes
I do. But a reason is not more
than a reason. It appears in our
ordinary mind conditioned by
so many things: family, country,
friends, and ideology! Generally



our logic is just the ego logic and
does not represent at all the real
condition. On the other hand, we
are practitioners. It means that
we are applying methods for dis-
covering the condition beyond

my opinion or your opinion, you
and me.

So, if we have not the capacity
to remain in the instant presence
(which is evident), we have re-
ceived again and again precious

>> continued on the following page

Tashigar Sur

>> *Gakyil continued from previous page*
practices from our dear Master for working with our anger, resentment, etc. Why, then, don't we apply the Purification of Six Lokas or Vajrasattva Practice? Elemental, Watson! In this case it is possible purifying our emotions and maybe we do not need another thing to understand and forgive the action that has hurt us. This action has lost importance for us. Or maybe not, and we recognize that we even need to talk with the person who offended us. But in this case we could talk without the heavy weight of emotions and also the conversation becomes a way to share, to participate.

At least, if the previous methods failed for us, there is the possibility to renounce to the anger, the resentment etc. Sometimes we have renounced to a beautiful dress or a wished book because we are saving money for traveling, or we said no to an exquisite food for being healthy. I hope the comparisons are clear because if we choose to participate in the Sangha in spite of our possible past hurts, really we have chosen the boat of our Master once more!
Elementary, Watson! This famous sentence maybe works for many Vajra brothers and sisters, but not for all. Sure, also in this

case I am using the logic and its limits.
After this digression, I return to my first topic: the election of a new Gakyil for Tashigar South. Really it was not so difficult because five person of the old Gakyil renewed their commitment to work for the Gar and for the new Gonpa that they promised to the Master during the past summer. But then... What a situation! When the meeting's coordinator asked: "Are there more persons that wish to be Gakyil members?" It was evident that these words were magic: all of us discovered that they are the precise words to get silence within

the noisy and talkative people of Tashigar South.
Fortunately, it was just for a moment. It was a moment of silence waiting to see what was happening with the others and to decide. Then, six old practitioners offered themselves once more.
You see, with eleven persons offering themselves to become members, the previous gakyil with the help of the assembly had the possibility to form the new Gakyil that you can see, widely smiling, in the photo.
We hope to form a really good work team, in spite of the differences of age, experience, ideol-

ogy and opinions. We hope to be an operative and open minded Gakyil for the benefit, in first place, of ourselves because this task is also our practice, and for the benefit of all sentient beings because the Gar is a Source of Teachings for the present and future generations.
And also we hope, elementary, Watson! that all of you help us with this great task! The doors of Tashigar South are open for all those who wish to work for the Community!!! ©

"20 Years, time to roar like a lion! Join us to make it real!"

Tashigar South is about to be 20 years old. For this joyful occasion we are embarking on an ambitious project that will be of great benefit to both the local and worldwide Community. We need of your support to help bring it into reality!
"20 Years, time to roar like a lion! Join us to make it real!"

The Celebration

On 7th February 2010 Tashigar South, the Gar of the Dzogchen Community for South America will be 20 years old. Its location was especially chosen by our Master and its unique character-

istics have favoured the tireless development of the Dzogchen Teachings of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu in South America.
Since its foundation in 1989, Rinpoche has led more than 60 retreats of precious teachings and hundreds of courses, retreats and practices have been undertaken by instructors of SMS, Yantra Yoga and Vajra Dance or coordinated by older practitioners.
All this would have been impossible without this sacred place.

The Project - Remodelling of the existing Gonpa
Following the instructions given by Rinpoche during our last retreat, Tashigar South should give total priority to the project of reconstructing our Gonpa. The main work to be done is the replacement of the roof that, as many of you know, is made of straw. Having passed twenty years since it was constructed, the material needs to be changed, but nowadays, due to the global climatic changes our province is more and more subject to big fires during winter, so this material has also become very risky. Therefore the new design contemplates a sheetmetal roof. It will be larger than the existing one creating a perimeter gallery in the north and east sides of the building, ex-

tremely useful in the rainfall season when our retreats are held. Two more gates will be added as well as two rooms (a toilet, and a storage room) in the back, behind the throne of the Master.
This change implies the need of replacing the structure as well, because the old one is no strong enough to support any other type of roof.
Our Master requested Engineer Giovanni Boni to design the project who counts with the technical assistance of Architect Alejandro Fabiano. Tashigar South has appointed Sergio Oliva as the manager for the project.
Certain items such as the windows from the gonpa and part of the structure supporting the roof can be recycled so they will

be used to improve the Camping Site facilities in the near future.
The Estimated Budget
The estimated budget for the remodelling of the Gonpa is of US\$ 97 000. Thanks to the generosity of our Master and the collaboration of all the Sangha during our last retreat, we already have US\$ 57 000, that means we count on the 58% of the total amount needed to complete the works.

The Goal

Tashigar South needs to count on the total amount by the end of July. We are sure that working together and we the support of all the Community we will be able to raise the funds we need to make this project come true.

How can we Collaborate?

There are many ways in which we will be able to collaborate:
Donate money for this project!

Any amount will be really appreciated – The Gar will offer nice thank-you gifts to donors. Although donating is a supreme act of generosity that waits for no reward, the Gakyil of Tashigar South wants to offer nice thank-you gifts to thank all the brothers and sisters than join this Gonpa.

- For donors of US\$ 3000 or more: a gold-plated vajra; 10 000 pesos.
- For donors of US\$ 1000 or more: a resin pendant with letter TAM, HRI or HUM; 2500 pesos.
- For donors of US\$ 300 or more, a bag with Tashigar South logo with a surprise gift inside; 500 pesos.



- For donors of US\$ 1500 or more: a silver and resin medal with the symbol of the Universal Mandala or Green Tara (chosen by the donor); 5000 pesos.
- For donors of US\$ 500 or more: a silver Gau with an almandine stone; 1000 pesos.
- For donors of up to US\$ 300 an envelope with 5 lhungta and a picture of our Master; 500 pesos.



Buy 'virtual bricks'!

Another way of collaborating is buying 'virtual bricks'. They can be exchanged for Yantra Yoga and Vajra Dance courses led by local instructors at Tashigar South; for lodging at the Gar to make personal retreats; or for days to make a dark retreat in our dark retreat cabin.
• Buying '500 virtual bricks' (US\$ 300) you can attend a Vajra Dance or Yantra Yoga course held by local instructors at Tashigar south. You can take advantage of this benefit in any course held at the course until the end of 2011.

• Buying '250 virtual bricks' (US\$ 150) you have the chance of lodging at the Gar for free for 1 (one) week to make personal retreats (subjected to availability of rooms and not coinciding with retreats with our Master or with any other retreat with international instructors).

• For each lot of '100 virtual bricks' you buy (US\$ 50) you have the chance of making 1 (one) day dark retreat in our dark retreat cabin. You can take advantage of this benefit until the end of 2011 (subjected to availability of our dark retreat cabin and not coinciding with retreats held with our Master or any other retreat with internacional instructors).

Pay your membership in advance!

Meritorious, supporters and ordinary members can pay either 2, 5 or 10 years in advance to help this project come true. You should contact your Gakyil or Ling if you prefer this kind of collaboration with the project.
Prices will be 'frozen' in.
US\$ 1000 for meritorious members per year
US\$ 300 for supporters members per year
US\$ 100 for ordinary members per year

The following people have already adhered to this campaign: Our Master Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, Rosa Namkhai, Fabio Andrico, Jorgelina Cardini y Diego Pacheco, Sergio Oliva y Paula De Raedemaeker, Adriana Batistti, Claudio Bruno, Ma. Elena Gastaldi, Luis León Gacigalupo, Norbuling (Peru), Estela Ugarte, Ricardo Sued, Marisa Alonso, Sophie Marceux, Naomi Zeitz, Gakyil de Buenos Aires, Ana García, Daniel Barreto.

We hope you can join us for the benefit of these precious Teachings!
For any donation, payment or buy, please, contact to: tashigonpa@gmail.com ©

Singapore Retreat with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

May 1-3, 2009

Shelley Han

With great anticipation and happy grinning faces, nearly 400 old and new students participated in the three-day retreat held by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche. It was one of the biggest retreats the Singapore Gakyil held in years, not to mention that many had become a little rusty in their endeavor considering that the last retreat given by Rinpoche was in August 2000.

The decor was simple yet elegant and the atmosphere in the retreat hall was one of many old semi-retired students, some of those who found their true calling in other lineages, and new people, all attending the retreat with great joy amidst the renewal of friendships forged years ago and new friendships made. The atmosphere of rekindled friendship as well as

the injection of new blood was prevalent. When we practiced Guruyoga, the strong chorus of the participants gave testimony to the past experience of more than half of total practitioners in attendance.

Ngee Ann Cultural Center hall, which usually holds 280 chairs, had to be rearranged a day prior to the event when online registration surged to 302. The Gakyil brought in mats to create more space with chair arrangements at the side and back row. In the end, when the numbers averaged 350, many students sat on the carpeted floor in the pathways. We had many students coming from America stationed in China, Europe (Italian, French, Swiss, Spanish and Russian), Thailand (both expatriates and Thais), Hong Kong, Taiwan and



Indonesia and some monastic lamas from Bhutan, Tibet and a Nagkpa/Chödpa from Nepal.

Rinpoche gave two hours of teachings and explanation and practices of Yeshe Zangthal (the first series on emptiness and instant presence) every morning, followed by explanation on essential practices by Dr. Cheh Goh and The Eight Movements of Yantra Yoga by Fabio Andrico in the afternoon. There were then practic-

es led by local Santi Maha Sangha teacher Cheh Goh on the first and second evening and an explanation on the rite of Ganapuja, which the Dzogchen Community worldwide always performs on the last day of retreat. Over 200 practitioners in cordial cooperation and mutual respect attended the Ganapuja with our Guru and all the Vajra Family.

Many new faces expressed their joy during lunchtime on the first

day after the morning teaching, saying that Rinpoche's teaching was very deep and high and they understood Dharma far more in one session than they had from the numerous teachings combined elsewhere.

We hope that Rinpoche does not stay away for so long a time in the future and that he returns to bring the precious Dzogchen Teachings to Singapore many times more! ©

Double Rainbow in the Sky of Tokyo, Japan!

Takatomo Sasaki

Red Gakyil

Dzogchen Community of Japan

Our precious master, Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, gave a weekend teaching in Tokyo, Japan from May 8-10, 2009. There were about 160 people participating in the retreat, a larger audience than any previous retreat in Japan. About half of the attendees were new practitioners and had never met Rinpoche before.

The retreat was held in the Minato business district at the Tokyo Grand Hotel, which is run very well by a Soto Zen Buddhist



group. The teachings were given in a large Japanese style room with a tatami mat floor and shoji screens enshrining a beautiful life size (almost) statue of Buddha Shakyamuni.



Rinpoche gave teachings for three days in front of this statue, naturally reminding us that Rinpoche is none other than Buddha himself.

The opening teaching started on Friday at 6pm. Rinpoche was very well and full of energy after all his travels. He empowered us all through his vigorous voice and smiles.

The teaching mainly stemmed from his own Tibetan medical book, "On Birth, Life, and Death". The teaching was not only on the medical topics but also on the essence of Dzogchen. Rinpoche patiently gave detailed explanations, about the importance of Guruyoga, how to maintain awareness in our daily life and how to practice in the night, etc.

Many new practitioners were strongly touched by Rinpoche's powerful presence and his precious teaching. One of the newcomers said, "I felt information beyond words came through his whole being and penetrated into me."

On the second day of the teaching, an article of the prestigious Japan Time News was posted on the door at the retreat. The article said, "A double rainbow appeared in the sky over the Minato district in Tokyo around 6 pm on May 8th", with a large photo of the rainbow. This means when Rinpoche began to teach on the first day of the retreat, at exactly the same time, the double rainbow manifested in the space just outside our retreat place! This great new and auspicious sign made us all joyful and happy. Rinpoche gave a direct transmission using the yeshe zangthal on that day.

The last day of the teaching, he gave lung transmissions and the weekend retreat was finished.

After the retreat, the Gakyil of Japanese Dzogchen Community expressed appreciation and wished his return to Japan by saying that there are many practitioners who need his guidance. Rinpoche replied gently, "I am hoping to come back to Japan again." His reply was the greatest gift for all of us!

All practitioners of the Dzogchen Community of Japan hereby say that we will collaborate and help each other and expand our activities to do our best for the Japanese Dzogchen Community to flourish!

Long long life to Rinpoche! ©



www.jcrow.com

J. Crow's®

Mulling Spice Folk Medicine
Tibetan Medicine

SpicedCider.com

fax or phone: 1 800 878 1965 603 878 1965
jcrow@jcrow.mv.com

Special Practice Calendar for the Earth Ox Year 2009–2010



5th Month, 10th day
Thu. 2nd July 2009
Today is a special day of Guru Padma-sambhava. In general you can do the Guruyoga of Padmasambhava practice on this day. If you can, try to do a *Ganapuja* collectively with your Vajra brothers and sisters, otherwise you can do the longlife practice “Union of Primordial Essences”.

5th Month, 14th day
Mon. 6th July 2009
This is an important day for the practice of Ekajati, so try to do a *long* or *medium* Tun collectively or alone, reciting the heart mantra of Ekajati as many times as possible.

5th Month, 15th day
Tue. 7th July 2009
Full Moon. This is a special day for the longlife practice of Amitayus, so you can do the Longlife practice “Union of Primordial Essences”. The best moment to do it is between 7 and 8 in the morning, if possible, either collectively or alone. If you can, try to do a *Ganapuja* as well. It is also the Dzam gling spyi bsang (Lit. ‘smoke puja of the world in general’) so if you know how to do it, you can do the *Sanqod* (*Sangchod*) in the morning.

5th Month, 25th day
Fri. 17th July 2009
Today is Dakini day as well as an important day for the practice of Ekajati, so try to do a *Ganapuja* or a *long* Tun collectively with your Vajra brothers and sisters, or a medium Tun alone. In either case recite the heart mantra of Ekajati as many times as possible.

5th Month, 30th day
Wed. 22nd July 2009
New Moon. This is a day for purification practices. It is best to do the *Purification of the Six Lokas* either collectively or alone, preferably in the early morning. Otherwise you can do a *medium* or *short* Tun or a *Ganapuja*.

6th Month, 4th day
Sat. 25th July 2009
This is the anniversary of the Dharma-chakra (the first turning of the Wheel of the Dharma): the first time that Buddha Shakyamuni gave the teaching of the Four Noble Truths to his disciples at Sarnath, after his illumination. To honour the Lord Buddha on this special day you can do a *Ganapuja* with your Vajra brothers and sisters.

6th Month, 10th day
Fri. 31st July 2009
Today is the anniversary of the birth of Padmasambhava. On this day when it is 8 am in Oddiyana Chögyal Namkhai Norbu will give the transmission of Guruyoga with the specific practice linked to the anniversary of Padmasambhava. In this way the transmission will be live because the transmission has no distance. Rinpoche will transmit and throughout the world people who do the practice at the same moment will be in the transmission

and will thus receive the transmission. (In Italy, this practice will be done at 5 am.) It is also the anniversary of Yeshe Tsogyal, the main consort and disciple of Padmasambhava so it will be beneficial to do a *Guruyoga of Padmasambhava* with the longlife mantra and a *Ganapuja* as we usually do, otherwise you can do the longlife practice “Union of Universal Wisdom”.
See the global timetable

6th Month, 14th day
Tue. 4th August 2009
This is the anniversary of the Third Karmapa, Rangjung Dorje (1284–1339), a disciple of Rigdzin Chenpo Kumaradza and a famous master of Dzogchen Upadesa. On this day it is good to do *Akar Lamai Naljor, Guruyoga with the White A*, collectively or alone.

6th Month, 15th day
Wed. 5th August 2009
Full Moon. This is the anniversary of Gampopa, the main disciple of Milarepa, founder of the Kagyupa school and author of “The Precious Ornament of Liberation”. It is, therefore, an excellent day to do *Akar Lamai Naljor, the Guruyoga with the White A*. It is also good to do the longlife practice “Union of Primordial Essences” of Guru Amitayus and, if possible, a *Ganapuja*.

6th Month, 25th day
Sat. 15th August 2009
This is a Dakini day, so it is a positive day for reinforcing the function of our energy and creating a vital contact with the energy of the universe by doing a *Ganapuja* with our Vajra sisters and brothers. If there are no other practitioners nearby you can do a *medium* Tun on your own. In either case, when you transform into the Dakini Simhamuka, recite her heart mantra as many times as possible.

6th Month, 30th day
Thu. 20th August 2009
New Moon. This is a very important day to do purification practices, especially the “Purification of the Six Lokas”. If you have the chance, you can also do a short or *medium* Tun or a *Ganapuja*, collectively or alone.

7th Month, 9th day
Sat. 29th August 2009
This is an important day for the practice of Ekajati.

7th Month, 10th day
Sun. 30th August 2009
It is a special day of Guru Padmasambhava as well as the anniversary of Jomo Menmo (1248–1283), a famous yogini, terton and reincarnation of Yeshe Tsogyal and consort of the terton Guru Chowang. Therefore it is an ideal day to do *Akar Lamai Naljor, the Guruyoga of the White A*, and a *Ganapuja*, if you have the possibility.

7th Month, 15th day
Fri. 4th September 2009
Full Moon. This is the anniversary of Tsarchen Losal Gyatso and Padma Karpo, a famous 17th century Drugpa Kagyupa Master. Therefore it is an excellent day to do the longlife practice of the Dakini Mandarava, “Cycle of Life’s Vajra”, with a *Ganapuja* if possible as well as *Akar Lamai Naljor, the Guruyoga of the White A* collectively with your Vajra brothers and sisters or alone.

7th Month 19th day
Tue. 8th September 2008
This is an important day for the practice of Ekajati, so try to do a long or medium Tun in the usual way, reciting the heart mantra of Ekajati as many times as possible.

7th Month, 25th day
Mon. 14th September 2009
This is a Dakini day and also the anniversary of Phagmo Drugpa (1110–1170), the chief disciple of Gampopa. Try to do a *Ganapuja* together with your Vajra sisters and brothers. If there are no other practitioners nearby, you can do a *medium* Tun on your own. In either case, when you transform yourself into the Dakini Simhamuka, recite her heart mantra as much as possible and then do an intensive practice of Ekajati.

7th Month, 30th day
Fri. 18th September 2009
Dark Moon. This day is ideal for purification practices. Try to do either the *Purification of the Six Lokas* or the *Namchos Shitroi Naljiyor*, the Yoga of the Peaceful and Wrathful Manifestations, either collectively or on your own. Try to do a *Ganapuja* as well, if possible.

8th Month, 10th day
Mon. 28th September 2009
This is a special day of Guru Padmasambhava, therefore you can do the Guruyoga of Padmasambhava. If you have time and the possibility you can do a *Ganapuja* with the Guruyoga and the long-life practice of Guru Padmasambhava together with your Vajra brothers and sisters. Otherwise you can do the long-life practice “Universal Wisdom Union”.

8th Month, 15th day
Sun. 4th October 2009
Full Moon. This is an important day to do the long-life practice of Amitayus, “Union of Primordial Essences”. It is best to do it early in the morning and a *Ganapuja* in the evening.

8th Month, 19th day
Thu. 8th October 2009
This is an important day for the practice of Ekajati, so try to do a *long* Tun with your Vajra brothers and sisters, or if that is not possible, you can do a *medium* Tun alone reciting the heart mantra of Ekajati as many times as possible.

8th Month, 25th day
Tue. 13th October 2009
This is a Dakini day and also the anniversary of two great Dzogchen masters, Rigzin Kumaraja, who transmitted the Dzogchen teachings to Longchenpa and to the third Karmapa, and of Rigzin Tsewang Norbu (1698–1755), a great Dzogchen master of the Nyingmapa school. It is therefore an excellent day to do *Akar Lamai Naljor, the Guruyoga with the White A*. If you can do it in the morning, that is best. Then, if you have the time, you can do a *medium* or *long* Tun later in the day, with an intense practice of Simhamuka, or a *Ganapuja*, if you have the possibility.

8th Month, 27th day
Thu. 15th October 2009
This is an important day for the practice of Ekajati, so try to do a *long* Tun with your Vajra brothers and sisters, or if that is not possible, you can do a *medium* Tun alone reciting the heart mantra of Ekajati as many times as possible.

8th Month, 30th day
Sun. 18th October 2009
Dark Moon. This day is excellent for practising the “Purification of the Six Lokas” if you know how to do it. Otherwise you can do the *medium* or *long* Tun or a *Ganapuja*.

9th Month, 3rd day
Wed. 21st October 2009
This is the anniversary of Rigdzin Jigmed Lingpa (1729–1798), a great Dzogchen master who was the author of many books, among which is the Longchen Nyingthig, which he wrote after having contact with Longchenpa through visions. Therefore, on this important day, you should try to do *Akar Lamai Naljor, the Guruyoga with the White A*.

9th Month, 10th day
Wed. 28th October 2009
This is a special day of Guru Padmasambhava. It is also the anniversary of Tertön Sogyal, a previous reincarnation of Sogyal Rinpoche and discoverer of many terma. It is therefore a good day to do the long-life practice of Guru Padmasambhava “Universal Wisdom Union”, which is included in the *medium* or *long* Tun. You can do this in the usual way or, if you have the possibility, you can do it with a *Ganapuja*.

9th Month, 15th day
Mon. 2nd November 2009
Full Moon. This is a day of the Buddha and a good day to do the long-life practice of Amitayus, “Union of Primordial Essences”, either collectively or individually according to your possibilities, in the morning and in the evening a *Ganapuja*.

9th Month, 22nd day
Mon. 9th November 2009
This day is the important celebration of Buddha Shakyamuni’s descent to earth from the realm of the Divinities. It is called “Lhabab Tuchen”, the Great Time of the Descent of the Divinities.

It is an ideal day to do a *Ganapuja* with your Vajra brothers and sisters. If there are none nearby, you can do a *short* or *medium* Tun on your own.

9th Month, 25th day
Wed. 11th November 2009
The 25th is a Dakini day and also the anniversary of the great Dzogchen Master Adzam Drugpa (1842–1924), a previous reincarnation of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu. He was a disciple of Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo and a master of great masters such as Changchub Dorje and Ayu Khandro. Therefore, when it is 7 pm in East Tibet on this day, *Chögyal Namkhai Norbu will give the transmission of Guruyoga with the specific practice linked to the anniversary of Adzam Drugpa*. In this way the transmission will be live because the transmission has no distance. Rinpoche will transmit and throughout the world people who do the practice at the same moment will be in the transmission and will thus receive the transmission. This practice should be done at the appointed time together with your Vajra brothers and sisters or, if that is not possible, alone. (In Italy, this practice will be done at 1 pm.)
See the global timetable

9th Month, 30th day
Mon. 16th November 2009
Dark Moon. This is a good day to do *Namcho Shitroi Naljor*, the Yoga of the Peaceful and Wrathful Manifestations, in the morning. It is also an important day for the practice of Ekajati, so try to do a *long* or *medium* Tun, reciting the heart mantra of Ekajati as many times as possible.

10th Month, 10th day
Fri. 27th November 2009
Today is a special day of Guru Padmasambhava, the day on which he arrived in central Tibet. It is considered that on this day, at the end of the 8th century, King Songtsen Gampo, the ancient king of Dharma, vanished dissolving into a statue of Avalokiteshvara. Therefore it is good to do the *Guruyoga of Padmasambhava* with the long-life mantra and a *Ganapuja*. Otherwise you can do the long-life practice “Universal Wisdom Union”. If it is possible, the best moment to do the Guruyoga is early in the morning between 7 and 8. You can do the *Ganapuja* later in the afternoon.

10th Month, 11th day
Sat. 28th November 2009
This is an important day for the practice of Ekajati.

10th Month, 15th day
Wed. 2nd December 2009
Full Moon. This day is considered to be the day to honour the Lord Buddha in general, and it is one of the best days to do the *long-life Practice with the Dakini Mandarava* in particular. Generally the best moment to do this kind of practice is between 7 and 8 in the morning but if you don’t have this possibility, then do it in the afternoon or later in the evening when you are free. It is also a good day to do a *Ganapuja*.

10th Month, 25th day
Fri. 11th December 2009
Today is a Dakini day and the anniversary of Tsongkhapa (1357–1491), who made a synthesis of the previous schools and founded the Gelugpa school. It is very beneficial for reinforcing the energy of the universe so try to perform
>> continued on the following page

Worldwide Transmission days

About the Worldwide Transmission

Newcomers who want to participate in the worldwide transmission must be truly interested in the Teachings transmitted by our Teacher, Chögyal Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche, and practiced in our world wide Dzogchen Community. Participants in this Transmission should try to receive Teachings from Rinpoche in the future. After having received the Transmission, they should also try to train and collaborate with the Sangha of the International Dzogchen Community of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche. Originally, Chögyal Namkhai Norbu had the idea of a ‘Transmission at a Distance’ because he wanted to help people in different situations, who could not travel at that time to meet the Teacher. The Transmission will enable them to practice the Dzogchen Teachings transmitted by Rinpoche without needing direct contact with the Teacher at that time.

Here is a summary of how the Live-Video-Empowerment works: To receive the World Wide Transmission, new students need to participate with an experienced student who will host both the preliminary explanation as well as the actual practice well in advance of the event. Hosts of Empowerments with the videotape should be members

of the International Dzogchen Community. For new and interested persons, it is important to have seen the explanation by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche that is also on the videotape, in advance. They should also have the possibility to clarify any doubts about the practice on the videotape with some serious, dedicated older students of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche before the Empowerment. Exactly at the given time (see timetable) at your place, you start the Transmission Video at the starting point of the part of the Anniversary of Guru Padmasambhava. At that moment – worldwide – students and newcomers start to practice this session of the Thun together, which ends with the dedication of merits. We wish you all a successful practice. Please contact your local Community for details.

Global Timetable

Anniversary of Padmasambhava

6th Tibetan month – 10th day

Celebration at 8 a.m. Oddiyana time.

Thursday 30th July 2009

17:00 Hawaii

20:00 San Francisco, Los Angeles, Vancouver

21:00 Denver, Salt Lake City, Pagosa Springs, Edmonton

22:00 Lima, Quito, Chicago, Mexico City

23:00 Caracas, San Juan, Santiago, New York, Conway, Montreal, Atlanta, Detroit, Havana, Kingston, Indianapolis, Ottawa

Friday 31st July 2009

00:00 Buenos Aires, Sao Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Bermuda

03:00 GMT, Reykjavic,

04:00 London, Dublin, Lisbon

05:00 Johannesburg, Rome, Berlin, Oslo, Paris, Madrid, Amsterdam, Copenhagen, Brussels, Geneva, Prague, Salzburg, Stockholm, Budapest, Vienna, Warsaw

06:00 Kuwait City, Riyadh, Tashkent, Helsinki, Athens, Ankara, Beirut, Jerusalem, Tallinn, Vilnius, Istanbul

07:00 Moscow, Murmansk, Baghdad

08:00 Oddiyana, Islamabad

08:30 New Delhi, Bombay

08:45 Kathmandu

09:00 Dacca

09:30 Rangoon

10:00 Bangkok, Jakarta, Saigon

11:00 Singapore, Beijing, Lhasa, Manila, Hong Kong, Kuala Lumpur, Taipei, Perth

12:00 Tokyo, Seoul,

12:30 Darwin, Adelaide

13:00 Brisbane, Melbourne, Sydney

14:00 Vladivostok

15:00 Fiji, Wellington, Auckland, Kamchatka

Video-Webcast on demand

livestream

Featured

Live Now

News

Entertainment

Music

Sports

Games

Yeshi Silvano Namkhai

ysn

Welcome to Yeshi S. Namkhai Video Library!

Embed

Full-screen

ON-AIR

5

ON-DEMAND

MENU

Dear Dzogchen Community Members and Friends,

I received many requests about my activities so I am organizing a small video library on the internet. If you are interested you can already find the last webcast from Moscow in the “on-demand” section.

<http://www.livestream.com/ysn>

Love,
Yeshi S. Namkhai

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu Schedule 2010

>> continued from page 1

Canaries

May 21–23

Canaries retreat

UK

May 28–30

London Retreat

Russia

June 2–8

Clinic treatment

June 11–15

Moscow retreat

June 18–20

Saint Petersburg retreat

June 28–July 4

Crimea retreat

Romania

July 20–25

Merigar East retreat

July 26–29

SMS Level I exam

July 30–August 10

SMS Level II Training

Italy

August 16–22

Merigar West retreat

August 25–Sep. 3

Grosseto personal retreat of Mandarava empowering chudlen pills for use at the retreat in Margarita plus Fitness

September 8–12

Zhitro purification for all those who have died

France

September 24–26

Teaching at Karmaling

Spain

October 1–7

Barcelona retreat.

Brazil

October 13–17

Brazil retreat

Venezuela

Tashigar Norte

December 1–8

Mandarava intensive practice retreat with Chudlen (in Webcast)

Dec. 26–Jan. 2

Christmas retreat

>> continued from previous page

a Ganapuja with your Vajra brothers and sisters. If there are no other practitioners nearby you can do the medium Tun on your own, transforming into the Dakini Simhamuka and reciting the heart mantra as many times as possible.

10th Month, 30th day

Wed. 16th December 2009

Dark Moon. This is an excellent day to do purification practice so try to do the Purification of the Six Lokas and a Ganapuja in the evening.

11th Month, 8th day

Thu. 24th December 2009

This is a special day for doing the practice of Ekajati so try to do a long Tun, collectively or alone, reciting the heart mantra as many times as possible.

11th Month, 10th day

Sat. 26th December 2009

This is a special day of Guru Padmasambhava called Padma Gyalpo: it is the day on which he arrived in the capital of Oddiyana and became prince to King Idrabhodi. Therefore it is an excellent day to do the Guruyoga of Padmasambhava with a Ganapuja.

11th Month, 15th day

Thu. 31st December 2009

Full Moon. Today it is important to try to do the long-life practice of Guru Amitayus, Union of Primordial Essences, in the usual way, and, if possible, a Ganapuja.

11th Month, 25th day

Sat. 9th January 2010

This is a day of the Dakinis in general, so if you have the opportunity practise a collective Ganapuja, with the transformation of the Dakini Simhamuka, and recite her heart mantra as many times as possible. Otherwise you can do a medium Tun either collectively or personally.

11th Month, 30th day

Fri. 15th January 2010

Dark Moon. This is an excellent day to do purification practice so try to do the Purification of the Six Lokas and a Ganapuja in the evening.

12th Month, 10th day

Mon. 25th January 2010

Today is the anniversary of Guru Padmasambhava’s coronation as Prince of Orgyen at the invitation of King Idrabhodi. We can perform a Ganapuja collectively or do the long-life practice, “Universal Wisdom Union” either collectively or personally, according to circumstances.

12th Month, 11th day

Tue. 26th January 2010

This is a good day to do a medium or long Tun with an intensive practice of the mantra of Ekajati.

12th Month, 15th day

Sat. 30th January 2010

Full Moon. This is in general a day for honouring the Lord Buddha, and in particular an ideal day for the Longlife

practice of Guru Amitayus, “Union of Primordial Essences”. If possible try to do a collective Ganapuja with your Vajra brothers and sisters in the evening.

12th Month, 18th day

Mon. 1st February 2010

This is the anniversary of the great Dzogchen master Longchen Rabjam (Longchenpa, 1306–1363). On this very important day try to do the Guruyoga Akar Lamai Naljor, Guruyoga with the White A, either collectively or personally.

12th Month, 25th day

Mon. 8th February 2010

Dakini Day. This is very positive day for reinforcing your energy and creating a stronger contact with the energy of the universe so try to do a collective Ganapuja with your Vajra brothers and sisters. If that is not possible, try to do a medium Tun alone. In either case recite the heart mantra of Ekajati as many times as possible.

12th Month, 30th day

Sat. 13th February 2010

Today is the last day of the Earth Ox year. It is a special day for purification practices so try to do “Purification of the Six Lokas” as much as possible. You should also try to do a Ganapuja with your Vajra brothers and sisters.

Being Helpful When Someone Dies

Death in the Western World

Elio Guarisco

“Everything that gathers at the end separates,” said Nagarjuna. With the years, a newborn baby becomes an adult and the adult grows into an old man or woman.

We know that one of the sufferings that mark the beginning of our exit from this world is illness. Even if we are not suffering from any disease in particular, with age the human body slowly deteriorates and loses its ability to function in a normal way. Eventually this condition leads to death. We always hear of the passing away of other people, but we remain particularly affected when one of our loved ones dies. At that time a feeling of helplessness engulfs us and our mind becomes gloomy. Even though we know through reason and direct perception that all human life ends with death, when death comes close to us we are shocked. Emotions overwhelm us, and the feeble knowledge of the spiritual teachings we may have seems insignificant. Suffering seems like an arrow through our raw flesh, and no rational thinking, explanations or reasons can mitigate it, until with time the wounds eventually heal themselves.

In our western world, death is widely considered to be the very opposite of life. Death poses a threat to society and ordinary people’s established values. For that reason, society and individuals try to conceal it as much as possible. Also the tremendous ignorance that pervades our society as to the way to treat the dying person while he or she is dying and what to do after the person is dead, leave the people close to the deceased in a state of bewilderment. And for a while one asks him or herself the reasons for life and the reasons for death. Reasons that, of course, by common standards, one is unable to answer. The body of the dead person, that is now a corpse, is quickly taken away by the mortuary agencies, embellished as to appear still alive in his or her nice coffin. Religious people follow the tradition of funerary rites in church, where the officiating priest does his best to alleviate the suffering of the relatives with nice words. After that, the relatives are alone in the house that once was also shared by the physical and spiritual presence of the deceased. They are now left with a sense of emptiness that is difficult to fill. All has happened so suddenly that one has no time to realize that our beloved parent, wife or husband has died and is no longer with us. Our habitual life has some healing effects on



us, as we are anyhow bound to continue to live ourselves.

Truly speaking, at any moment one of us is dying and being born as a new person. Only ignorance and the sense of permanence that such ignorance instills in us prevents us from seeing this. The other person always appears to be the same person in our eyes, or at best becoming older and older gradually, but still as the same being in a withering shell. If we were like realized ones we would see the continuously changing atoms in the palm of our hands leaving no space to conceive a permanent entity in them.

In any case, as illnesses and other problems manifest in the life of an adult person, we should realize that these could be obstacles to the life of our loved ones. Naturally, the best help one can give for a person in such a situation is to make him enter the spiritual teaching so that his life can enter into another perspective. This is, however, not always possible, because the person may be old, and with a cultural and social background that does not make him receptive to that teaching. In that case we should apply the methods to avert death which are explained in the teaching. For example:

- Saving the life of animals that are on the verge of being killed for their meat or fur, etc.
- It may also be useful to commission a *thangka* of one of the deities of long life, such as White Tara, Amitayus or Ushnishavijaya, and dedicate that for and present that to the person we want to help.
- Performing long life retreats in which one visualizes that the person receives the empowerment of long life, and dedicating the merit of that practice so that the person’s obstacles to a long life maybe be removed, his health restored and his life lengthened.
- Putting up prayer flags in sacred sites.

There are also other methods of a ritual nature that, however, are difficult to perform in a western country and by westerners.

As the person enters the final stage of life, one should be able to judge approximately how long that person will still live. Generally speaking it is difficult by normal standards to estimate the length of a person’s life, but we can check for some of the signs that are explained, for example, in Tibetan Medicine. There are

signs of death approaching and signs of imminent death. Then there are the signs of impending death. Moreover there are signs that death is just around the corner:

The progression in which the elements lose their quality is related to specific clinical signs: upon the absorption of the quality of the earth element into that of the water element; the person ceases to grasp the gross and subtle forms.

Upon the absorption of the quality of the water element into that of the fire element, the nine orifices dry up losing their wet and humid aspect.

Upon the absorption of the quality of the fire element into that of the air element, the bodily heat disappears gradually from the extremities.

Upon the absorption of the quality of the air element into the space element, the breathing and the other functions of the organism stop.

The progressive absorption of the potencies of the five elements is accompanied by cessation of the functional capacity of the sense organs: when the functions of sight stop, the visual forms become faint until they disappear into the sense-field of sound; thus the person has the impression of hearing loud noises.

When the function of hearing stops, the external sounds become faint until they disappear into the sense-field of smell.

When the olfactory functions stop, smells become faint until they vanish into the sense-field of gustatory sensations.

When the gustatory functions stop, tastes become faint until they disappear in the sense-field of tactile sensations.

Lastly, when the tactile functions stop, tactile sensations become indefinite until they dissolve into the life-sustaining wind. The life-sustaining wind in turn dissolves into the consciousness that by now moves toward a new existence.

When such signs manifest, it is inopportune to hope in doctors, medicines and other remedies to save the life of the person. Realizing the impermanent nature of this life, we should accompany the dying person with awareness to the door of death. The person should be assisted but at the same time left in peace and quiet. At that point the vital energy of the person may have become so weak that the person has no longer the strength to complain about the pain and discomfort he is feeling. No-one should be allowed into the room of the dying person calling him aloud, asking him about how he feels; such behavior, at that point, is only silly.

The dying person may not be able to swallow any medicines, and instead of forcing the person to take medicines that are useless at that time, it may be useful to:

- give the person ‘empowered medicinal ingredients’ such as Nyongrol, substances that create a cause of liberation in those who taste them, or other special pills empowered by highly realized beings. For that purpose is always useful to keep such pills and powders in our house.
- If the person is a practitioner, this is the moment to remind him of the essence of the teaching, by speaking or reading to him passages that introduce the person to the real nature of the mind.

For common people at the moment of death there is a kind of struggle that may last half an hour or ten minutes. This seems to be caused by the force of attachment to this life that is inseparably united with the life force of the person. In a native custom of the Himalayas, to overcome that struggle people who have had recent problems with the dying person are brought in as the last act of reconciliation. But I am not sure this is a good idea. At the end, the person lets go of life and breathes the last breath. Simultaneous with that, holding the wrist of the dying person and feeling the radial artery, at a certain point, one can feel that the pulse stops. This is conventionally considered to be the moment of death.

There is no need to hurry to do anything at this point, although in the West and everywhere else, at this point one only thinks of getting rid of the dead body. There are still ways to help the person. Sometimes the heat of the person’s body remains a little in the region of the heart. This indicates that the consciousness of the person is still around. So if we are practitioners we should:

- Using a straw or a horn shaped tube, we place that in the ear of the dead person, in the right ear if male and left ear if female, and we recite, for example, the following (as suggested by Chögyal Namkai Norbu in his ‘Birth, Living and Dying’): “Listen, son or daughter of a noble lineage! Now what is called death has come to you. This happens not only to you but to all beings without exception. Do not be attached to the karmic visions of this life. Now your vision is manifesting as ‘the intermediate state of the real condition’, the natural energy of the wisdom of instant presence. Now your body and your mind have separated, and thus all manifestations – subtle, limpid, luminous and clear – spheres of light and forms (such as those of the peaceful and wrathful deities), shimmering like a summer mirage on a plain, will appear: they are the vision of the pure real condition. Do not be afraid of these visions! Recognize them as the natural energy of your real condition. From within that light, the natural sound of the real condition of existence will resound like the roar of a thousand simultaneous thunderbolts.”

- Place the *tagdrol* on the chest of the dead person, facing toward the inside.
- chant the Song of the Vajra, or at least ‘A A Ha Sha Sa Ma, and other mantras we are familiar with.
- Place the substance from the transference of consciousness on the posterior fontanel at the crown of the head of the dead person.

After three days from the death of the person, considering the day the person has died as the first day, one perform the practice of the Shitro, the peaceful and wrathful deities, for the dead person. This can be done each day, throughout the 49 days of the intermediate state before a person takes rebirth. Or it can be done at least at the end of each week, and especially on the third week and on the 49th day.

In areas of the Himalayas influenced by the Buddhist culture, people used to light many butter lamps on the occasion of the performance of Shitro or other rites, till the 49 days are over.

As the body of the deceased is carried off to be buried or cremated, one must pay close attention and show affection and understanding for the people that were very close to the dead person. The death of that person strikes them very deeply, leaving them in the midst of suffering. The body of the person although dead is still in the house and has not left, and because of our great identification with the body and the fact we impute the existence of others mainly on the basis of the body, the relatives still think the person is with them. But when the body is carried off in a pompous way with funeral music as Himalayan Buddhists do, that certainty shatters [this concept] and people very close to the dead can faint or have heart problems. For this reason we should be very understanding and comfort these people without pronouncing harsh words. Suffering is human and to express it is also human, and should be understood and accepted.

If we do all these things, although the death of relative is always painful, we can certainly create benefit for the future of the dead person. Also we ourselves, after the initial feeling of helplessness, feel we have done everything that could possibly be done in a human condition for our dear one who has passed away. Our heart remains peaceful and calm like a great ocean, understanding the nature of human life. ©

How I met Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

Uliana Sokolova

I could probably tell you a story. However, my story will be about friendship, sky-signs, inner soul pleadings and outer circumstances. There will be several stories in one and you can probably draw some parallels between them depending on your sense of humor or the twisted curve of your thoughts.

So, my calendar was turning its pages with incredible speed, and suddenly I was 27 or 28 when I was taking my postgraduate studies, taking psychology classes and attending seminars, but I was far from being too very interested in mysticism.

1st Story. Crisis. - Approximately 6 months before MEETING with the TEACHER

I was experiencing one of my crisis; it's a common knowledge that crisis is an inevitable part of life and personal growth. At least psychologists should know that. Once again I had to experience a shockingly horrifying realization that everything in this life goes its own odd way and I can only acknowledge that I KNOW NOTHING! My experience was a mere nightmare and I pleaded: "Hey, You up there! Listen to me! I want to meet a TEACHER, I want to understand how this all works. I'm ready to give up my pride and prejudices and follow him unquestionably – if it could help me to understand something."

Later the crisis passed as it happens with all crises, and I completely forgot about my speechless entreaty, addressed to whom it might concern; however, this episode first surfaced in my mind from the depths of subconscious.

2nd Story. Illness. Four months before the MEETING.

Unexpectedly, I got sick and spent almost one and a half months at home alone. I lived by myself that time and due to my sickness I could hardly walk. My ex-boyfriend stopped by regularly to bring medications from the pharmacy and my mom came to my place to help me with my housework. Meanwhile, my relatives made various appointments with medical personnel from the traditional healthcare system, and my friends with adepts from alternative medicine.

Luckily, I earned some good money then, which allowed me not to work for the duration of my illness and rehabilitation, and also to cover my downtime until the new contracts were sealed.

I spent hours on the phone with my friend from St. Petersburg, who called long distance to encourage me as well as curse all our mutual friends who, in her opinion, had abandoned me in that time.

3rd Story. On Friends and Information. Approximately 2 months before the MEETING.

Once two nice Jungian psychologists from Moscow, who I believed were my friends as well as business partners, and I had invited them several times to my home city Samara to hold seminars, told me that their Teacher who taught Buddhism and Dzogchen was coming to Moscow to give a retreat and it might be his last visit to Moscow as he had been sick. The word "Bud-

dhism" was familiar to me, but it was of no particular interest. The word "Dzogchen" meant nothing at all to me. So I told them I would be happy to meet them in Moscow and I would think about going there, but I would have exams in May and I didn't really have money to go to Moscow.

A couple of days later my other nice and more mature friends and partners from the St. Petersburg Institute of Personality told me that a Dzogchen teacher named Chögyal Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche was going to Moscow in May and that they intended to go to his retreat. And then I thought, "Well, we'll see..."

4th Story. Two Weeks before the MEETING: (This part is some kind of friendly-crazy-adventurous-criminal with a slight shade of eroticism.)

One sunny morning I woke up and knew that I was going to Moscow to meet the Dzogchen Teacher, Chögyal Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche. I still knew nothing about Dzogchen except that it was a teaching associated with the mind, which in a strange way made me feel proud. However, I required some explanations for my odd actions to reschedule my exams, and I easily made myself believe that at least I would have a good time in Moscow with my friends.

I had to figure out the practical matters of where to find money for the retreat, train tickets and lodging in Moscow.

At first my ex-boyfriend unexpectedly showed up telling me that his business bit the dust, but he had left with only one super electrical drill from the last batch, which he could give me free and if I could sell it, I would have some money. In a day another friend also showed up unexpectedly and told me that he needed that particular drill, and thus I got money for the retreat and lodging in Moscow.

A week before the trip there was a strange phone call to my apartment. Though technically there was nothing unusual in that rattling sound of an old phone installed in the rented apartment of the old Stalin type apartment building on embankment, where some strange chief engineer from a strategic military plant had lived in before me.

The words I heard on the phone were almost bizarre. It was my former student from the musical department of the local teachers' training college, whom I vaguely remembered when she was a student, and for the reason she probably wasn't very keen on psychology that time. However, later on she happened to attend my courses and in a way we became friendly. She called me that day to tell me hectically that she, her sister and some other guys were in the car at the moment next to my house and they invited me to join them for a party.

Not only was I surprised and shocked, but different thoughts and suspicions of a criminal nature rushed through my head, because it was the 1990s in Russia. As a result, I came to the conclusion that these silly girls muddled themselves into some sort of story and that they couldn't call



Photo: A. Chlimper

anyone else for help. Furthermore, they couldn't talk their way out their trap and they needed me to out and "rescue" them.

When I went out to their car I was introduced to several pleasant looking guys, who introduced themselves as salesmen of the glamorous Russian VAZ cars which were produced in a bordering town named Togliatti. As it turned out, we had a very good time. We enjoyed some great food and wine. We listened to these guys sharing with us about their business success. They flirted a bit with us. They chatted about life and mysticism, and we felt very easy though a bit strange.

After someone mentioned that they are good guys in all respects, I made a joke, "If you are so good why don't you lend me some money to buy a ticket to Moscow to meet the Tibetan Teacher who might come to Russia for the last time?" One of them asked me how much I needed. I answered, "Just enough to cover the round trip." I heard in response, "It's probably less than we paid for the meals now."

Then we all said goodbye to each other for that day and I forgot all about it.

The next day a young man called me and told me that he was in my neighborhood and that he had brought money for me. I was surprised and asked him what money he was talking about. He replied, "The money is for your train tickets that you had asked." I promised to repay him from the first money that I would earn upon my return from Moscow. But when I attempted to repay the money, nobody ever returned my calls.

As it turned out I have never again seen any of those young people. I hope they are doing well; had good luck, survived the 90s, did not turn into alcoholics or become addicted to drugs. I hope they were successful in continuing their businesses or were able to start new ones. In any case, I truly wish them all the best.

MEETING

At a gymnasium in Balashikha, a small town in the Moscow region, I experienced my first encounter with the Teacher. He had a Tibetan face and wore rather simple clothes. I felt very happy, but I really didn't understand anything that he said. I tried to focus and listen attentively, but after several words, like: "dharmakaya", "sutra", "tantra"; I felt like my brain could not comprehend anymore, and I felt myself falling asleep. I woke up again, listened and fell asleep again. Yet I understood in order to be free you need to discover the particular state that the Teacher introduces to the students. And the strings on the neck wouldn't help you either!

I saw that most of the practices in the book are called secondary, and they are very long with many words were in Tibetan and most of the people knew them by heart (the crazy freaks) and I thought, "If the secondary practices are so long, how long could the main practices be?"

I watched people dancing on Mandala, and I wanted to repeat their movements. I tried to repeat these movements with my hands, standing behind Mandala. My friend told me that the book on the Dance was published and everything was described there. But no one actually taught the Dance during the retreat.

We came to the Teacher and introduced ourselves. There were four of us from Samara. We could practice together. The typical question of a beginner is what practices we should do first?

And always the eternal response is: GURUYOGA.

6th Story. All stories are continued.

My meetings with my Teacher continue, and are really meetings with myself. My blurry reflections of my features in the mirror are getting more clarity, occasional ones are erasing and the world becomes: WONDERFUL...AWFUL...NEUTRAL...

I ended up moving to St. Petersburg where I learned the Vajra Dance and met a big Dzogchen Community. Later I moved to Moscow, because a Gar had been bought nearby and participation in its establishment seemed very important that time.

Then I lost everything that I had gained previously in society: my occupation, my status, and my ability to earn money.

Later I started all over again.

Now my life seems more joyful to me. One story overlaps the other and together they become interwoven. Every year I feel that my life is just starting now. ©

Uliana Sokolova has been living in Moscow for 11 years, got married, and is an authorized Vajra Dance instructor.



ཨ་ཁྱེ་ལྷ་ས་གྲོང་ཁྱེར་། Desde el Sur
Adriana Battisti
Jewelry & Accessories



ab@desdeelsur-ab.com.ar - www.adrianabattisti.com.ar
TE: +54-351-6441022 / +54-351-488-0994 / Cel. +54-9351-156 120 092
Skype: adrianabattisti