

THE MIRROR

Newspaper of the International Dzogchen Community

March/April 2002 • Issue No. 60

Teacher Training in Margarita February, 2002

by Jean Mackintosh



Rinpoche with Santi Maha Sangha Base Level Teachers

Finally the day of the Teacher Training Retreat arrived on the February 15th, 2002. It was held on the land that has recently been purchased for Tashigar North on Margarita Island, Venezuela.

Although this land was still in the process of negotiation, the owner allowed the Dzogchen Community to use the land for the retreat. Since then the land has been bought by members of the International Dzogchen Community.

Applicants for the Teacher Training Retreat traveled for many days to finally arrive on this small island. There were fifteen candidates for the Teacher Training of the Base Level Santi Maha Sangha and all were expected to teach for one hour on the topic given to them, on the day, by their Master Chögyal Namkhai Norbu.

Practitioners gathered in apartments and houses and tents around the village of Pedro González and organized transport to Tashigar North by taxi, bicycle, and on foot, so that all candidates and listeners gathered in the morning and the afternoon to participate in the Retreat.

On the afternoon of the first day Rinpoche led a Short Thun and included a short practice to convert the unfavorable nature of the day so

that circumstances would be more favorable to commence the Teacher Training.

Rinpoche then spoke about the Teacher Training. It became clear that to be accepted, candidates would need to be very precise and clear in their explanations. Rinpoche said teaching doesn't mean explaining how you feel about things or your fantasies; it's not about what you think. It is necessary to be precise in explaining what you learn from your teacher, Chögyal Namkhai Norbu.

The candidates would also need to be very familiar with the practices, if they had to use a practice book then it showed they were not that interested. They also needed to have respectful behavior without too much ego; and to be natural and down to earth in their explanations without too much intellectualization.

The next day began with the first student being called by Rinpoche and given a small red envelope with their name on it. Inside the envelope was written the topic on which they had to speak and Rinpoche also read out the topic to the candidate. And so the first student took his place on the chair next to Rinpoche and began to speak as everyone listened attentively.

There were two students every morning and one in the afternoon. After that we sang the invocations from the book of the Santa Maha Sangha Base Level practices. As each student finished their presentation they were liberated from the tension of anticipation into the relaxation of the island life. The music of the salsa, merengue, and cumbia throbs in the streets through the night as the people sit outside their houses in the warm evening, talking, singing, dancing and listening to music. Members of the Sangha ate together in little restaurants by the beach or went to the Karaoke bar to sing and dance.

In the mornings practitioners swam with their Master in the cold waters of Zaragosa Beach, singing the Song of Vajra and integrating with the water element, then later lying under the coconut palms on the hot sand and drinking Pina Colada.

Finally, the Teacher Training was also over and the successful candidates received their diplomas and advice from Rinpoche, Yantra Yoga and Vajra Dance Teachers also participated in the Training and received their diplomas. The retreat ended with a Ganapuja in which all is purified.



Entrance to Tashigar Norte

R. BONOTTO

The Wind of Wisdom at Pearl Island Longsal Retreat in Margarita

By Agnes Rudzite and Grisha Mokhin

When an airplane approaches Isla Margarita, passengers have an opportunity of viewing this majestic island of pearls from a bird's eye view and sometimes not only once. If the crew is not taking care of you, the wind does. It is so strong that the pilot has to wait until it ceases to land.

The Gonpa is on the land of the Community, Tashigar del Norte, on the outskirts of the little town of Pedro Gonzalez. Rinpoche sits on his chair gazing into space. The wind blows, and the loudspeakers wail. Everyone feels that movement, and we are enjoying this wind as the wisdom of our Teacher. He already explained how. We are trying to integrate in our real condition in his Presence. "This is a very special place for wind", he said.

Every morning we meet Rinpoche at the beach for a long swim. No matter what the weather or the water temperature is, he enjoys it equally and so try we. We lay floating on the water as he does and sing the Song of the Vajra. Then we play the game of liberation together with him. "I could pass the whole day in the sea", he said.

Then there is the newly acquired land, almost untouched yet. It is the place our Master chose for himself and his disciples. We will soon see aloe vera growing and houses being built. Sheep are grazing around the Gonpa and seem to be interested in hearing the Teachings as well. "They didn't learn very well," Rinpoche says, "they should say A-A-A, not be-e-ehi."

Two weeks of the long expected Longsal Teaching started a day earlier than planned. After checking the Tibetan calendar, Rinpoche decided to begin on the 8th of April to take the advantage of that auspicious day. We did a Short Thun with him to eliminate negativities and obstacles. There were almost no obstacles, if one is able to forget about the Caracas strikes and political turmoil. One could guess that something was going on only by looking at the worried faces of our Venezuelan brothers and sisters, some of them receiving phone calls from their children fighting at the central square of Caracas. The next day Rinpoche asked everyone to dedicate the merits of the practice and teaching to the people who perished in Caracas strikes, and the situation in the country also calmed down, so the retreat was not affected by it at all.

We were privileged to have two weeks of teaching, probably the most sacred and precious that exists in our dimension. Three hundred and fifty fortunate people from more than twenty countries who asked Rinpoche's permission to attend this teaching. It is Rinpoche's path for liberation, beyond words, beyond all doubts and fear. It is our Teacher, the real Buddha living for his disciples and manifesting limitless kindness and compassion. He is giving himself to his students with every word, look and gesture; transmitting the ultimate meaning of his teaching - integration.

At the end of the retreat, Rinpoche said that there were some students who could make this principle of integration alive - Michel Dubourdieu and Carmen Rivas. We all witnessed their capacity of integration, kindness and patience in their everyday efforts to solve all the small and big problems that arise while organizing a retreat. Actually, the problems of organizing such a retreat are overwhelming, as everyone who tried to do it at least once knows quite well. Accommodation, food, transportation, contacts with local people; all of this in a Venezuelan village that never saw so many foreign people at a time. All of this was resolved with an unsurpassed skill and diligence by the organizing committee formed by the participants of the retreat and lead by tireless Gilberto Parella. Rinpoche calls this island the place of *Ihundrub* - self-perfection - but it is really the devotion of his disciples and the compassion of the Teacher together that makes this self-perfection manifest.

In the future there will be more teachings at Tashigar del Norte. Much responsibility is now on newly authorized instructors of the Base of Santi Maha Sangha, Vajra Dance and Yantra Yoga. Since Rinpoche decided to spend more time at Margarita, it is they who will have to contribute their knowledge and energy to the development of the local Communities all around the world. Rinpoche will continue the program of Teachers' Training and will transmit more teachings at Margarita, the next one is scheduled for October, 2003. It is quite important that the development of this wonderful place for practicing Dharma and enjoying life will be fast and free of obstacles.

The end of the retreat. Soon we will be back home, Treasure Teachings in our hearts. And the wind blows. It blows away the good and the bad. Thoughts pass like clouds. They come and go. The wind blows them away, too. What remains? Space, light and wisdom. "You will feel lighter after this retreat", Rinpoche said on one of the first days.

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Important Message from Chögyal Namkhai Norbu
Cancellation of Santi Maha Sangha 1st and 2nd Level Examinations at
Tsegylgar, 2002

"I am sorry, but I must cancel the 2nd and 3rd level trainings of Santi
Maha Sangha at Tsegylgar in this year, 2002, because it is very impor-
tant that I do a personal retreat at Khandroling, Conway, in that period."

With many greetings to you all!

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

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We need to change our program a little for this Teacher Training Retreat. Originally I thought to do a practice this afternoon and tomorrow do the introduction and then go ahead. We have to change the program because there are more people than I thought would participate. So in this case, we will have to work a little more. We will do a Short Thun and then an introduction for the Teacher Training today instead of tomorrow; tomorrow we will have more time for presenting people.

When we made this program I did not have the Tibetan calendar for the new year, so when I received the calendar it indicated that today and tomorrow are not very positive days for activities. We can consider that we started on New Year's day here, for example, because that was the first time we did a practice on this land. The first formal contact with this place was the day of the new year; that is a very nice day and we can consider today and tomorrow a continuation of that day. Also, when we apply something during days which are not favorable, there is an invocation for changing that aspect which you may have seen in the Tibetan calendar from Merigar. On the last page of the calendar there are verses which are the words of Buddha. It is considered something important for bringing good omens. So, we can start with this and then I will give the Teacher Training introduction.

Introduction to Teacher Training

The Teacher Training program is very important. The only way to continue the Teaching is through the people who have the capacity to teach and develop that capacity for the future. In this case, if someone is taking this responsibility, they must be perfect. If we do something in the wrong way - not correct or not perfect - then we develop that. If we have qualifications in a perfect way and develop them day after day and we multiply that by many people who learn and develop, then something good develops. This is very important.

I always use the example of numbers; from number one there can be many millions and billions. Numbers are related to time and time is moving ahead. After some years many of us will disappear and will be no more on this earth. Time continues. So the Teaching should also continue. It doesn't mean the Teaching should just continue in any way, but in the correct way, and have benefit for people. If we develop something incorrectly it is dangerous and negative instead of having benefit. You know that very well.

For that reason, I have asked from the beginning that the people who want to do the Teacher Training observe themselves very well. When we do practice or learn the Teaching, we know that the aspects of body, speech and mind exist. There exist the aspects of *tawa*, *gonpa* and *chödpä*. Which kind of point of view or knowledge do we have, including intellectual understanding? For example, there is a Santi Maha Sangha book for learning, but that is not complete. It is only a part of *tawa*. We must also include what practice you did, which kind of capacity you have of



Chögyal Namkhai Norbu at Teacher Training

Teacher Training Margarita Island, Venezuela

February 15th - 24th, 2002

practice, how you have integrated it in you, which kind of manifestation of your practice you notice yourself. For everybody it is not so difficult to understand. I am always saying to observe your tensions and problems with people. I am always receiving emails saying, "I have this problem and that problem", today there are some problems, and tomorrow we find another problem. Of course, when we are in *samsara* in a dualistic condition there are many problems. How can our *gonpa* be perfect when you feel you have this or that problem and someone is very upset because of those problems; someone says there are problems between practitioners, problems of *samaya*, for example? So you must understand these things.

To teach other people you need, at least, to have that experience perfectly. Otherwise our teachers are just like how it is today in general; everywhere there are teachers today - Buddhist teachers, Tantric teachers, Sutric teachers, Dzogchen teachers. Most of these teachers make a kind of business; that is the purpose of that teaching or activity. We don't need that. That is not our purpose. For that reason we started Santi Maha Sangha. We arrived at the 4th level of Santi Maha Sangha, but when we arrived at the 4th level I decided to stop. Why? Because I understood there is no qualification of the 4th level. I couldn't see it. Maybe I do not have sufficient pure vision.

So that means that we are not realizing our purpose of Santi Maha Sangha. Now we are starting from the base of Santi Maha Sangha; something and someone qualified to teach that. Many of you have the idea that you already know how to teach and explain. But if you are thinking that *only*, then you are following like parrots. Parrots also repeat. We don't need that very much today because there are many recordings and cassettes to which you can listen. That's easier. For example, when you are cooking, working, or cleaning your house, you can listen. There is no need to go and listen to someone. But that is not sufficient. You must under-

stand, if you are presenting yourself as a teacher, you need that kind of qualification.

Also you must observe your *chödpä* a little; your attitude. A teacher cannot be arrogant. A teacher must not be limited to his or her view only. Teaching means knowing how to enter the dimension of the student and knowing how to work with the circumstances; you see there are the aspects of *tawa*, *gonpa* and *chödpä*, and you must observe and work that way.

If you feel you are still not perfect, you try to do perfectly. Otherwise it is not good. Some people say, "Oh I like to teach because I can learn more by explaining to people". Sometimes there is some benefit, but this idea is egoistic. You are only thinking of yourself. "I am learning more explaining for people". This is not teaching. I have said that many times - in America, for example, everybody is using and thinking very nice words. "I am sharing", they say. But when we work with the Teaching and give teachings, teaching is giving, not sharing. Teaching is not thinking of ourselves and our own interests, but thinking of the interest of the student; the people who are interested. We dedicate 100% for that. That is not sharing. Sharing means, for example, you are eating together and you have something so you eat half and I eat half. This is sharing. That means you are including your interest and *then* you are doing something for the others. You don't teach in that way.

In general, in the teaching, we must learn that there are many dimensions. I have my dimension, but when I present myself as a teacher in front of many people, I must be aware that all those people have their own dimensions. I respect these dimensions and try to do my best to satisfy these people. Not *only* satisfying people, but helping them to understand what I am communicating. I am working; we should really work in that way with the teaching.

To teach doesn't mean that you explain how you feel and how you have your fantasy. You know

very well the teaching has its principle and transmission. Even if you are teaching a small thing, something related to the teaching, you must introduce that first of all. What this teaching is, where it comes from, how you received this teaching and which kind of transmission you have. It is not that you are doing a workshop and explaining what you think. This is not the way of the Teaching.

The most important thing when we are teaching is that we know we are working with people who are interested. Of course, we are not doing missionary work. That is not our job. We are not interested in that at all. Some people say we should diffuse the teaching here and there, but we are not interested in that. We are interested if people are interested. If someone is interested and they want to know and learn, then we do our best, 100% for that person. We make them understand what the real sense of the teaching is; even if we explain a kind of practice, we explain not only the technique of practice, but try and communicate what the purpose of this teaching is.

Today when many people speak of the Teaching, they believe the Teaching is a kind of technique. Someone says, "Oh I went to this teacher and they taught a very interesting teaching". When we ask what this teaching was, they explain how to do practice; visualization, chanting mantras, etc. That is good, but that is the technique of that practice. Why do we use those techniques? Why do we chant and do visualization? We must understand that this is the most important thing. If we take medicine we must understand *why* we take medicine. If we are healthy and we have no problems and we take medicine, we are stupid. We don't need it. If we take medicine and we are healthy, we create problems instead of having benefit.

So we don't need any technique; we need to understand the real sense and how it is connected to technique. For example, in the Santi Maha Sangha base, there are not many practices, but all practices are condensed into a kind of exam-

ple, like a model of practice. For example, in our Mahayoga practice we are not going to do Hevajra or Kalachakra because these practices are very complicated. But we should know essentially how these very concentrated practices go.

Also for people who like to apply practices in daily life, we have the Long, Medium and Short Thun and practices at least four times in a month. We also have several collective practices. If you are going to a Dharma center, for example, how do they practice? They use many books; much more than we have. We are not developing so many books for doing practice. We always have the Short, Medium and Long Thun and some collective practices. Why? Because that is sufficient. But even if there are few practices, many of the old practitioners still don't know them. They still use books. I have seen. You observe, if you are going to do training, do you need to use books when you do the practices we do in general?

When I was in Derge, in the monastery of Derge Ganchen, the system of the monastery was that we learned at least four or five small volumes by memory. I learned in memory. Not only I, but all the monks learned in this way. In the temple when we performed these kind of practices, we couldn't use books. We did not have all these things, only small books. If you are still using books, people who are going to do Santi Maha Sangha training, it means you are not really very interested. Then how do you teach? I am happy if there are one hundred people really doing Santi Maha Sangha training and becoming teachers, I like and need it. But I only need people who have perfect qualifications. Perfect like Buddha, and the aspects of *tawa*, *gonpa* and *chödpä* correspond with the Dzogchen teachings. That is OK.

You must reflect on a these things a little by yourself. If you need to progress, you try to do that. Also, what you should do with all the practices, particularly in the base, is not only to say you did them, but that you did them well. It is in your interest, because if you did the practices well you will have such qualifications. If you didn't do the practices well, for example you only do prostrations like many Westerners do in Bodhgaya in order to receive teachings later and then they say, "Oh, I did sufficient prostrations"; from this activity we do not obtain benefit.

This is what I would like to ask everyone. You know very well how important Teacher Training is, you know very well how many places and people we have in the world who are really interested to learn, so if there is someone who really has the capacity to explain, they can help. Becoming a teacher means you are going to help people, not to do something special, not to think you that now you have a position. Being a teacher is not a position, a teacher is a kind of service. Some people say, "Then why do you sit a little higher and everyone listens to you?" If I am sitting a little higher you can see and hear me better. That is the reason.

We really should learn very well the aspect of *chödpä*; attitude. When you become a teacher you must be aware of your attitude. Particularly to pay respect to others;

continued on next page



Yantra Yoga Teachers

not only Community people, but anyone. Also to collaborate with practitioners, particularly in the Dzogchen Community. And if we are a teacher it means we are really active in the Community and understand what the Community is. Becoming a teacher doesn't mean I go somewhere tomorrow and open a center and become the boss of this center. It does not mean that. If you do that you are outside of the Community; you are no more in my Sangha, because it doesn't correspond. If you collaborate with people, help people and develop your capacity, that it is good. Even if we did all the levels of Santi Maha Sangha, it doesn't mean that really we become like Garab Dorje. Maybe someone does, who knows, but in general it's not so easy. Particularly if we are still in *samsara*. *Samsara* is always *samsara*. Even if we have done nine levels of Santi Maha Sangha, *samsara* doesn't change, it always presents *samsara*. It is possible that we have some evolution in ourselves. Knowing then that knowledge and understanding are developing in ourselves is something; but not to use it to govern people, not to show position, this is the first thing. I recommend to all people that when you have the idea, "Now I am becoming a teacher", you don't think that you have a position, otherwise your quality is finished.

From tomorrow we will observe your presentation. I already told you that the Teachers' Training is not that Namkhai Norbu explains how we should be as teachers, how we should teach, etc., and gives lessons for many days. Many people had that idea, but this is not teachers' training. I already do this, always, in Santi Maha Sangha as well as in other teachings and retreats. How many retreats have we done? You can go and visit Merigar to see how many videos and cassettes of teachings there are.

The conclusion of that is that now we go into Teachers' Training; now it is your turn. How do you start, for example? Firstly, you don't think you are doing a kind of examination. You are not doing a kind of examination, but presenting how you teach. We want to know that. Tomorrow we start according to the list. In the practical way, how we do it? In the practical way, tomorrow is not a very nice day also, so we start in the same way we did today for transforming it to a good day. Then whoever teaches tomorrow for one hour, goes to the chair and sits and I give them a small piece of paper saying what they should explain. You should explain for one hour. When you are starting to explain, first of all you should introduce yourself, what you are going to teach, what it means, everything. For example, it is as if you are somewhere and there is a group of people and you are talking with these people. Maybe some people know you or you know them; but maybe someone doesn't know you or you don't know them, so you must introduce yourself.

When I teach in general, like in retreats, not like today where more or less everyone knows I am Namkhai Norbu, but when I give a public talk, then either someone introduces me or I introduce myself. It's important, when we are talking with two people, for example, we must know who that person is. We must also present that person with whom the other person is talk-

ing, otherwise that person is not interested.

When you explain any argument, you remember not only technique - technique is only a part - but you always remember in your mind with any kind of argument, any kind of teaching, that it has its aspect of *tawa*, *gonpa* and *chödpä*. You don't need to see this is the *tawa* of this and *gonpa* of this, you know them as an aspect of what you should explain. And particularly, you must not lose the real sense. For that reason, if you are explaining any subject you could also explain for two or three hours. You can do this with any kind of subject because everything is related.

Some people think, "Oh, I should explain this subject but in the Santi Maha Sangha book there are only three lines", for example. The Santi Maha Sangha base explains all, not only one argument. But now you are going into more detail and deeper into the knowledge in this argument. So then you must know how to do. So we need one hour of explanation.

We want to see your attitude, way of presenting, way of explaining, aspect of *tawa*, and how it is related with *gonpa*. If you have some experience, some knowledge with practice, it easily shows when you explain or give teachings for others. It is not necessary to say, "I did this practice for two months, I did this quantity of that mantra". That doesn't matter, we don't need to know this.

So this is how we proceed. Tomorrow we will meet in the morning and two people will present, then one in the afternoon. I will always be present, but not as a teacher. I will also receive teachings from three people tomorrow. The other people, those doing and not doing the training, can receive and listen also. That's a teaching. You can observe how to teach, if the presenters are good teachers or not. If they present everything - the aspects of *tawa*, *gonpa* and *chödpä* - then on February 24th they will get a kind of diploma with the recognition that they can teach the base of Santi Maha Sangha. We should also know how their capacity is and how they teach.

There will also be Yantra Yoga teachers and Dance of Vajra teachers, but they will be after the Santi Maha Sangha training. Some people have the idea to do both, but it is better not to do. You should only do one, so we can do everything in a more qualified way, not by quantity. If



Vajra Dance Teachers

you want to do, for example, teacher of Yantra Yoga and at the same time Santi Maha Sangha, then you do one of these in this moment and another in another moment. There will be more occasions, particularly Yantra Yoga and Vajra Dance. They are easier to do. But it is possible this will not be the last time, also with the Santi Maha Sangha Teacher Training, if there are more qualified people.

Transcribed and edited by Naomi Zeitz

The Future of Margarita

A talk given by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu during the break at the Teacher Training on 2/18/02

Next year this place will be very different. Everything will be very well prepared. There will be many houses, including my house. Then I will enjoy - *io godo* - that is my principle. *Io godo* good weather, good mangos, good coconut, everything. But I am not just saying *io godo*, after that there is also *noi godiamo*. If you are joining with *noi*, then you can join. If you are not joining in *noi* there is not much I can do.

For the future, I will spend more time here in this place because it is very comfortable for my health. Also I shouldn't travel too much, only to some Gars. That is also a sacrifice for me. But then most of the time I will be here; so the people who are interested must move. If they are interested in the teaching, or if they want to enjoy with me, then they can think about how to do it and there are many possibilities.

I am thinking at least when we are building these houses, private houses, we still have the possibility to have one lot for each Gar. That is not so heavy for each Gar. For example, Merigar can have one lot

for all the people belonging to Merigar and those people can go and live there when they come here. Kunsangar, in the same way and Tseggyalgar. In general Tseggyalgar has less money, but it doesn't have to be only Tseggyalgar, in can also be the West Coast Community, Santa Fe, Chicago, Portland; they can all participate with Tseggyalgar. In the same way with Merigar; Germany is nearby and powerful and France and other small countries.

Yes, really, I am not joking. I think this is something very good. Also Namgyalgar, it is quite far from here, so when the Australian people come here there will be a lot for them. That is something very nice, because when I am living here longer I think people will come and there will be something to do. It will not only be Teacher Training but also other teachings. There will also be Teacher Training continuously, not only this time."

There is one lot left at Tashigar North. To participate in this wonderful project, please contact: Gilberto Parrella: pratgiam@telcel.net.ve

Transcribed by Dick Drury

Rinpoche's Final Remarks at the Longsal Retreat Tashigar North

April 23, 2002

OK, we have finished our this retreat. We finished this retreat in a good way because we did not have any problems. In general we are in *samsara*, and there can always be some problems. So this retreat is very good, without any problems; and everyone remembers Margarita and particularly this place. Our program is that we are going to develop some Community base here, and that is important. For that reason you can always collaborate, and always be welcome. My idea is that I want to spend more time for the future here because my life is almost passed. Therefore there remains only little time, and I want to be in a place where there is a nice climate, not too damp but dry. So for me this place is very comfortable and for that reason I am not only living here like a tourist, but also working with the Dzogchen Community people.

For that reason we all have the program of building - the Gonpa and the houses for interested people. We can continue progress with this program. We also have a program for aloe vera cultivation. I feel this is something important for all the Dzogchen Community. For example, we have many Dzogchen Community Gars in different places and most of our Gars we still have no specific income. The only income comes when I go to a place and hold a retreat and that is just a little. For example, with this aloe vera program, there will be an income. Towards this income I want to contribute something, it is not really a great contribution, but to show an example, like beginning, and then you can continue.

We have different Dzogchen Community Gars. The first one is the oldest: Merigar. Merigar, compared to Tashigar South, has a little stronger economic condition. I want to contribute US\$1000 in the name of the Merigar Community to go into the aloe vera fund. And US\$1000 for Tseggyalgar, and US\$1000 for Namgyalgar. Then there is Tashigar which is a little weaker, so I want to contribute US\$2000. Kunsangar is not so very strong economically, but I also received some offerings from Kunsangar, so for that reason I want to contribute US\$3000. So this is altogether US\$8000. [Rinpoche later decided to invest US\$3000 on behalf of each of the five Gars, a total of US\$15000.]

This is the money in cash! (applause and laughter). I am giving this. (Hands over envelope of money)

So this is only an example, and you can add something from each Gar because it is very important. We must think how each Gar can really do something to have an income to maintain itself. It is not sufficient to live only on the money that comes from our retreats. Also only membership money is not sufficient income. So we must think what we can do and study it in general. This is a good example, but I am not saying this is all. So this is what I want to say."

Transcribed by Dick Drury

INTERVIEW

The Merigar Gonpa:

A Meeting with Giovanni Boni and Tsering Migmar

About five months have passed since work on enlarging the Merigar Gonpa began, a project that had already been approved before Rinpoche left Merigar last autumn. We are sitting around a table in the dining room at Merigar deep in conversation about the work: Giovanni Boni, an engineer and one of the designers of the Gonpa, Tsering Migmar, in charge of the work site at the Gonpa, Tatiana Minghetti for the Merigar Letter and myself, Liz Granger, for The Mirror. Giovanni is in good form and we are happy to have him here with us again after a period of being away for health problems. We begin our conversation in a relaxed atmosphere, the subject is technical but the company is pleasant.

Question: Giovanni, could you tell us how the idea to enlarge the Gonpa came about?

G. Boni: For years when Rinpoche has held the summer retreats the Gonpa has not been big enough to hold us all and in various ways we have always tried to do our best to adapt to the circumstances although the problem needed to be resolved. Various ways of solving the problem were proposed but none of them were very convincing.

One day while we were sitting outside the Golden House chatting with Rosa and Juden, looking at the Gonpa, I had an idea that we could enlarge it with a type of wing, similar to the rim of a hat, all around the top. Rosa and Juden liked the idea and we decided to ask for Rinpoche's approval. I said to Rosa that I would send some designs to him by fax and a few days later Rinpoche's approval arrived and we started work ...

Question: It would be interesting to have some information about the materials used for the construction of the Gonpa. Are they different from those used in the original construction and are they ecologically compatible, according to the principles of bio-architecture?

G. Boni: I know very well what bio-architecture says and I am still linked to the Bio-architecture Institute in Bolzano but, in my opinion, what counts is good sense, as with everything. It isn't enough just to follow a method ... in the case of the Gonpa, if we had followed the criteria of bio-architecture it would have been necessary to sand all the wooden parts of the building and treat the wood once again, because when the wood was prepared by the construction company, Holzbau in Bolzano, it was treated with a fire retardant product. This type of treatment is not in agreement with bio-architecture which uses other types of products.

However, we have to consider that these were the methods that were used at the time of the construction of the Gonpa.

Regarding the enlargement, we have used a normal fire-retardant product which is able to resist fire for about thirty minutes. If we had used a varnish able to resist fire for more than 60 minutes it would have been toxic. It is in this way that we have to use good sense, using materials that give a good level of security at an acceptable cost and which are not dangerous for health. The same criteria is valid as regards iron. It was not possible to build a structure like the Gonpa without using it. We have simply tried to limit its use to a minimum. As for the final coat of varnish we will use non toxic varnish, as we already did in the past.

Question: Let's consider a visitor who enters the enlarged Gonpa. What differences will strike him or her as a first visual impact compared to the original building?

G. Boni: When it is completely finished, the Gonpa will radically change its aspect because there will be a hall with eight pillars. To give a clearer picture, we will enter a space which seems lower and larger due to a play in perspective with eight pillars around the central hall forming a type of nave. Do you like the idea?

Question: Very much. To continue our visualization, can you describe the effect of the colors. What colors and decorations should we imagine?

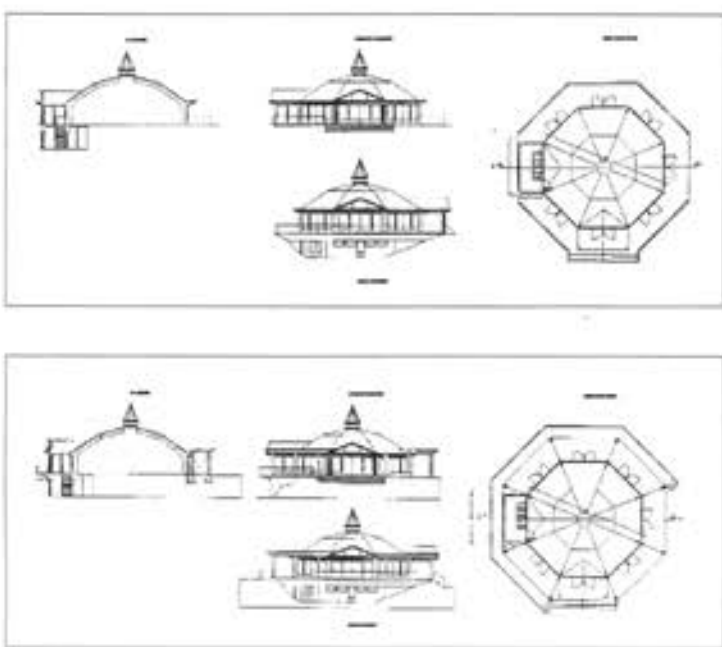
G. Boni: Towards the center of the room the eight pillars will maintain their original red and the decorations that we are used to seeing will still be there, with the images of the Vidyadhara (Rig 'dzin), two on each pillar. All this will remain the same. The outer part of the pillars, however, as well as the beams will be painted according to the wishes of Rinpoche, so we'll be giving another task to the Master, as if he didn't have enough already ... but I'm sure that he will enjoy this!

Question: How is the work proceeding and what difficulties have you met? A lot of people have collaborated with Migmar who has overseen the work



Merigar Gonpa under reconstruction

K.ROSSOTTO



forward so that it does not meet the road and will be reconstructed. The wall on the right will be rebuilt following the new plans.

Migmar and those helping him have done a lot of work. At the beginning, we asked for an estimate for the entire work of enlargement from an outside company. Then we considered the possibility of doing some of this work ourselves so about a quarter of the total work has been taken away from the contracting company. This is regarding just the structure, then we have to consider the fittings such as the balcony and all the other external work which were not included in the estimate. So it was decided to give this work to our group. Migmar, Augustinas, Nicola and Luciano have done a great job ...

Question: For now, there are few of them to carry out all the work.

G. Boni: Few, but good! In Italian we say "If you want something done, do it yourself" and in certain circumstances it works!

Question: Will the Gonpa be ready for the July retreat?

G. Boni: Not completely ready but usable. The external fittings will not be finished but the railings on the balcony will be up to guarantee the safety of people participating in the retreat.

Question: Will it be completely accessible?

G. Boni: Of course you will be able to go inside to use the space. Even now you can go inside and see the internal changes. The roof of the enlargement has been kept quite broad and even when the door frames are put up you won't have a sensation of being closed in. On the other hand, the building looks more imposing from the outside. Some people like this, others less.

Question: Would you like to add anything else?

G. Boni: What else is there to say. Of course there is still a lot of work to do and if someone is interested in helping they should let us know. They will be warmly welcome. Migmar is in charge of the working site. He's very understanding and doesn't expect miracles. Whoever is available will be well accepted. There's work for plasterers, electricians, carpenters and even if you are not a proper carpenter it's enough that you know how to work with wood, you can come the same.

Tatiana (for the Merigar Letter) and myself thank Giovanni and Migmar for answering our questions. Tatiana comments that it is important to participate in the work of our Vajra brothers even if only to share the story of their work because it gives us and our readers the possibility to thank them.

with great expertise.

Migmar: There are three or us, sometimes four - Augustinas, Nicola and myself, and Luciano also helps when he isn't working as Gekö. We haven't had any difficulties with the work and things have gone quite well ...

Question: For us who are not involved in the work, it doesn't seem so easy ...

Migmar: What we had to do was very clear and there haven't been any problems.

Question: Considering the entire work, what has already been completed and what are you working on at present?

Migmar: We have finished the wooden covering of the roof (for the enlargement) as well as the wall around the Gonpa. For the water, how do you say it in Italian ? (he refers to Giovanni)

Giovanni: The rain gutters and the drainage pipes for the rain.

Migmar: We are also building the railings that will go around the balustrade and another wall.

Giovanni: Yes, one of the walls that mark the entry to the Gonpa. (Giovanni gives us the technical/architectural details which are complicated to explain in a Western language for Migmar, who is Tibetan.) In its present state, the axis of the entrance has been moved to the right in comparison to its original position (directly facing the road). The entrance hall has been brought

Kalachakra Initiation in Bodhgaya Postponed

[The following article was taken from a news bulletin of Norbunet, the Dzogchen Community internet mailing list managed by Loeck Jehee.]

The Kalachakra teachings to be given in Bodhgaya, India, this past January, were annulled due to the health of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. On January 16th, His Holiness was taken to the hospital at Patna for a suspected gastroenteritis and then moved to Bombay where the diagnosis was confirmed. A few days later, after a course of antibiotics, he was able to leave the hospital to convalesce. During this period the Dalai Lama received many get well messages from around the world and thousands of devotees attended a special all night puja in Bodhgaya to pray for his good health. After leaving the Patna hospital and before going to Bombay, His Holiness spent a couple of days at Seche monastery at Bodhgaya where he wrote a message for the many people who had gathered for the Kalachakra Initiation.

This is an extract from his communication of January 24, 2002.

"The reason why I briefly wanted to meet you is not connected with spiritual or religious matters. Since I have been here for several days I thought is best if I met with you briefly. I wanted to brief you on the events and developments and what we should do in the future. At first we should say a short prayer. Normally I am in very good health. Because of this my officials and advisers have always been recommending that I relax more and take more rest. But I have always tended to ignore this piece of advice. I have been stubborn in not listening to their advice. When I came from South India to Bodhgaya I was in excellent health. A week back I made a pilgrimage to Nalanda and the Vulture's Peak. Normally in Tibetan tradition we believe that if we face difficulties and obstacles during our pilgrimage we will gain more spiritual merit. So I walked up to the Vulture's Peak with a help of a walking stick. For a year I had some minor problems with my knee.

Remembering the many kindnesses of the Buddha I made this pilgrimage. I perspired a lot. I prayed a great deal at the Vulture's Peak. I think I became ill because I was exposed to extreme temperatures. In the afternoon I had lunch and made a pilgrimage to Nalanda. After that I went by car to Patna. The journey by car was two hours but after about an hour in the car I developed extreme pain in my stomach. The pain in my stomach increased when I arrived at the hotel in Patna. Also I perspired a lot. I think I became exposed to extreme temperatures. I took both Tibetan and Western medicines and my basic illness has been cured but I think it will take some time for me to recover completely.

When I was 37 years old I suffered from jaundice. It took more than two or three weeks for me to recover. I suffer from exhaustion, though I suffer from no pain. Normally when I have fever or other ailments I recover rapidly. This time although I have recovered, I still suffer from exhaustion and I get tired very quickly. Because of this I have not been able to conduct the preliminary teachings. Because of the

continued on page 19

Rebkong-The Land of the Ngakpas

by Nida Chenagsang

In the history of Tibet, there is an incredible story of one thousand nine hundred *ngakpas* in Rebkong, an area of Amdo province. This was the largest *ngakpa* group in Tibet from the time Padmasambhava founded the *ngakpa* tradition in the 8th century. Even today it is still the largest concentration of *ngakpas* in Tibet.

In the Bön tradition, as in Buddhist culture, there are two types of practitioners. They are known today in the west as the "white sangha" and the "red sangha". The main difference between them is that the "white sangha" is made up of lay people who study and practice mostly Tantric and Dzogchen teachings, and the "red sangha" is mainly monks and nuns who study Sutra and Tantra. Padmasambhava was the grandfather of the "white sangha" and his major disciples were *ngakpas*. At that time there were several groups of *ngakpas* in Central Tibet. For example, there were thirty Sheldrag *Ngakpas*, eighty Yerpa *ngakpas* and one hundred and eight Chuwori *ngakpas* who attained the rainbow body. The tradition of the *ngakpas* has grown and moved into the Northern and Eastern nomadic areas of Tibet since the 9th century.

Tertons, or "treasure discoverers", are very important in the *ngakpa* tradition. The majority of Tertons are, in fact, *ngakpas*, and their consorts are called Khadromas, or *dakinis*. The five most significant Tertons were called "the five king Tertons". There has been a series of important tertons starting in the 9th century called "a hundred tertons".

The different schools of Tibetan Buddhism were born through the effort of many great *ngakpas*. Marpa Lozawa, the founder of the Kagyu tradition, and his disciple the accomplished yogi Milarepa and Rechungpa were the main figures of the Kagyu *ngakpas*. The Venerable Khon Konchog Gyalpo founded the Sakya School and his family lineage became the most important *ngakpa* family lineage in Tibet. This unbroken lineage has been maintained until today, and the presence of H.H. Sakya Trinzin and his sons is truly precious.

The Kadampa master Dromtonpa was a *ngakpa* representative of his tradition. All these great *ngakpas* have contributed enormously to Tibetan culture. The women of the *ngakpa* tradition, for example, Yeshe Tsogyal, Jomo Menmo, Machig Labdron and Shugseb Chonyid Sangmo, have all made wonderful contributions to both Dharma and the other Tibetan disciplines.

The main Amdo *ngakpa* lineages are the Longchen Nyinthig, Lhoter, the Dudjom Tersar and Kunsang Terna, and also other several *terma*, or "hidden treasure" traditions. Eight great *ngakpas*, who were Mahasiddhas, in the lineage of Padmasambhava's disciple Ngakpa Lhalung Peldor, were the origin of the Amdo *ngakpa* lineage. Over time this lineage flourished in Northeastern Tibet, especially in the Rebkong region. This land was well known as a center of Tibetan culture, therefore people used to call it "the land of knowledge". However, when the *ngakpa* tradition developed there, it became "the land of the *ngakpas*", and Tibetans called it "Rebkong Ngak-mang". Ngak-mang means, "group of *ngakpas*" and it refers to the one thousand nine hundred *ngakpas* who lived in the Rebkong region.

At the end of 17th century, the *ngakpa* master Palchen Mankhajime gave one *phurpa* to each *ngakpa* who attended his teachings. One day he gave out one thousand nine hundred *phurpas* and from that time they have called the *ngakpa* group "the one thousand nine hundred *phurpa* holders"; in Tibetan: *ngakmang phurthog chigtong gungya*. Among these *ngakpas* there are many artists, doctors, scholars, great practitioners, masters and Tertons. The great saint Shabkar Tshogdrug Rangdrol became a widely known *ngakpa* from this group. The famous scholar Gendun Chopel was the son of Alak Gyawo, another great *ngakpa*.

The Ngakpa tradition survived the cultural revolution in the same way as it survived in the 10th century when the Tibetan king Langtarma destroyed Buddhist

culture in Tibet. At present, through the efforts of the older *ngakpas* and courage of the people of Amdo, the "white sangha" group is developing very well. There are now about two hundred and fifty *ngakpa* houses, and over six thousand *ngakpas*, including women and children studying and practicing in Amdo. To preserve and maintain the *ngakpa* culture in modern society, Hungchen Chenagsang and I founded the Ngak-Mang institute in Amdo. Our main office is in Xining, the capital of Amdo, with five branches in the surrounding provinces. This is the first and only official *ngakpa* cultural institute in Tibet. We are the official center of study and research in the tradition of the lay people, or *ngakpas*.

The main activities of the institute are collecting ancient texts, publishing *ngakpa* books, restoring the *ngakpa* houses, organizing courses and training young *ngakpas*. In the *ngakpa* tradition, the general rule is called "The Three Changeless Events". These are: changeless body or not cutting one's hair, changeless dress or wearing white clothes without coloring, changeless mind or the state of the nature of the mind as it is. Therefore most *ngakpas* dress using a white shawl and wear long hair, and are called "the community of the white clothed and longhaired", which refers to the "white sangha". Many *ngakpas* are within a family lineage.

The children study with their family first and then go on to study in different *ngakpa* houses and also various masters' houses to receive teachings. The normal progression of the syllabus is first to study general Tibetan culture: Tibetan writing, grammar, literature and so on. After this the young *ngakpa* begins to receive teachings on Buddhist Tantra, and do the practices, preliminary practices, the three-root retreat, tantric magic studies, and mantra healing. Subsequently they go on to do the practices of *tsa-lung*, *tummo* and *thablam*. When they have a good basic understanding of Tantra, they can receive the Dzogchen teachings and do the corresponding practices.



A group of young Ngakpas at the Padong Ngakpa House

The larger complexes of buildings used for study and practice are called *ngakpa* houses, and many villages have their own *ngakpa* houses where all *ngakpas*, both men and women, gather for Ganapuja, special rituals and teachings. In some nomadic areas the *ngakpa* houses are large tents. The majority of *ngakpas*, however, live in villages and towns and, working for the upkeep of their family, do retreat two or three months every year.

When they become old many of them go to a *ngakpa* house to practice and remain there until their last wonderful trip. Women, who do the housework and are always busy with their families, of course integrate their practice into their daily life; they also take time for special teachings and retreats. They are known as *ngakmas* or Naljornas, and the people of Amdo also call them "Ama", or "Jomo".

Until now *ngakpas* have had difficulties in obtaining good conditions for studying, for instance, finding texts, having a library and organizing courses. Due to this the activities of the Ngak-Mang institute are very useful for all *ngakpas* and especially the younger generation. We hope in the future to be able to help maintain and develop *ngakpa* culture further.

If you are interested in the Ngak Mang Institute please check our web page at www.ngakmang.org

CHÖGYAL NAMKHA NORBU

Schedule
2002-2004

USA

Tsegyalgar, Conway
May 20th

Stupa Consecration

May 21st - June 5th

Personal Retreat at Khandroling

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

June 8th, 6PM

The International House, Hopkinson Hall
37th & Chestnut St.
University City

New York City

June 10th - 16th

New York City Dzogchen Retreat
Synod Hall

On the grounds of the The Cathedral of St. John the Divine
110th St. & Amsterdam Ave.

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USA
Email: DzogchenUSA@compuserve.com
Tel: 413 369 4153
Fax: 413 369 4165
Web site: www.tsegyalgar.org

ITALY & EUROPE

Merigar

June 20th

Leave for Merigar

June 21st

Rome, Inauguration for the opening of Zhepanling
Merigar Longde Retreat

July 5th - 9th

Santi Maha Sangha, Merigar

July 23rd - 25th

SMS I Level Exam

July 26th - 30th

SMS II Level Training

August 9th - 18th

Merigar Dzogchen Retreat

Europe

France

August 28th

Leave for Karmaling, France

August 29th - September 1st

Retreat at Karma Ling

Germany

September 3rd

Leave for Germany

September 6th - 8th

German retreat

Hungary

September 10th

Leave for Hungary

September 13th - 15th

Hungarian retreat

Crimea

September 17th

Leave for Crimea

September 25th - 29th

Crimea - Kunsangar Retreat.

Czech Republic

October 1st

Leave for Czech Republic

October 4th - 6th

Czech Retreat

October 5th

A public talk in the Prague Castle

Austria

October 9th

Leave for Austria

(On the way to Austria a stop in Bratislava for a public talk to the Slovak Buddhists.)

October 11th

His Holiness the Dalai Lama arrives

October 23rd

His Holiness the Dalai Lama departs

October 25th - 27th

Dzogchen Retreat

October 28th

Return to Merigar

ASIA & AUSTRALIA

Thailand

November 4th

Leave for Thailand

November 15th - 17th

Thailand Dzogchen Retreat

Singapore

November 22nd - 24th

Singapore Teaching retreat

Australia

November 25th

Leave for Brisbane

December 26th - January 1st

Namgyalgar Retreat, Australia

February 14th - 18th

Caloundra Teaching Retreat

Santi Maha Sangha, Namgyalgar

April 8th - 10th

Santi Maha Sangha Base Level Exam

April 11th - 15th

Santi Maha Sangha 1st Level Training

April 18th - 22nd

Easter Retreat at Namgyalgar

TAIWAN

May 7th

Leave for Taiwan

May 9th - 11th

Taipei Retreat

JAPAN

14th

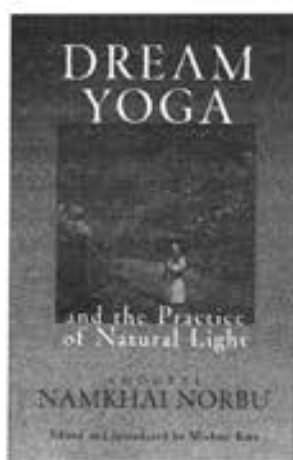
Leave for Tokyo

May 16th - 18th

Tokyo Retreat

continued on the next page

NEWS FROM THE TSEGYALGAR BOOKSTORE



Dream Yoga and the Practice of Natural Light
Chögyal Namkhai Norbu
Edited and Introduced by Michael Katz

In *Dream Yoga and the Practice of Natural Light*, Chögyal Namkhai Norbu gives instruction for developing clarity within sleep and dream states. He goes beyond the practices lucid dreaming that have been popularized in the West, by presenting methods for guiding dream states that are part of a broader system for enhancing self awareness called Dzogchen.

This is a revised and enlarged edition and expands and deepens the first edition's emphasis on specific exercises to develop awareness within the dream and sleep states. Also included in this book is a text written by Mipham, the nineteenth century master of Dzogchen.

HARD COVER BOOKS CLOSEOUT SALE!

The transcription of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu.

Volume One - These teachings were given at Conway, Massachusetts in 1982 and 1983

Volume Two - These talks were given at Oz, California in 1982.

Both books cover Sutra, Tantra and all aspects of Dzogchen teachings.

Historical Value!

NOW \$10.00US each

THE SONG OF VAJRA BOOK - requires transmission from Chögyal Namkhai Norbu. This commentary on the Song of Vajra was transmitted by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu at Tashigar, Argentina over Christmas 1990 and includes detailed explanations.

Published by Dzogchen Community in America

\$15.00US

THE STAIRWAY TO LIBERATION - intended for practitioners who have transmission from Chögyal Namkhai Norbu.

Dzogchen Ngöndro; based on instructions from the important Dzogchen masters of his lineage.

Published by Dzogchen Community in America

\$15.00US

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Chögyal Namkhai Norbu recommended some ingredients for this superb quality incense.

Red can be used for wrathful practices.

Yellow can be used for peaceful practices.

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other available items

LUNGTA (Prayer Flags)

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Each set contains five 13 x 13 flags in the 5 primary colors.

1 set sells for \$9 and 3 sets for \$25, 5 sets for \$40, plus shipping

Instructions on Lungta will be included.



Also available:

The Practice of Lungta by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

Shang Shung Edizioni

Teaching about Lungta from Merigar in 1991

\$4.00 plus shipping

NEW BOOKS by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

Important- these books are for practitioners who have transmission from Chögyal Namkhai Norbu:

PRECIOUS VASE

Instructions on the Base of Santi Maha Sangha

Edited and annotated by Adriano Clemente- Shang Shung Edizioni

Newly revised, a must-have book for practitioners who would like to participate in Santi Maha Sangha.

\$26.25 plus shipping.

LONGSAL TEACHINGS- Volume One

Translated from the Tibetan and edited by Adriano Clemente - Shang Shung Edizioni

This publication of teachings from the Longsal Cycle contains three Upadeshas received through dreams, including the history of their discoveries over a period of time ranging from 1959 to 1983.

Extraordinary dreams - highly recommended!

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12 PRIMORDIAL MASTERS POSTER by Glen Eddy

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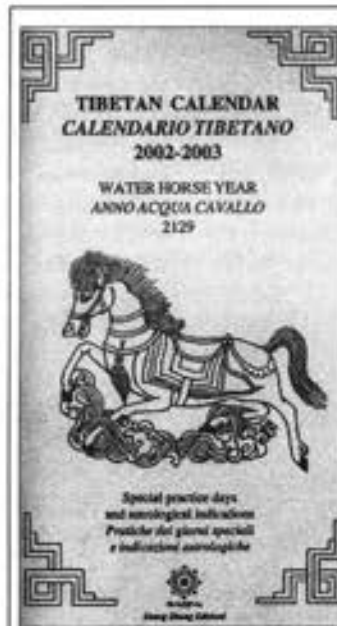
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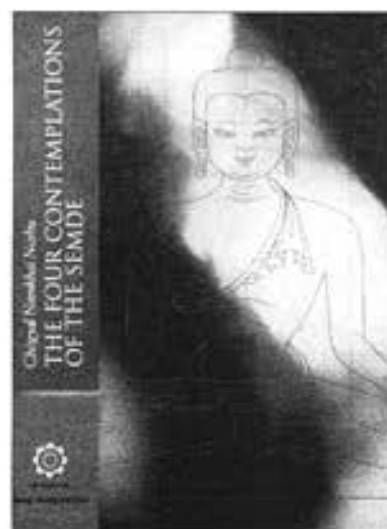


**Calendar-Agenda for the
Water Horse Year
(2002-2003)**

Pocket agenda containing concise indications of the practices recommended by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu for special days, positive and negative days for the Naga Practice, astrological data of the Tibetan Calendar and the individual aspects for those born between 1915 and 2002. Indispensable for finding out favorable and unfavorable days for daily activities and to remember special practice days.

For more information: shang-shunged@tiscalinet.it

two new books



Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

The Four Contemplations of the Semde

Transcription of the oral teachings given in Nea Macri (Greece), December 1986

"In general, Dzogchen isn't considered to be a method of the mind but of rigpa, instant presence. The way of the mind uses reasoning while the method of Dzogchen is to go directly, from the beginning, to the state of presence. Thus, in Semde, the word *sem*, mind, doesn't refer to ordinary mind but to an abbreviation of the Tibetan expression *changchubsem* (in Sanskrit *bodhichitta*) which indicates our real condition, also called the primordial state. To attain the knowledge of this condition one uses the Semde methods."

The Great History of Garab Dorje, Manjushrimitra, Shrisingha, Jnanasutra and Vimalamitra

Translated from Tibetan
by Jim Valby

This book is a translation of pages 84 to 165 of "The Great History of the Innermost Essence of Dzogchen". It is possible that in the fourteenth century AD, Longchenpa wrote down this history about Dzogchen Masters who lived from about the third century BC to the ninth century AD.



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Lives of the Great Masters

Jigme Lingpa (1730-1798)

by Judith Allan



"The nature of the mind is like openness space,
But it is superior, as it possesses the wisdom.
Luminous clarity is like the sun and moon,
But it is superior, as there are no substances.
Intrinsic awareness is like a crystal ball,
But it is superior, as there are no obstructions or coverings."¹
Jigme Lingpa

Jigme Lingpa was considered the emanation of both Vimalamitra and King Trisong Detsen. He had a simple upbringing, free from any pomp, even though both his parents came from well-known families. He retained this simplicity throughout his life. From birth his body carried auspicious signs. His heart was studded with small moles in the shape of a Vajra and at his navel the shape of a bell. On his right thumb was the syllable HRIH and one of his teeth was marked with the syllable AH, a sign of being the reincarnation of Vimalamitra.

As a young novice monk, he was more interested in playing than studying, but he did show intense compassion for all living beings, especially animals. He was able to absorb learning by simply listening to other students or just seeing texts. At thirteen he met his root guru, Rigdzin Thugchok Dorje, who was a great *terton*. He studied under a number of other masters, but always concentrated on essential teachings. In his twenty-eighth year, he spent three years in retreat in a hermitage at Pelri Monastery. In a vision he had direct contact with and received blessings from Guru Rinpoche, Yeshe Tsogyal and Manjusrimitra, amongst others. Having attained yogic mastery of all his channels and chakras, he "perceived all appearances as a book and the great treasury of the doctrine spilled open in the form of songs of indestructible reality and so forth, which were perfect in word and meaning."²

From then on, he grew his hair long and wore plain white robes instead of the maroon robes of a monk. At twenty-eight, Jigme Lingpa was entrusted the mind *terma* of the Longchen Nyingthig cycle by a wisdom *dakini* at

Bodhnath Stupa in Nepal, where he travelled in a state of meditative absorption. She gave him a wooden casket and with "an experience of great joy, he opened the casket. In it he found five rolls of yellow scrolls with seven crystal beads. At first the script was illegible, but then it turned into Tibetan script. One of the rolls was Nechang Thukkyi Drombu, the prophetic guide of Longchen Nyingthig. Rahula, one of the protectors of the teachings, appeared before him to pay respect. As he was encouraged by another *dakini*, Jigme Lingpa swallowed all the yellow scrolls and the crystal beads. Instantly, he had the amazing experience that all the words of the Longchen Nyingthig cycle with their meanings had been awakened in his mind as if they were imprinted there."³

He thus attained realization as a *terton* and kept these teachings secret for seven years. Thereafter, he went again into retreat in caves at Chimphu near Samye. Here he had three visions of Longchenpa, in which he received the full transmission and blessings of Longchenpa's body, speech and mind, now fully empowering him to transmit the Longchen Nyingthig. He perfected mastery of the Longchen Nyingthig in retreat. When he came out of retreat, although much weakened physically through lack of food, Jigme Lingpa had a vision of Thangtong Gyalpo who possessed the power of longevity and quickly regained his strength. Recognizing now that the time was auspicious, at the request of one of his clairvoyant disciples, he then taught the Longchen Nyingthig first to fifteen fortunate disciples at Samye before disseminating it more widely. These teachings of the Longchen Nyingthig are widespread today and still actively practiced.

Living life as a simple yogi in the hermitage he had built at Tsering Jong (together with a meditation school), Jigme Lingpa transmitted teachings of the Nyingmapa school, in particular the peerless Dzogchen tradition to all who came to him. Showing no interest in worldly ambitions like power or wealth, he continue to live an ascetic life with the minimum of needs. In his two testaments, one included this verse:

"I am always in the state of ultimate nature;
For me there is not staying or going.
The display of birth and death is mere relativity.
I am enlightened in the great primordial liberation!"⁴

Following his childhood love for animals, he saved the lives of animals from hunters or butchers. He re-consecrated Samye and was able to repel a Gurkha army, hostile to the teachings, by means of ritual practices. He had copies made, in twenty-five volumes, of the precious texts of the Nyingmapa which had been found at Mindroling and composed "The History of the Nyingma Tantras", elucidating his own now brilliant scholarship. His works are found in nine volumes including the famous Yeshe Lama, extensively used in Nyingma centers and monasteries today. At the age of sixty-five, he and his consort had a son who was recognized as the reincarnation of Chokyi Nyima, one of the two heads of the Drigung Kagyu tradition. Travelling with his son four years later to his enthronement, Jigme Lingpa, now old and frail, fell seriously ill, but recovered after taking a long life pill. At the age of seventy he warned a close disciple that he would die soon. Having given a teaching on White Tara, the Tara of Long Life, his hermitage became filled with sweet-smelling fragrance. Although the sky was clear, rain fell lightly and at night, sitting upright, he died. Relics appeared from his tooth and his hair. His body was kept in a small stupa at Tsering Jong hermitage which became a nunnery and was destroyed only in the last twenty-five years.

¹ Masters of Meditation and Miracles, Tulku Thondup, Shambala, 1996, p. 124 and 125

² The Nyingma School of Tibetan Buddhism, Volume 1 by Dudjom Rinpoche, Wisdom Publications, 1991, p. 837

³ Masters of Meditation and Miracles, Tulku Thondup, Shambala, 1996, p. 123

⁴ Ibid., p. 132

RUSSIA

May 21st leave
May 28th - June 3rd
Leave for Moscow
Kunsangar Retreat

ITALY

June 6th
June 18th - 22nd
June 27th - July 14th
Leave for Rome
Dzogchen Padma Nyingthig Teaching Retreat
Personal Retreat

Santi Maha Sangha, Merigar

July 15th - 17th
July 18th - 22nd
Santi Maha Sangha 2nd Level Exam
Santi Maha Sangha 3rd Level Training

August 13th - 19th
Retreat about *rigs-drug gnas-sbyong*

USA

August 25th
August 29th - 31st
September 1st
September 5th - 9th
September 9th - 14th
Leave for New York City
New York Teaching
Leave for Tsegylgar
Dzogchen Padma Nyingthig Teaching
Longsal Gonpa Ngotrod Teaching

Santi Maha Sangha at Tsegylgar

September 17th - 18th
September 19th - 23rd
Santi Maha Sangha 2nd Level Exam
Santi Maha Sangha 3rd Level Training

September 29th
October 3rd - 7th
Leave for Miami, Florida
Teaching Retreat

MARGARITA ISLAND, VENEZUELA

Tashigar North
October 10th
October 31st - November 4th
Leave for Margarita
Longsal Tsalung Retreat

ARGENTINA

Tashigar South
December 19th
December 26th - January 2nd
Leave for Cordoba
Tashigar Retreat

Teachers' Training Video Now Available Shang-Shung Institute, Italy

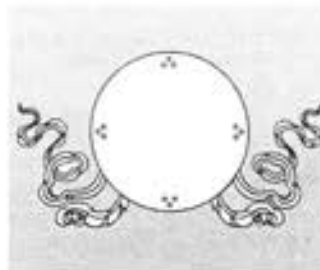
Teachers' Training with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu on Margarita Island, Venezuela, February, 2002

The video archives of the Istituto Shang-Shung has just finished preparing a video cassette of the recent Teachers' Training with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu at Isla Margarita, Venezuela.

In the video Rinpoche explains what it means to be a teacher in the Dzogchen Community and, in doing so, makes it clear for everybody how one should approach the teachings.

The Master comments on the development of Santi Maha Sangha, Yantra Yoga and the Vajra Dance. All instructors are presented briefly; at the end, the Master distributes the certificates and adds some comments.

The video is almost three hours long and is available from the Istituto Shang-Shung. Cost is 20 euro plus packing and postage. Can be sent COD in Europe (except UK).



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ITALY

OPEN LETTER TO ALL GARS AND DZOGCHEN PRACTITIONERS

Dear Vajra brothers and sisters,
The Shang-Shung Institute is happy to announce the updated list of all materials available on order with prices in Euro. Meanwhile, we'd like to give some clarification mainly directed to the Gars; the Gars sometime ask us to copy and distribute videos and audiocassettes of our production. We are sure that most practitioners know that some years ago Chögyal Namkhai Norbu entrusted us with the delicate and important task of collecting, keeping, indexing and preserving all the precious teachings Rinpoche has been giving for more than twenty-five years. That's why approximately two years ago, the Institute decided to create the ambitious project of saving all the teachings collected and kept in our archives in digital format.

At the very beginning, we were able to start the project thanks to the very generous donations of three sponsors whose contributions enabled the Institute to buy all the necessary equipment and provide the funds to pay at least the first six months wages to two people in charge of carrying out this job. This work is not meant to bring benefit only to Italian practitioners, but to be eventually useful to all practitioners and future generations.

We wish to mention as well the dedication of our operators who have accepted to work overtime for wages lower than average and in one case have donated half of their salary for many months to make it easier for the project to take off. We presume this program will be completed in no less than two to three years time and we keep it going thanks to possible donations, the Institute membership cards, and the sale of audio and video cassettes ordered by practitioners all over the world. (In fact we are trying to keep all the other multifarious activities of the Institute self-sufficient and self-supporting).

As soon as teachings are saved and indexed, our experts prepare practice cassettes and videos containing complete teachings or excerpts from retreats, besides the videos already prepared (or on the way) by our film director, Paolo Brunatto. Thanks to their joined efforts, the Institute now has quite a wide range of audio-video cassettes to offer Dzogchen practitioners all over the world.

Therefore, whenever a Gar asks the Institute to be allowed to copy and locally distribute audio/video cassettes of our production, it is a matter of course that we must find an agreement acknowledging financial support to the Italian Shang-Shung Institute which, with no outside help, is presently bearing all the costs of this project concerning the whole Dzogchen Community. Because of this, the Italian Institute is heavily exposed financially and is not in the position of giving "masters" for free; this is a way to collaborate to keep the Institute going and to share the responsibility to complete the big task the Institute is trying to carry out for the benefit of all the people interested in the precious Dzogchen teaching. We hope this letter can contribute to a better understanding of some

problems the Institute has had to face and to improve the flow of information. Please find here the updated list mentioned at the beginning:

VIDEO (if not specified, videos are in Italian and English)

13 Euro:
General introduction to Dzogchen (Italian) The English version is distributed by Snow Lion Publications.
A Lama Around the World
Kailash (Italian)
Garuda

16 Euro:
Merigar Story
Dance of the Liberation of the 6 Lokas
Ganapuja
Mandarava
Six Loka: explanations of the Six Lokas practice recorded during 2001 August retreat (new entry)

18 Euro:
Yantra Yoga (Italian) The English version is distributed by Snow Lion Publications.
Kunye
Chöd
Transmission videos

21 Euro:
Vajra Dance: Demo

26 Euro:
Vajra Dance: Teachings

The two videos together cost 45 Euro

AUDIO - sets of two cassettes
13 Euro:
Six Lokas (new entry)
Green Tara
Vajrapani
Ödzer Chenma
Ganapuja

7,50 Euro:
Mandarava
Simhamukha
Shitro
Guru Dragpur
Naga

6,50 Euro:
Chöd
SMS preliminary practices
Tsok Gyas
Tundus
Guru Yoga of Garab Dorje
Vajrasattva

17 Euro:
SMS base explanations given by Adriano Clemente
Garland of Views - 4 cassettes
SMS First level practices recorded directly by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu (new entry) - 4 cassettes

5 Euro:
Some practice melodies (Phowa, Green Tara, Garab Dorje, 100 syllables of Vajrasattva) recorded by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

HERBAL PREPARATIONS (food supplements)
10,50 Euro:
SheShi, Zati, ChiunTang

T-SHIRTS:
Kunye School: Euro 13
with Lama Gyurmed's drawings: Euro 10,50

NEW EMAIL SHANG-SHUNG INSTITUTE IN ITALY

The Istituto Shang-Shung based at Merigar has a new email address <ssinst@tiscalinet.it>.

NEW ENTRIES

2001 July retreat:
4 videocassettes containing an essential but complete introduction to the Dzogchen way of seeing and practice: 64 Euro

From the 2001 August retreat:
- Longsal Ati G. Gojyed - 2 videocassettes: 17 Euro each
- SMS essential information and Chöd practice explanation - 1 videocassette: 17 Euro
- Advice and suggestions on Daily Life - 1 videocassette: 17 Euro

MP3
The entire July 2001 retreat: 13 Euro for practitioners who attended the retreat
26 Euro for practitioners who didn't attend the retreat

The entire August 2001 retreat: 26 Euro for practitioners who joined the retreat
52 Euro for practitioners who didn't attend the retreat

DOCUMENTARY FILM: Merigar Summer 2001 (it.)-
REPORTAGE on Summer 2001 in Merigar: the Twenty Year Anniversary and celebration, karma yoga with Rinpoche in the wood, advice of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu during the Sangha Meeting, presentation of the Gonpa enlargement project: 15 Euro

SANTI MAHA SANGHA First level Training, Merigar 2001- set of 5 videocassettes: 80 Euro

AVAILABLE SOON
Set of two CD's containing most melodies of Dzogchen Community ritual practices recorded by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu: 22 Euro

Video of the Short, Medium and Long Thun recently recorded by our precious Master: 22 Euro

Best wishes,
Elisa Copello from the Italian Shang-Shung Institute Managing Board

Shang Shung Institute in America will host a Talk and Live Web cast
by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu on May 11th, 2002, at Tsegylgar, Conway, Massachusetts at 4:00 PM.

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu will speak on "The Importance of Awareness in Everyday Life". This is the sole public teaching Rinpoche has scheduled at Tsegylgar during his US visit this year. Rinpoche has chosen to speak on awareness, he said, because maintaining it in daily life is "connected to everything." Following his teaching, the Shang-Shung Institute in America, which sponsors the talk and the web cast, will offer a variety of presentations on Tibetan cultural traditions, and will conclude with a community dinner. An exhibit of work by Tibetan thangka painter Glen Eddy will be shown, and various cultural events will be scheduled throughout the day. A donation of \$25US is requested to attend both the talk and the dinner. The event will be held at 18 Schoolhouse Road, Conway, Massachusetts.

Details about the free web cast with an international timetable will be posted on the Shang-Shung Institute web site (shangshung-usa.org) and Norbunet in early May.

Founded in 1994 by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, the primary mission of the Shang-Shung Institute in America is to foster the preservation and knowledge of Tibetan

USA

A Big Thank You from the Shang-Shung Institute in America

The Shang-Shung Institute in America gratefully acknowledges all its donors and volunteers during the past year 2001. Without your assistance the Institute would not be able to manifest the many projects envisioned by its founder, Chögyal Namkhai Norbu. We wish everyone prosperity and good health for the Year of the Water Horse.

We especially thank the following individuals and organizations for their financial support during 2001:

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu
Dick Drury
Steve Landsberg
Thomas Crumb
Sally Warren
Tides Foundation
Savannah Haske
Mark Farrington
Efreem Marder
Mass Mutual
Nanji Davison
West Coast Dzogchen Community
Portland Dzogchen Community
Tsegylgar
Andrea Sertoli
Stephanie Scott
Lauri Marder
Carol Cooper
John Walker
Beverly of Portland
Paul Bail
Carisa O'Kelly
Webcast support from the Gars of the International Dzogchen Community

Many thanks to the volunteer efforts of the following individuals and groups:

International Gakyil in support of the web casts of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu
ASIA office in Lhasa
Dr. Phuntsog Wangmo
Loek Jehee, technical advisor to the web casts of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu
Dan Pederson, digital recording for the department of Tibetan Medicine
Jim Raschik, web master
Sharon Manning, editorial intern
Dr. Mary Ryan, English language editor for Tibetan translation
Jeff Krouk
Eliane Diallo
Naomi Zeitz
Constance S. Silver
Alex Seidlecki
Margherita Pagni
Dr. Leslie Hutchinson

*Jacqueline Gens
Treasurer, Shang-Shung Institute in America*

culture. The Institute fulfills this mission by overseeing a number of projects related to Tibetan medicine, history, several on-going translation projects, an art and art restoration program, support for archaeological research, and educational programs offered to the public annually.

Among the Institute's achievements over the seven years since its inception are translating Chögyal Namkhai Norbu's groundbreaking three-volume history of Tibet, Light of Kailash (ongoing, under the direction of Dr. Donatella Rossi), developing a comprehensive English-language curriculum and texts for the study of Tibetan Medicine, including the year-round residency of Tibetan physician, Dr. Phuntsog Wangmo, maintaining an extensive audio library of educational resources in Tibetan Medicine (open to study by individuals from every continent), and a supporting the creation of thangka series associated with the Dzogchen lineages (created by thangka painter Glen Eddy).

In addition to hosting all of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu's web casts, the Institute supports many other translation and art projects.

For further information about the Shang Shung Institute, recent updates, articles, interviews and tapes for sale, please view the Institute's web site at <www.shangshung-usa.org>. To attend the talk and dinner, please RSVP at <shangshungus@cs.com>.



Shang-Shung Institute, Italy Courses held by Doctor Nida Chenagsang 2002

COMO: May 25th-26th 2002
Second level of Sa Che. The course will be residential and will be organized in a beautiful spot suitable to the observation and analysis of natural environment: the fees will include food and lodging as well. Information will be provided as soon as all the details are worked out.
Information:
Elisa Copello,
Tel: 02-33607505,
Email: ecop@ats.it

ROME: June 15th-16th 2002
Final seminar of third level of Ku Nye
Registration fee: 114 Euro
Registration and information:
Annmarie Clos
Tel: 065885142,
Email: anamar@katamail.com

MILAN: June 22nd-23rd 2002
Final seminar of third level of Ku Nye
Registration fee: 114 Euro
Registration and information:
Elisa Copello

MERIGAR: July 13th-16th 2002
(REVISED DATES)
Mantra Healing (First and Second levels)
Registration fee: 166 Euro
Information and registration:
Shang-Shung Institute Secretary

MERIGAR: July 20th-23rd 2002
Dreams and medicine (First and Second Levels)
Registration fee for both courses: 166 Euro
Registration and information:
Shang-Shung Institute Secretary

MERIGAR: September 1st-8th 2002
Intensive course of First Level Ku Nye
Fees include materials (manual and video) 360 Euro
Information and registration:
Shang-Shung Institute Secretary

MERIGAR: September 21st-22nd 2002
Pregnancy, birth and infant massage
Registration fee: 114 Euro

FOURTH YEAR OF THE
TIBETAN MEDICINE COURSE
with Prof. Wangdu, professor at
the University of Lhasa
Dates:
May 10th-15th 2002
May 31st-June 5th 2002

Subjects dealt with during the course: Symptoms, diagnosis and treatment of solid and hollow organs, main pathologies, study of herbal medicines: posology and simple preparations. Registration fee: 672 Euro for both seminars.
The two seminars are directed to all the students of the previous three year course and to all Ku Nye students who have at least attended and passed the first two levels. Doctors, therapists and nurses interested in joining the course, can attend it, provided they buy and study the cassettes of the three year foundation course.

Information and registration:
Shang-Shung Institute Secretary
Tel: 30 0564 966941
Fax: 39 0564 968110
Email: ssinst@tiscali.net

Visiting Gopalpur

by Antonio Rosa

So many images, sounds and colors revive in me; as I write this short letter the sensations arise intensely as if I were seeing a film again. That, however familiar, never ceases to amaze and surprise me. I am packing my bags, my movements mechanical, I am not mindful of what I am doing, my mind is elsewhere, already in India.

In a letter Tsering told me about the place where he lives in Gopalpur. A few hints, but with these I try to imagine the place, the colors of my intuition and try to paint in my mind the village, the classrooms where the children study, the bedrooms, their football field. I can see them as they pray, eat, laugh, cry, big and small. I manage to see the place as it changes with the passing of seasons, but time is flying and I have a plane to catch! I arrive in Delhi after and eight hour flight, the journey went well and I left the airport to find a sign with my name on it telling me my guide is ready to take me to Dharamsala and then on to Gopalpur. After having loaded my luggage onto the jeep, I find out it is going to take about ten hours to reach my destination. We pass through villages and towns, constantly changing just like my thoughts arising and dissolving like the 'clouds in the autumn sky'.

We cross Punjab and enter Himachal Pradesh. Here the landscape changes completely; with many trees, water running down freely from the mountains and the inescapable sacred cows grazing in the fields. The car climbs up the roads and I smile as I look at the beauty of the countryside. I think that Tsering and the other children should be OK in a place like this. I spend the night in Dharamsala.

At 8:10AM we are on the road to Gopalpur. We soon cross the 20 km that separate Dharamsala from Gopalpur; now the road passes through tea plantations, higher up I can see conifer forests and higher still the hawks hovering for their daily feed, beyond a hill I can see the football field and immediately behind it the village. Small red houses scattered about and some larger buildings, everything seems to be the way Tsering described it in his letter. I am met by the white smile of a small lady, Dolma, one of the three secretaries of the village. She welcomes me with a *kadag*. She tells me to wait a moment and then disappears. The sun is hot and the time I spend waiting is pleasant.

After about three minutes I see her return together with a boy who I immediately understand to be Tsering. As soon as he sees me he runs into my arms, automatically I hug him, and infinite moment of time beyond any dimension. In my feelings there is room for nothing other than gratitude for the newspaper article I read four years earlier that inspired me to subscribe for a long distance adoption sponsorship.

Tsering leads the way up a small staircase going into a little recreation room, simply furnished and very clean. I stop and look at the white walls that contrast with the red carpet and before me I see a settee and two armchairs set along the side walls. Before entering I follow my guides' example and take off my shoes.

With a gentle smile Dolma gives me some tea and I notice that as well as being very observant of our conversation Tsering discreetly refills my cup. I am pleasantly surprised by how attentive he is. I watch him closely; he has unkempt hair, slightly dark skin, brown eyes and the bountiful smile of a happy boy, even though he has been forced to live far from his native land. Seeing his eyes fill with joy as I hand him the football and football boots he had asked me to bring was my greatest reward. But Tsering surprises me yet again when on leaving the room he picks up my shoes and sets them down next to my feet ready for me to put them on. I do not know what to think but the expression on my face indicates all the words I cannot speak because they are stifled by my emotions. We look each other in the eye intensely, communicating the only way the heart can understand, in this dimension words and gestures become futile.

Visiting the village in their company I start to notice how well organized it is structurally and for teaching; there is a classroom with thirty computers with the best known programs and a covered sports ground, classrooms for traditional teaching, a football field and basketball court. There are dormitories with bunk beds supervised by an Amala ("Mother" in

Adoption at a Distance Project Mission Report

by Wolfgang Schweiger

From April to June, 2001, I carried out an exploratory mission for ASIA in the area of Dongche, in Qinghai Province, aimed at collecting epidemiological data and information about health facilities at the county and village levels and on the needs of the local nomadic population. The mission was also aimed at identifying children of school age who don't have a chance to attend school, and starting with them an adoption at a distance project.

Together with a translator and driver, we traveled long distances on the Tibetan plateau, visiting the traditional Tibetan medical clinics of Dongche, Golmang and Jianzigho, all realized by ASIA. These visits were also an opportunity for treating patients together with traditional doctors. Apart from many minor diseases, such as uncomplicated infections and pain syndromes, we also regularly encountered more serious pathologies such as TB, cancer, psychosis, epilepsy, appendicitis, and trauma.

We also used consultations as an incentive for discussions and lessons about Western medicine. As the traditional doctor is usually the first person to be consulted by the nomads with all kinds of health problems, it is vital that he or she is also cognizant of certain pathologies for which allopathic medicine could be more successful, in order to send the patient to the hospital after an emergency treatment.

Many nomadic patients were also visited in their own homes during

a s i a



Tibetan) each accompanying fifteen children, all quite independent with their own adjoining kitchen, a hall for religious services, and a small refectory, washing rooms and an oven for baking bread. Everything is very clean. The village director and secretaries work very hard to maintain contact with the sponsors, to provide for all the internal needs and resolve inevitable daily problems.

I am fascinated by the education the boys receive; there is never an unkind gesture or word. I only receive smiles.

This day draws to a close, now around us there is only silence still warmed by the sun, and on a marvelous September day everything else is lost like grains of desert sand.

(Antonio Rosa is a sponsor of ASIA who went to India, to the Tibetan Village of Gopalpur, to meet Tsering Sonam, the child he has sustained since 1998.)

NEWS FLASH

Surgery for Life - With this venture ASIA is seeking to bring to Italy Tibetan children afflicted by congenital malformations, heart disease and other grave disorders that cannot be treated within the local health services so that they can be operated on in special hospitals.

Thanks to the generous contributions of some individuals, the sum of approximately \$8000US has been collected which will serve to cover the hospital expenses as well as travel and accommodation costs for Pema Lhamo, a little girl suffering from a grave deformation of the hip. During the course of a mission in Tibet, ASIA contacted the girl's father and helped him obtain the passport and necessary documents to travel abroad.

ASIA Projects Being Appraised for 2002

Project for the development of a Tibetan Elementary School at Galengteng, Sichuan.

Project for the Amelioration of Women's Conditions in Dangche Village, Qinghai.

Project for the Construction of the Gyurmed Gyaltsen private school in Qewan village, Golok Prefecture, Qinghai.

Project for the Development of Elementary Education in four Nomad Districts in Ngari Prefecture, West Tibet.

Project for Development Education called "Humanitarian Aid Informing and Sensitizing in Awakened, Active Popular Participation".

To information on how to sponsor a child at Dongche contact:

ASIA
San Martino della Battaglia 31
00185 Rome, Italy
Tel: 06 44340034
Fax: 06 44702620
Email: mc8125@mcLink.it

For Donations and Offerings:

For Adoption at a Distance, Scholarships and Surgery for Life:
Monte dei Paschi di Siena C/C n. 5622.72 ABI 01030 CAB 72160
C/C Postale 78687001

All donations to ASIA are tax deductible.

In the USA, ASIA is a non-profit organization, under act 501-3c of the Internal Revenue Service Regulations.

Tax deductible donations to ASIA in the USA can be made to:

ASIA, c/o Dzogchen Community, PO Box 277, Conway, MA, 01341, USA

outreaches. Here we encountered a large number of disabled people who are forced to stay at home because there is no special aid for the handicapped in this area; thus we distributed some wheelchairs and crutches.

This mission in Dongche valley instigated the idea of a network of traditional clinics in this area to enable closer cooperation between the local doctors. This idea is part of a larger project which includes ASIA's proposals for the creation of a training center for the preparation of traditional Tibetan medicines in Dongche. The Tibetan traditional clinics of the area, which are located very far away in nomadic areas, could constitute an effective network for distributing the medicines prepared in the clinic of Dongche and spreading the know-how and techniques acquired during training sessions in the Dongche training center.

To start ASIA's first long distance adoption project of Tibetan children in China, we identified poor nomadic children who could not attend school because their families could not afford the costs. During both the clinical activities and the outreaches we found sixty-four children with ages ranging between six and fourteen, most of whom did not yet attend school. If adopted at a distance, they can attend the Tibetan primary school in Dongche, built by ASIA and inaugurated in 1997. There they can learn the Tibetan language and culture as well as Chinese, and also basic English and computer science. Boarding facilities, which were not yet in use, were completed, so our sponsored children are now able to study there.

In Golmang we were asked to help another Tibetan primary boarding school where there are ninety-nine children up to sixth grade. Struck by the

continued on page 19



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Subscription Rate/
6 Issues:
\$35US available
through
Tsegvalgar
31 Euro
through Merigar
Visa and Master card
welcome

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SPECIAL PRACTICE CALENDAR

2002

"...It is best to do these practices collectively with your Vajra Brothers and Sisters (at the recommended times), but if this is not possible you can do them personally whenever you have free time. The important thing is to try to communicate with all practitioners linked with the same transmission. In this way you develop the potentiality of your transmission and your understanding and capacity to integrate your daily life into practice ..."
Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

3rd Month, 25th day
Mon. May 6th, 2002

This is a Dakini day as well as the anniversary of the Fifth Dalai Lama, a great tertön and practitioner of Dzogchen so it is a very beneficial day to reinforce the function of our energy and create a more vital contact with the energy of the universe. If you have the possibility, it is good to do a Guruyoga of the White A in the morning and in the evening a Ganapuja with an intensive practice of Ekajati, repeating the heart mantra as many times as possible. Otherwise you can do the Medium Thun with the practice of Ekajati, repeating the heart mantra as much as possible. The best time for this practice is around 8 in the evening.

3rd Month, 30th day
Sun. May 12th, 2002

DARK MOON. Today is the anniversary of Sangyas Lingpa (1340-1396) a great tertön and Dzogchen master. You can do a Guruyoga of the White A from the cycle of teachings Universal Clarity with a Ganapuja. It is also a good day to do the Purification of the Six Loka.

4th Month, 6th and 8th days May 18th and 20th, 2002

These are important days for the practice of Ekajati so try to do a long or medium Thun with your Vajra brothers and sisters. If that is not possible you can do the Medium Thun alone, reciting the heart mantra of Ekajati as many times as possible.

4th month, 7th day
Sun. May 19th, 2002

This is the anniversary of the birth of Buddha Shakyamuni, an important day for all Buddhists, so try to do a Ganapuja with your Vajra brothers and sisters.

4th Month, 11th day
Wed. May 22nd, 2002

This month there is no 10th day so the 11th is the day of Guru Padmasambhava. In general you can do the practice of the Guruyoga of Padmasambhava on this day. If you have the possibility and enough time you can do a collective Ganapuja with your Vajra brothers and sisters otherwise you can do the long life practice "Union of Primordial Essences".

4th Month, 15th day
Sun. May 26th, 2002

FULL MOON. This is the anniversary of the Parinirvana of Buddha Shakyamuni as well as an important day for the long life practice "Cycle of Life's Vajra". Therefore if you can, do the practice of the Dakini Mandarava in the morning (the best time is between 7 and 8 am) and a collective Ganapuja in the afternoon or even according to your possibilities.

4th Month, 25th day
Wed. June 5th, 2002

Dakini day. This is the anniversary of Ngor Chen (a great master of the Shakyapa tradition and initiator of the Ngor lineage), therefore it is a good day to do the Guruyoga of the White A. Akar Lamai Naljor, collectively or alone.

4th Month, 30th day
Mon. June 10th, 2002

DARK MOON. Today is the anniversary of Nyagla Padma Dundul (1816-1872), one of the Masters of Changchub Dorje and the main Master of Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche. He discovered the Terma "Tsedrub Gongdu" which two of his disciples, Ayu Khandro and Changchub Dorje, transmitted to Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche. Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche practiced this method as much as possible and started to transmit it to his students after visiting the sacred cave at Maratika. Therefore try to do the long life practice "Union of Primordial Essences" in the morning. In the afternoon or evening you can do the Guruyoga of the White A, Akar Lamai Naljor, collectively or alone, with a Ganapuja if possible.

5th Month, 1st day
Tue. June 11th, 2002

This is the anniversary of Chogyur Lingpa (1829-1870) a Nyingmapa Master of Dzogchen, one of the three most important Rimed masters of the 19th century. Try to do a practice of the Guruyoga of the White A, Akar Lamai Naljor.

5th Month, 10th day
Thu. June 20th, 2002

This is a special day of Guru Padmasambhava. 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 long life practice "Union of Primordial Essences".

5th Month, 14th day
Sun. June 23rd, 2002

This is an important day for the practice of Ekajati, so try to do a Long or Medium Thun collectively or alone, reciting the heart mantra of Ekajati as many times as possible.

5th Month, 15th day
Mon. June 24th, 2002

FULL MOON. This is a special day for the long life practice of Amitayus, so you can do the Long life 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 Dzamling Chisang (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. July 5th, 2002

This is a Dakini day as well as an important day for the practice of Ekajati, so try to do a Ganapuja or a Long Thun collectively with your Vajra brothers and sisters, or a Medium Thun alone. In either case recite the heart mantra of Ekajati as many times as possible.

5th Month, 30th day
Wed. July 10th, 2002

DARK 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 Thun.

6th Month, 4th day
Sun. July 14th, 2002

This is the anniversary of the Dharmachakra (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 Samath, after his illumination. To honor the Lord Buddha on this special day you can do a Ganapuja with your Vajra brothers and sisters.

6th Month, 10th day
Fri. July 19th, 2002

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 long life mantra and a Ganapuja as we usually do, otherwise you can do the long life practice "Union of Universal Wisdom".
SEE THE GLOBAL TIMETABLE

6th Month, 14th day
Tue. July 23rd, 2002

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. July 24th, 2002

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 long life practice "Union of Primordial Essences" of Guru Amitayus and, if possible, a Ganapuja.

6th Month, 25th day
Sat. August 3rd, 2002

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 Thun 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. August 8th, 2002

DARK 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 Thun or a Ganapuja, collectively or alone.

7th Month, 10th day
Sat. August 17th, 2002

It is a special day of Guru Padmasambhava as well as the anniversary of Jomo Menmo (1248-1283), a famous yogini, tertön and reincarnation of Yeshe Tsogyal and consort of the tertön Gugu 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.

This month there is no 9th day so today is a special day to do the practice of Ekajati.

7th Month, 15th day
Thu. August 22nd, 2002

FULL MOON. This is the anniversary of Tsarchen Losal Gyatso and Padma Karpo, a famous 17th century Drugpa Kargyupa Master. Therefore it is an excellent day to do the long life 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. August 27th, 2002

This is an important day for the practice of Ekajati, so try to do a Long or Medium Thun in the usual way, reciting the heart mantra of Ekajati as many times as possible.

7th Month, 25th day
Mon. Sept. 2nd, 2002

This is a Dakini day and also the anniversary of Phagmo Drupa (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 Thun 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
Sat. Sept. 7th, 2002

DARK MOON. This day is ideal for purification practices. Try to do either the "Purification of the Six Lokas" or the "Namcho Shitroi Naljor", 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. Sep. 16th, 2002

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
Sat. Sep. 21st, 2002

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
Wed. Sep. 25th, 2002

This is an important day for the practice of Ekajati, so try to do a Long Thun

with your Vajra brothers and sisters, or if that is not possible, you can do a Medium Thun alone reciting the heart mantra of Ekajati as many times as possible.

8th Month, 25th day
Tue. Oct. 1st, 2002

This is a Dakini day and also the anniversary of two great Dzogchen masters, Rigdzin Kumaraja, who transmitted the Dzogchen teachings to Longchenpa and to the third Karmapa, and of Rigdzin 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 Thun later in the day, with an intense practice of Simhamuka, or a Ganapuja, if you have the possibility.

8th Month, 27th day
Thu. Oct. 3rd, 2002

This is an important day for the practice of Ekajati, so try to do a Long Thun with your Vajra brothers and sisters, or if that is not possible, you can do a Medium Thun alone reciting the heart mantra of Ekajati as many times as possible.

8th Month, 30th day
Sun. Oct. 6th, 2002

DARK MOON. This day is excellent for practicing the "Purification of the Six Lokas" if you know how to do it. Otherwise you can do the Medium or Long Thun or a Ganapuja.

9th Month, 3rd day
Wed. Oct. 9th, 2002

This is the anniversary of Rigdzin Jigmed Lingpa (1729-1798), a great Dzogchen master who was the author



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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 Nalor, the Guruyoga with the White A.

9th Month, 10th day
Tue. Oct. 15th, 2002

This is a special day of Guru Padmasambhava. It is also the anniversary of the 16th Gyalwang Karmapa and of Terton Tso- gyal, a previous reincarnation of Sogyal Rinpoche and discoverer



er of many terms. 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 Thun. 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. Oct. 21st, 2002

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. Oct. 28th, 2002

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 Thun on your own.

9th Month, 25th day
Thu. Oct. 31st, 2002

The 25th is a Dakini day and also the anniversary of the great Dzogchen Master Adzom 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 Adzom 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.)

9th Month, 30th day
Mon. Nov. 4th, 2002

DARK MOON. This is a good day to do "Namcho Shitroi Nalor", 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 Thun, reciting the heart mantra of Ekajati as many times as possible.

10th Month, 10th day
Thu. Nov. 14th, 2002

This 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, that 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
Fri. Nov. 15th, 2002

This is an important day for the practice of Ekajati.

10th Month, 15th day
Tue. Nov. 19th, 2002

FULL MOON. This day is considered to be the day to honor 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. Nov. 29th, 2002

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 a very beneficial day for reinforcing the energy of the universe so try to perform a Ganapuja with your Vajra brothers and sisters. If there are no other practitioners nearby you can do the Medium Thun on your own, transforming into the Dakini Simhamuka and reciting the heart mantra as many times as possible.

10th Month, 30th day
Wed. Dec. 4th, 2002

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.

10th Double Month, 10th day
Sat. Dec. 14th, 2002

This 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, that 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 Double Month 11th day
Sun. Dec. 15th, 2002

This is an important day for the practice of Ekajati.

10th Double Month, 15th day
Thu. Dec. 19th, 2002

FULL MOON. This day is considered to be the day to honor 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.

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10th Double Month, 30th day
Thu. Jan. 2nd, 2003

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
Fri. Jan. 10th, 2003

This is a particular day for the practice of Ekajati so try to do a Long or Medium Thun with intensive practice of the mantra of Ekajati.

11th Month, 8th day
Fri. Jan. 10th, 2003

Today is a special day for the practice of Ekajati so try to do a Long

Thun collectively or alone, reciting the heart mantra as many times as possible.

11th Month, 10th day
Sun. Jan. 12th, 2003

This is a special day of Guru Padmasambhava manifesting in the form called Padma Gyalpo and is the day on which he arrived in the capital of Oddiyana and became the prince of King Indrabhuti. If you have the time and possibility it is good to do a Ganapuja with the Guruyoga of Padmasambhava collectively with your Vajra brothers and sisters, otherwise you can do the Short or Medium Thun alone.

11th Month, 15th day
Sat. Jan. 18th, 2003

FULL MOON. Today it is important to try to do the Longlife practice of Guru Amitayus "Union of Primordial Essences" in the usual way, and if you have the possibility, a Ganapuja.

11th Month, 25th day
Mon. Jan. 27th, 2003

This is a day of the Dakinis in general, so if you have the opportunity practice 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 Thun either collectively or personally.

11th Month, 30th day
Sat. Feb. 1st, 2003

DARK MOON. This is a special day for purification practices so try to do "Purification of the Six Lokas" and a Ganapuja if possible.

12th Month, 10th day
Tue. Feb. 11th, 2003

This day 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
Wed. Feb. 12th, 2003

Today it is good to do a Medium or Long Thun with intensive practice of the mantra of Ekajati.

12th Month, 15th day
Sun. Feb. 16th, 2003

FULL MOON. This is in general a day for honoring the Lord Buddha, and in particular an ideal day for the Long life 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
Wed. Feb. 19th, 2003

This is the anniversary of the great Dzogchen master Longchen Rabjam (1308-1363). On this very important day try to do the Guruyoga Akar Lamai Nalor, Guruyoga with the White A, either collectively or personally.

12th Month, 25th day
Wed. Feb. 26th, 2003

This is a Dakini day and a very beneficial day for reinforcing the energy of the universe so try to perform a Ganapuja with your Vajra brothers and sisters. If there are no other practitioners nearby you can do the Medium Thun on your own, transforming into the Dakini Simhamuka and reciting the heart mantra as many times as possible.

12th Month, 30th day
Sun. March 2nd, 2003

This is the last day of the Water Horse year.

This is a very special day for purification practices. Therefore try to do "Purification of the Six Lokas". If possible try to do a Ganapuja with your Vajra brothers and sisters.

LOSARWATER SHEEPYEAR
Monday, March 3rd, 2003

GLOBALTIMETABLE

ANNIVERSARY OF PADMASAMBHAVA

Thu. July 18th 2002
17:00 (-10) Hawaii
19:00 (-8) Fairbanks
20:00 (-7) San Francisco, Los Angeles, Vancouver
21:00 (-6) Denver, Salt Lake City, Pagosa Springs, Edmonton
22:00 (-5) Lima, Quito, Chicago, Mexico City
23:00 (-4) Caracas, San Juan, Santiago, New York, Conway, Montreal, Atlanta, Detroit, Havana, Kingston, Indianapolis, Ottawa
00:00 (-3) Buenos Aires, Sao Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Bermuda

Fri. July 19th 2002
00:30 (-2.5) Newfoundland
03:00 (0) GMT, Reykjavik,
04:00 (+1) London, Dublin, Lisbon
05:00 (+2) Johannesburg, Rome, Berlin, Oslo, Paris, Madrid, Amsterdam, Copenhagen, Brussels, Geneva, Prague, Salzburg, Stockholm, Budapest, Vienna, Warsaw
06:00 (+3) Kuwait City, Riyadh, Tashkent, Helsinki, Athens, Ankara, Beirut, Jerusalem, Tallinn, Vilnius, Istanbul
06:30 (+3.5) Tehran
07:00 (+4) Moscow, Murmansk, Baghdad
07:30 (+4.5) Kabul
08:00 (+5) ODDIYANA, Islamabad
08:30 (+5.5) New Delhi, Bombay
08:45 (+5.45) Kathmandu
09:00 (+6) Dhaka
09:30 (+6.5) Rangoon
10:00 (+7) Bangkok, Jakarta, Saigon
11:00 (+8) Singapore, Beijing, Lhasa, Manila, Hong Kong, Kuala Lumpur, Taipei, Perth
12:00 (+9) Tokyo, Seoul
12:30 (+9.5) Darwin, Adelaide
13:00 (+10) Brisbane, Melbourne, Sydney
14:00 (+11) Valdivostok
15:00 (+12) Fiji, Wellington, Auckland, Kamchatka

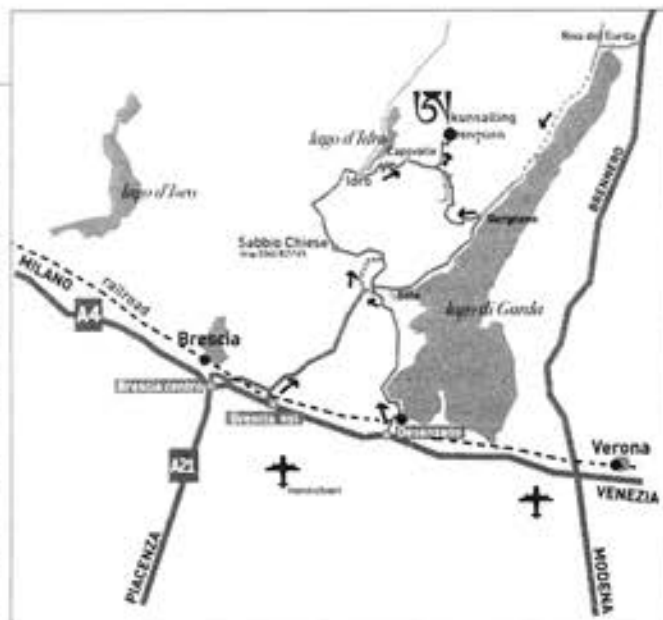
A Guide to Kunsalling, North Italy

by Claudio Regali

Kunsalling, (one of the two Dzogchen Community Lings of the same name, the other in the UK), is situated within the territory of the Regional Park of Lake Garda in north Italy. The owners of the land, Migi and Fulvio, gave up private use of the land in 1990 and opened it to practitioners of the Community. In 1991 Chogyal Namkhai Norbu stayed there for several days and gave some useful advice to those who were present. Following this the place was named "Kunsalling", place of clarity. From that time on the Ling has been managed by a Gakyil and whoever wishes to come there has been welcome. A group of practitioners in Brescia province regularly look after the Ling and from time to time meet there for meditation practice.

Getting to Kunsalling is not an easy trip but the effort is worth it: gradually moving into the midst of the mountains, almost without knowing it, you find yourself alone. Looking at the sky, the rocks, and the wood, you see your own mind.

The area of the Alto Garda Park rising behind the lake is extensive, mountainous and scarcely inhabited. The mountains are not very high at about 2000 meters and follow one after the other for kilometers, interrupted by deep valleys, covered in woods and meadows with great hanging rocks. Tiny villages are scattered here and there with old barns on the summer pastures. In winter the scene is covered with snow lasting well after the springtime. In summer the woods are richly green and the meadows luminous with freshly cut grass. But



a monument to the lord and master of the valley who one fine day decided to build a road which would finally allow the valley to communicate with the "world", and even export the wood.

We take the road on the right towards Magasa, the main town. The valley narrows even more, the pines and fir trees get thicker. We catch a glimpse of the town but don't enter, then take the road for the meadows of Denai. At this point the road starts to cling to the sides of the mountains twisting around desolate rocks from which contorted bushes spring forth, like a traditional Chinese painting. These are the "Rocks of the pagans" around which legends of witches and witches' Sabbaths have grown in the valley, alongside those linked to the numerous caves hidden in the area. Stories that talk about demons that leave their marks on the rocks, of secret doors that lead to the nether world. Stories that appeal greatly to the valley dwellers, as they do to us.

We struggle up the slope but once at the pass, the horizon opens before us to space all around: we are on a plateau, a multicolored stretch of grass, studded with woods and barns, surrounded by rocky spurs. The signs in the park make us leave the car behind and shouldering our backpacks we continue on foot for a while along the mule-track that leads to the top of Tombea. Then we wade through the meadows, being careful to follow the track and not tread on the grass of the neighbor who is a bit touchy.

On the way we can see the typical barns of the area with

Garda, and down below we can catch a glimpse of the great plain. This is a place you can stay for days on end without being seen or heard by anyone (a good place for Rushen practice). You surprise yourself from time to time watching the path in the hope of a surprise visit. Solitude is a wonderful thing, but so is company!

Let's take a look at the buildings. The barn is large, on the ground floor the stable has become a storeroom. Upstairs is a room for meditation that is big enough for quite a few people and in summer is also used for sleeping and eating. The space can also be used in the winter. The small house used to be occupied by a herdsman. Downstairs is the kitchen with a large fireplace which was used time ago for making cheese. There is a wood stove which is used for cooking and heating. Upstairs is a bedroom which can sleep five or six people with a squeeze. There is potable running water in the house and an outside tank collects rain water for use outside the kitchen. There is still no electric current although there may be soon, even though it isn't really essential. The toilet is a small shack



Houses on the land

the festival of colors appears in the autumn when the red beeches, the yellow birches and the deep green firs bring the woods to life.

There are two roads to get to Kunsalling: one from Lake Idro, the other from Lake Garda. The former is shorter, the latter more charming. Let's take the latter. Coming along the eastern side of the lake we go up into the mountains towards Valvestino. The vegetation is Mediterranean: olives, cypresses, oleaners. The old farmhouses with their vegetable patches, the ancient lemon groves with their stone walls and columns have become luxurious villas and residences.

We continue to go up and at each turning catch wider and wider glimpses of the lake until at the top of the slope we can see the entire lake, glinting below. We leave the lake and go forward into the valley. The bush quickly makes way for the woods, the road narrows and winds until a high dam appears. Beyond is a lake with deep green water which creeps through the mountain gorges like a fjord. Above the bridge which crosses one of its branches, a stone marks the old border of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

Once we have passed the lake, like a door, we move into the real Valvestino, which, more than a valley, is actually a territory which branches out, strongly incised by erosion, with steep cliffs and mountains, thick woods and mountain streams. Spread through this region are seven small villages which are almost uninhabited: Bollone, Turano, Arno, Persone, Moema, Magasa and Cadria. Each of them consists of a huddle of houses around a church, each a few hours walk from the next but visible to the eye. The few inhabitants who have remained tell the story of seven brothers who arrived in the deserted valley long ago and wanted to live close to each other so that they could help each other, but not too close in case they argued, proving true the old saying that humans are similar to hedgehogs: prickly when near, cold when they are distant.

Following the road, twisting and turning, glimpses of a ruined shack, a stone bridge, an abandoned saw-mill, a mule-track disappearing into the wood all give an idea of the way life was lived time ago. We arrive at a crossroads marked with



Houses on the land

their high sloping roofs with spires, similar to card houses made in one's free time. This shape is not to be found in the surrounding area and is said to be the heritage of immigration within the Empire from Hungary in the 1600's. Time ago the farmers who cultivated buckwheat here covered the barns with the stalks of this plant and this covering lasted for decades. Today nobody cultivates the earth any more and they have to make do with sheets of metal. However, they are still beautiful.

Crossing the meadows we reach a saddle from which we finally see Kunsalling with its two buildings, a large barn and a small house. On the front of the barn the gakyil symbol has been traced. We pass through a beech wood, cross the stream, go up the slope and we are there. While we catch our breath, we contemplate the scene: it is worth getting here. We find that the barns are situated in a clearing surrounded by rocky crests surmounted by trees and bushes. In the distance we catch sight of the meadows of Rest and Denai and the chains of wooded mountains that follow each other and fade into the distance. On a clear day, the mountains frame a blue triangle of Lake



Cave on the land

near the wood; if you leave the door open while you are sitting, there is a splendid view! Accommodation is a bit spartan, but no more so than a retreat place in Nepal.

Walking through the fields we find that the place is very big. Those of us who cut the grass each year know this very well because we do not always manage to finish the job. The area close to the house is level and we could even do the Dance of the Vajra with a painted Mandala of material, although up to now we have never tried. Reaching the extremities of the land, clinging to the heather, we arrive at a spur of rock stretching out of the valley. Below us is a drop of almost three hundred meters. Seated you have the sensation of being suspended in the air. If you are lacking that particular siddhi, it is a good substitute. Joking aside, this is a good place for practices such as *namkha arted* or the five *zernga*.

Behind the house is a rock wall which hides a small cave. Rinpoche told us that we could practice meditation there, but not being Tibetans but lovers of comfort, we have never listened to him. When Rinpoche came to visit the place, however, we thought that he would have liked to explore the surroundings. We also discovered that a snake lived close to the cave. One day we all went together to the Tombea, the highest mountain, and at the top we sang the Song of the Vajra. The snake is still there and every so often asks about the Master hoping that he will come back to see him, obligations permitting.

There is nothing else to add except that Valvestino is famous for being a very rainy place, squeezed between the lakes and the mountains. In fact sometimes there are tremendous storms with thunder and lightning and bursts of hail followed by luminous rainbows. Or in spring and autumn it may rain without stopping for days. But sitting with a straight back, legs crossed, listening to the sound of silence from the mountain depths, you can appreciate the precious gift that has been offered: discover that whether the weather is good or bad, your mind is always clear. It is Kunsalling.

KUNSALLING

Localita Cordenter, Magasa BS, Italy
Information: Fulvio Ferrari tel. 0365-825165
Email: fulgidi@tiscalinet.it



INTERNATIONAL

COMMUNITY NEWS

Merigar
Spring/Summer 2002

Retreats with CHÖGYAL NAMKHAJ NORBU

DZOGCHEN TEACHINGS

JULY 5th - 9th

Starts at 4PM on July 5th.

Cost: 200 Euro with the usual discount for paid-up members.

AUGUST 9th - 18th

Starts at 4PM on August 9th.

Cost: 450 Euro with the usual discount for paid-up members.

Santi Maha Sangha

July 23rd - 25th - Exam for the First Level SMS

Participants must register at the Merigar office beforehand.

July 26th - 30th - Training for the Second Level SMS

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu.

Starts at 4PM on 26th August.

Cost: 206.58 Euro (400.000 lire) no discounts.

YANTRA YOGA

MAY 25th - 26th

A course on Kumar Kumari Yantra

with Laura Evangelisti

(for teachers of Yantra and parents with a knowledge of the base of Yantra Yoga)

Starts at 10:00AM on May 25th.

Cost: 72 Euro with a 30% discount for paid-up members. (1)

JULY 12th - 21st

Training course on 2nd Level Yantra Yoga

with Laura Evangelisti and Fabio Andrico

(for those who have already taken part in at least one training course of 1st level)

Starts at 4PM on July 12th, ends at 1PM on July 21st.

Cost: 324 Euro, no discounts. (1)

(1): Please enroll at least 10 days before the course starts by paying a 25 Euro advance. If a minimum number of participants is not reached the course will be canceled.

VAJRA DANCE

MAY 28th - JUNE 2nd

Course of the Song of the Vajra Dance, Part I

with Prima Mai

Starts at 18:00 on 28th May and finishes at 13:00 on the Sunday 2nd June.

Cost: 216 Euro with a 30% discount for paid-up members. (1)

JUNE 14th - 16th

Course of the Dance of the Liberation of the Six Lokas

Instructor TBA

Starts at 18:00 on 14th June and finishes at 18:00 on Sunday 16th June.

Cost: 108 Euro with 30% discount for paid-up members. (1)

AUGUST 20th - 27th

Training course of 2nd Level Vajra Dance

with Prima Mai and Adriana Dal Borgo

Starts at 10:00AM on August 20th and finishes in the afternoon on August 27th. The course is reserved for those who know both the male and the female parts of the Dance of the Song of the Vajra and have taken part in at least one course at the first level. Cost: 288 Euro with no discount. Those interested must be up-to-date with membership their fees and should write to the Merigar office to apply for admission by the end of May. If a minimum number of participants is not reached, there could be changes to the subject of the course.

INTRODUCTORY COURSE

AUGUST 3rd - 4th

Lucid Dreams

with Michael Katz

Starts at 10:00AM on August 3rd, finishes at 6PM on Sunday.

Cost: 72 Euro with a 30% discount for paid-up members. (1)

KARMA YOGA

April 25th - 28th

June 1st - 2nd

August 31st - September 1st

The days begin with a Short Thun at 9:00AM and finish at 6PM with the Dedication of Merit.

Work Exchange at Merigar

Members of the Dzogchen Community who would like to participate next summer in the retreat with Rinpoche, but who have economic difficulties, can ask about work exchange. Work exchange will be in operation from the present time, and also during and after the retreat. We ask you kindly to contact the Gakyil of Merigar for booking. Please book before June 30th, 2002. Thank you!!!!

Merigar

Arcidosso, 58031 GR, Italy

Tel: 39 0 564 966837

Fax: 39 0 564 968110

Email: merigaroffice@tiscalinet.it

PURIFICATION MEDICINE
AND OINTMENT
AVAILABLE
AT THE MERIGAR SHOP

The prescription is based on the instructions of Guru Padmasambhava and has been adapted for contemporary use with the addition of ingredients in accordance with the practical knowledge of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu. It has proven to be of great benefit.

Dugsel Man Sang

(Purification Medicine)

Ingredients: consists of 11 herbs including calendula (gurgum), saffron (cugang), bamboo (sergod), nutmeg (dza-ti).

Benefits: it is famous for purifying the body and removing toxins such as alcohol, tobacco and other forms of drugs. It is especially beneficial for breaking habits associated with these substances. It also improves the functions of the organs and the circulation of the body by purifying and harmonizing the elements.

Use: take one teaspoonful of medicine with a glass of warm water one hour before breakfast and one hour before dinner (excellent with practices like Chudlen).

Counter indications: avoid garlic, onions, meat, heavy and raw food, strong tea and coffee.

Dug Selde Gu

(Purification ointment)

Ingredients: consists of 8 herbs including aloewood (agar), cloves (lishi), and sandalwood (tsan-dan). Benefits: excellent for detoxification, skin and 'rlung' diseases.

Use: apply to the skin once a day at the time of taking the Dug Sel Man Sang (purification medicine). Especially beneficial when applied on the points of 'la' at the proper time on the proper day. It is also good to use it for 'kum nye' massage applied to the special points and with Yantra Yoga.

If intoxication is less serious use the medicine for a week. For more serious intoxication use for two weeks.

The use of this medicine is intended only for Dzogchen practitioners.

Order from Merigar Shop:

Cost: EUR 30.00 including shipping charges

Payment by credit card accepted

email: merigaroffice@tiscalinet.it (att. Merigar Shop)

merigar

Losar at Merigar: Water Horse Year

by Tatiana Minghetti

Celebrating Losar in Italy, so far from Tibet, the country where it is traditionally celebrated is a unique experience. In the days before the event you are caught up in the atmosphere of preparations and as the new year gets closer you naturally start to feel the joy of the coming event.

Coming out of the house on New Year's day, you step into the daily rhythm of students off to school, the shops open and ready for business, the hustle and bustle of everyday life - it all seems unreal because today things are different for you. Today is a holiday! You've stolen a special corner from the monotony of every day and you enjoy it like a mouse who has stolen a piece of cheese, tasting it, calmly and safely.

So I get ready to "taste" the New Year, even though I expect to have a little trouble getting up at dawn in order to get to Merigar at six for the purification and then the Long life practice of Guru Amitayus. The preceding evening, after the practice of the Six Lokas, two bowls of "star water" were put outside to receive the influence of the stars during the night. When I arrive in front of the Mandala Room in the morning, along with other practitioners, all of us a little cold, I wash my face and feet in the star blessed water. The sang offering burns in a brazier to purify the surrounding area.

I join the others to start the first practice and in the room I feel the serene joy. We greet each other, embracing with greetings for the new year. A thought enters my mind ... in spite of the problems and difficulties of daily life, when we are together, everything vanishes and we feel privileged. But then, how else could we feel?

Let's make a brief account: another year has passed for us who are together in the Dharma boat, the course has been set and our Master is securely at the helm of the boat. These things are certain and whatever else may happen appears to be relative. We really do have a valid reason to celebrate!

And this, too, was Rinpoche's greeting: "...we send you all best wishes for a very happy and joyful Losar". So after the Ganapuja, we stayed together through the afternoon to watch the video "Twenty Years at Merigar", to play bakchen and spend wonderful moments together which we hope were enjoyed by our Tibetan guests at Merigar, more than 10,000 km from the Land of the Snows. In the evening after dinner, music and dancing at Serkhang. The festive day is over, I look forward to a good rest, closing my eyes and seeing the final picture in my mind of the smiling face of Rinpoche, with the Caribbean sea in the background. What a picture for such a little mouse!

ACCOMMODATION 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:

Merigar Reservation Service (available information in English, German, French, Italian)

Information service and reservation of accommodation during retreats, local transport, logistic solutions, contact:

Christina von Geispitzheim

Email: merigar-reservations@libero.it

Tel: 0039 0564 957542

Mobile phone: 0039 339 1370739

Postal address:

Via Monaci 26

I - 58033 Castel del Piano (GR) 58031

Italy

INFORMATION FOR PEOPLE WHO INTEND TO COME TO MERIGAR THIS COMING SUMMER

An accommodation service has been created for people who want to come to Merigar.

We cooperate with local hotels, pensions, residences. Community members who have rooms or houses to rent and local people in the area offering holiday houses, apartments or rooms.

For information and bookings contact Christina von Geispitzheim Christina speaks English, French, German and Italian.

Tel: 0039 0564 957542

Mobile phone: 0039 339 1370739

Email: merigar-reservations@libero.it

Postal address:

Christina von Geispitzheim

P.O. Box 36

I - 58031 Arcidosso (GR)

Italy

Welcome to Serkhan.net and Dzogchen.it

On the occasion of the new Tibetan Water Horse year, Merigar has inaugurated a new office automation system. The system was installed at the Golden House and so has been called <Serkhan.net>. It is made up of a server which is linked to five terminals: one for the secretary, another for the accountant, a third for the Gakyil, another for the Istituto Shang-Shung, as well as one for guests. The system can be easily expanded to include up to fifteen terminals even outside Serkhang, such as the Gonpa and the Library.

From each terminal it is possible to write, share (when one wishes) documents and data, link to the electronic mail and internet via ISDN, do print outs and send faxes. Each user is able to access the system from any terminal and by using their own password they can find their own files and personal desktop regardless of which computer is used. A good level of protection of data is guaranteed since no user can overwrite or cancel files in the personal folder of other users. Besides this, the server simultaneously creates a double copy of each file on two different hard disks.

One would think that the cost of a system such as this would be quite high, however, it isn't necessarily so. The use of free software and an efficient networking model (GNU/Linux and application server, for those familiar with such terms) have allowed us to keep costs surprisingly low, practically reduced to the cost of the hardware. Added to this, the networking approach allows us to recycle old PCs as terminals, practically reducing to zero the costs of each additional work station without sacrificing performance: it is sufficient to connect the server with the termi-

nals by means of a fast network. Finally the system was designed and installed without external professional help, therefore at no cost.

The work, however, is not finished and we need able collaborators who can help us (in karma yoga) with the remaining work: in order of priority, construction of a new web site which is more complete and elaborate than the present one, and the conversion of the Merigar database from MS Access to MySQL.

The Dzogchen Community has recently become the owner of an internet domain, www.dzogchen.it, and under this domain we intend to create a real Dzogchen portal for our European Gar. In order to create the new site we need someone experienced in HTML and PHP languages. The conversion of the database is not as urgent since the current Access database has been reprogrammed and is working well.

In perspective, however, in this area also it would be better to migrate to Unix/Linux where there is a powerful free database software available, called MySQL. So we could use the assistance of someone with some experience with Access and MySQL.

Even those who are not experts in the field of computer technology can help us: a web site needs an adequate graphic design and a good graphic designer who would be welcome to study this with us from that point of view.

To conclude: whoever feels able to give us a hand, even with the simplest suggestions, can get in touch with us by email at the following address.

Many thanks.

Maurizio Mingotti
<maurizio.mingotti@iol.it>

**Kalachakra/Graz
New Web Site
Address:
www.kalachakra-graz.at**

NEW GAKYILS

Switzerland

Blue:
Katharina Gusset Roth
Tel: +41 (0)31 829 40 23
Email: k.gusset@bluewin.ch

Red:
Peter Eisenegger
Tel: +41 (0)56 640 10 11
Email: garuda@bluewin.ch

Yellow:
Charles Sarasin
Tel: +41 (0)1 724 13 89
Email: sarasin@knowledge-work.ch

The contact address of the Swiss community is as follows:
Monique Leguen
ch. de Maisonneuve 12D
CH-1219 Châtelaine
Tel: +41 (0)22 797 37 21
Email: leguen@infomaniak.ch

e u r o p e

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu in France

August 29th - September 1st, 2002

Rinpoche will give a retreat in France at Karma Ling in the French Alps. The retreat will start on August 29th at 4PM and will end after a Ganapuja on the afternoon of September 1st. For registration and/or accommodation contact: (33)4 79 25 78 00 or <accueil@karmaling.org>. The price will be 187 Euro with the usual reductions for Dzogchen Community members."

Dzogchen Teachings by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu in Germany

September 6th - 8th, 2002

The German Dzogchen Community is happy to announce the long desired German retreat:

Location: Kirchheim / Hessen
Cost: Euro 140,- / 108,- (members)
Early Bird Discount: Euro 120,- / 92,- (members) until May 31, 2002)

Local accommodation in small houses available.

Further information:
Geschäftsstelle der Dzogchen Gemeinschaft e.V.
c/o Svetlana Riecke
Ringstr. 28
D-35112 Fronhausen
Tel: ++49-(0)6426-967148
Fax: -149
Email: dzogcheninfo@aol.com
Web site: www.dzogchen.de

Santi Maha Sangha in Prague with Jim Valby

October 29th - November 7th, 2002

Santi Maha Sangha Base Level Practice Retreat

The four daily sessions are: 8:30-10AM, 10:30-12, 4:30-6 PM (Yantra Yoga), 6:30-8 PM. Anybody who has attended a retreat with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu or participated in one of the three universal transmission practice days may participate in our SMS Base Level Practice Retreat where we will focus on the essential theory and practice of Sutra, Tantra & Dzogchen as transmitted by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu in his book named "The Precious Vase - Instructions on the Base of Santi Maha Sangha". Jim Valby, a student of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu since 1982, will lead this retreat.

Yantra Yoga Course for Advanced Students in Höfen/Neustadt an der Aisch, Germany

with Laura Evangelisti

May 8th - 12th, 2002

We have the rare opportunity to offer a Yantra Yoga Course for advanced students with Laura Evangelisti in Germany. Laura will teach the third series of Yantra Yoga and variations on the first and second series.

Requirements for participation are:

- attendance on one retreat with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu or video-transmission
- experience with 5 Tsigjong, 8 Lungsang, 5 Tsandul and the first series of yantras and to be acquainted with the second series

Beginning: Wednesday, May 8th, 7:30 p.m.

Ending: Sunday, May 12th, at noon

Fees: EUR 125,- / EUR 100,- for members

Information and registration:

Barbara Schwesig, Spenglerstr. 15, D-90443 Nürnberg

Tel: 0911-286270 (after 6:00 p.m.)

Email: b.schwesig@office-concept.de

Bank account: Dzogchengemeinschaft Deutschland e.V., YY0202, Stadtparkasse Düsseldorf,

Code: 300 501 10, account no. 11047891

Registration valid after remittance of course fees.

Withdrawal until 14 days before course begins with complete refund of course fees, later Eur 15,- tooling costs

For accommodation please contact:

Hans J. Vogel

Höfen 12

D-91460

Baudenbach, Germany

Tel: 09166-995311

Fax: 09166-995313,

Email: HansVogel@t-online.de

"WHERE I AM IS NOT DZOGCHEN" - OR WHAT?

The Santi Maha Sangha Level 1 Retreat with Jim Valby in Höfen, Germany
October 12 - 16, 2001

by Alexia Meyer-Kahlen

It's been two years since I took part in a Base Level Retreat with Jim Valby in Weiz, Austria. Inspired by his incredibly clear, yet humble, way of bringing the teachings of our Master Chögyal Namkhai Norbu closer to our hearts, back then some of us spontaneously decided to form a Santi Maha Sangha study group. This ultimately had lead me and a Vajra sister from this group to take the Base Level Exam this summer in Merigar.

And here we were now - ten people from Germany, Austria, Holland, France and Poland - curiously awaiting Jim on a Friday morning at 9 am in the Gonpa of our Vajra brother Hans Vogel in Höfen, a tiny little village in the south of Germany.

Jim had scheduled four Tuns a day, one of them being Yantra Yoga. Under the inspiring guidance of Gerd Manusch, one of our local Yantra Yoga instructors, we tried to find each afternoon in our own direct experience, what Jim had been teaching us throughout the day and at night. And what was that?

There are two sentences, that still ring in my ear: "It's fatal!" and "It's hopeless!"

This might require some explanation....

Jim made us realize how we again and again choose a completely unsuitable approach, blocking our realization by turning our primordial state into "something" we need to "achieve" through countless activities - bearing in the depths of our mind the conviction: "Where I am is not Dzogchen".

How often have we heard from our master Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, that our primordial state is HERE and NOW, each effort to "produce it" or "get to it" being a negation of this very state, and yet..... we've heard it a thousand times and we keep falling into the same activity trap over and over. We try to get to BEING by DOING and that is what is fatal, and hopeless.

What to do?

Through our five days of practicing together with Jim the vision of letting our whole existence be penetrated by the transmission of our Master Chogyal Namkhai Norbu became palpable. Jim kept pointing out that we can use EVERY experience to discover the primordial state - rather than anxiously awaiting and fixating on some "special" experience, in the face of which we can happily proclaim: "This is it!"

Our primordial state already is, has always BEEN and will always BE, and to point again and again to this BEINGNESS was the task Jim Valby fulfilled for us in those five days. Every single one of us will now have to be responsible for continuing to fulfill this task in his or her own dimension.....

Thank you, Jim.



**Easter Retreat in Merigar
Mandarava Long Life
Practice Retreat**
Led by Nina Robinson

by Claudia Ciardulli

Between the end of March and the beginning of April in Merigar, we had a brief Mandarava Long Life practice retreat. There were seventy practitioners and I was one of them. I still keep a beautiful memory of it.

Nina Robinson led the retreat and she was delicious and perfect; light as a butterfly and precise as a lama. I was touched by her humility and sense of humor. Nina explained many times how surprised she was to have been chosen by Rinpoche to perform this function, and from

time to time couldn't help but make fun of herself. In reality, her knowledge of the text and practice are very deep and revealed her very great dedication.

Nina explained to us how this *terma* was revealed to Rinpoche through a series of dreams and her enchantment with this fact was apparent.

During the retreat, when we sang the Song of the Vajra, people danced on the Mandala. Nina urged me to participate, even though I was uncertain, like a mother encourages her child to make their first step.

I would like to thank Nina again with all my heart and all the people who participated in this retreat; and of course, now and always, our beloved Rinpoche.

Polish Land Plea

Dear Community,

We have managed to complete work related to the Longde cabin. It's located in an isolated place on the top of a hill, a few hundred meters away from the house. It also provides some facilities which makes personal retreats possible also during autumn and winter. We are happy to have this cabin ready for practitioners interested in Longde and other practices involving open space.

We are facing a very urgent task now: renovating the main house. It has to be dried by a system of insulation and ventilation which wasn't done at the time the house was built. This will get rid of humidity and let us begin other work to make the house a place more convenient for longer personal retreats, as well as group ones. During summer we will build a well which will provide a secondary source of water; we are also going to rebuild and add bathrooms and toilets. These are the goals we hope to complete this summer.

Main work has already begun thanks to financial and professional help of one of our members: we have started to dry the house, although some part of this work will have to be finished during sunny summer days. We do our best to raise funds for that in Polish Community, but according to our rough estimates we will need support to complete our plans. We will greatly appreciate any donations and support.

Very Best Wishes to All of You!
On behalf of Polish Dzogchen Community
Jowita Poniewska & Jacek Marciszyn

The account details:
Wspolnota Dzogczen w Polsce
Bank Slaski SA o/Krakow
Account number 10501445-2246385047
SWIFT: SKAT PL PK

kunsangar

**Santi Maha Sangha Base Level Practice Retreat
Kunsangar, Russia
July 28th - August 17th, 2002
with Jim Valby**

From July 28th until August 17th, 2002, there will be a Santi Maha Sangha Base Level Practice Retreat with Jim Valby.

The four daily sessions are: 8:30-10AM, 10:30-12, 4:30-6PM (Yantra Yoga), 6:30-8PM. Anybody who has attended a retreat with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu or has participated in one of the three universal transmission practice days may participate in our SMS Base Level Practice Retreat where we will focus on the essential theory and practice of Sutra, Tantra and Dzogchen as transmitted by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu in his book named "The Precious Vase - Instructions on the Base of Santi Maha Sangha". This practice retreat will be led by Jim Valby who has been a student of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu since 1982.

tsegyalgar & west coast

**Santa Fe Sangha Days:
Dr. Phuntsog Wangmo's visit to New Mexico**

by Carisa O'Kelly and Julia Deisler

It was very lovely to spend time in the company of Dr. Phuntsog Wangmo this past January during her visit to Santa Fe, New Mexico. While in Santa Fe, she gave two public talks on Tibetan Medicine and Astrology, and made herself available to a number of people for medical and astrological consultations. Throughout her visit, Dr. Wangmo's kindness, skill, and wit were much appreciated by all - as were the momos she made and the bakchen lessons she generously gave us one night.

Dr. Wangmo's two public talks were well attended. In the first talk, sponsored by the Santa Fe Astrology Forum and set at the Longevity Cafe, she provided an introduction to Tibetan Astrology with some discussion of how Tibetan Astrology and Tibetan Medicine interact. Many of us were surprised to learn that the reason the turtle that forms the basis of the Tibetan astrology chart is upright, stomach exposed, is that it has just been shot by an arrow. To help us understand how one might "read" a Tibetan astrology chart, Dr. Phuntsog brought in an example of one and handed around copies of it - giving us a brief overview of how she might advise the person in question based on their astrology.

The second talk, co-sponsored by the Dzogchen Community of New Mexico and Crossquarters Breeze Press, focused more on Tibetan Medicine but also again discussed the relationship between Tibetan Medicine and Astrology - partly because of the close relationship between Tibetan Medicine and Astrology, but also because of the Santa Fe community's great interest in all things astrological. The audience especially appreciated her clear discussion of the importance of five-element theory in Tibetan Medicine.

Dr. Yangdrön Kelsang, currently an acupuncture student in Santa Cruz, California, offered translation assistance for both talks.

Dr. Wangmo's visit also provided the impetus for some of us to arise and venture out while the sky was still dark to see Native American dances - in this case the early, early, morning Feast Day dances at San Ildefonso Pueblo which happen every year in the dead of winter. One of our kind hosts had heard there were to be Feast Day dances at San Ildefonso Pueblo that the general public had been invited to observe. We were very lucky timing wise in that San Ildefonso Pueblo is the only Pueblo to have a winter feast day; most of the other Pueblos' feast days fall during harvest months, August to September. Dr. Wangmo was very interested to see Native American dances and so we set off early in the morning, coffee forgotten, and arrived well before dawn at the Pueblo. The dancers had been out all night on the land engaged in their sacred ceremony of which we have barely an inkling and at dawn they were expected back home. We were held at the gate just outside of the Pueblo plaza until a certain moment when we were ushered in by Pueblo officials who showed us where we should line up to see the dancers arrive. The drumbeat was audible now and we found ourselves standing by the roadside with the other non-Pueblo people, shuffling our feet to keep warm. In front of us and to the left a bit there was a line of drummers standing firmly and relaxedly keeping the rhythm. Then in a moment, from the hill in front arose the antlered forms of the dancers emerging after their night of movement. They wended their way from the hill through the trees, stooped on short walking sticks that were like extensions of their arms, adding to the impression of antlered four-legged beings coming from the hill.

Slowly they came, and they were many - coming down, down and sideways. They looked very tired. As they came closer - close enough so that their eyes were visible, peering out from their blackened faces beneath their antlers - their tiredness was more obvious, palpable, and yet there was something else there in their eyes which was not tiredness. Then we saw that there were others coming down the other hill also, slowly, wending, and the drumming continued. As the dancers came down the path to the village they came by the Pueblo women and children awaiting them who each touched the dancers as if in a mutual offering or a blessing. Then two very small children appeared in little deer costumes with tails as if they were starting on their path up the hill into the night to come.

We were ushered to the central area of the village where the deer dancers from the night continued dancing in lines and rows with a meaning that was beyond us, and then finally they slipped off and we were left to enjoy the morning and the wonderful cottonwood tree whose scarred trunk was well more than a meter in diameter - of some unknown age.

Dr. Wangmo commented on the patterns on the blankets/shawls of the men, saying that they were very similar to that worn by the men of Northeastern Tibet. We all felt very honored to be included in the experience of San Ildefonso Pueblo's sacred dance and we went quietly on our way back to Santa Fe, the day hardly begun but already full. The dances were in some way the highlight of the visit; it was very pleasing to see how much Dr. Wangmo enjoyed them. And yet there were many other good things that arose from Dr. Wangmo's desire to come see New Mexico, including her deep understanding of Tibetan Medicine and Astrology to which she introduced us. One bonus of her visit was having the opportunity for a brief introduction to the game of bakchen - which she has played since a very young age, having been called over to play by her mother, aunt and other family members with a "Hey you, we need a fourth, come here!"

Another bonus was meeting the representative of ASIA, Giorgio Minuzzo, who had much interesting news and information to offer. Finally, this article wouldn't be complete without mentioning Dr. Wangmo's wonderful host, Luisa Putnam, who graciously and easily invited us all into her very comfortable house to spend some time visiting with each other.



Dr. Phuntsog Wangmo (on the right) with translator Dr. Yangdrön Kelsang (on the left)

YANTRA YOGA ANNOUNCEMENT CALIFORNIA

Two new sessions starting on Sunday, April 21st

OPEN SESSION OF YANTRA
Sundays at the center 11AM to 12:30PM

For those who have been initiated to the basics of Yantra Yoga. After warm-ups and stretching, we'll do the nine purification breathings, the five Tsigjong, and the Eight Movements (*lungsang*). Additional practices to work on from Rinpoche's "Yantra Yoga Manual" will be chosen by the group.

Sessions on Sundays 9:30AM to 10:45AM
(on demand) AVAILABLE BY REQUEST ONLY
Call Catherine (510-525-5779) first if you want a Sunday Basics session to occur. If no one calls, there will be no session. You need to call by 7:30PM on Saturday.

Note: If attending a session, please bring a mat or soft blanket.



Third North America C2C Meeting, Santa Fe, New Mexico, January 18th - 21st, 2002

by Carol Fields and Ed Goldberg

Prologue

A sunny, windy day with temperatures in the 40's greeted us as we landed somewhat bumpily in Albuquerque, New Mexico. We paused to admire the unique airport statue of an Indian man reaching skywards, being lifted by an eagle's talons into flight. On the way we made a small pilgrimage stop at the Coronado National Monument next to the Rio Grande River under the watchful heights of Sandia Mountain. A placard explained that Spanish explorers encountered the Pueblo people who spoke the Tiwa language at this spot in the 1500's, in a vain search for the seven cities of gold. We felt it was appropriate that we were holding our community-building meeting in a region where the Pueblo Indian communities have survived and continue to pray, hold ceremonies, live and work together to this day.



Group of practitioners enjoying the meeting

G. DE DOMENICO

The New Mexico Dzogchen Community hosted North America's Third Community - to - Community (C2C) meeting at the Upaya Center, a Zen practice center created by Joan Halifax, five minutes from downtown Santa Fe. It consists of a cluster of adobe buildings, each perfectly designed and decorated in southwest style. With about three inches of snow on the ground, the stiff weeds, seed stalks,

and occasional pine branch were silhouetted against the warm, reddish clay of the adobe walls. We were surrounded by hills, with a partially-frozen creek down the canyon. There were two zendos, a large one where we were able to have the dance Mandala; a small, perfectly white square zendo, where we had our opening gathering. There was Joan Halifax's remarkable house, where she generously allowed us to meet in the living room.

Process

The meetings began on Saturday morning and continued until mid-day Monday. A brief orientation included an encouraging message from Rinpoche. He sent his warm wishes to all attending the meeting and said that he hoped that everything would manifest successfully. We stated our intention to learn more about what makes teams successful, and to explore the formation of teams with members from multiple sites in North America in order to meet the needs of the Community. We began with an orientation to teamwork, followed by an introduction and review of the project to date. Most of the time was dedicated to exploring the potential of individual teams. The larger group broke into three or four smaller groups which did intensive brainstorming on individual teams. We enjoyed the unusual experience of getting to know Community members from all over North America, many of whom did not know each other. Twenty-eight people attended the meeting, including practitioners from Hawaii, Alaska, the Northwest, New York, Southern California, Massachusetts, New Mexico, and Northern California.

Susan Harris, President of the New Mexico Community, had a welcoming dinner at her home on Friday night, and also hosted a Ganapuja for the entire group on Saturday night. There were practice sessions. Dr. Gisela de Domenico facilitated the use of sand trays throughout our meeting.

Everyone wrote what they personally hoped would come of the meeting at the very beginning on sheets posted on the wall. Our collective hopes included the words clarity, depth, familiarity, vision and cooperation. The idea of forming teams was the important new element for all of us. Not only would each team have members from all over North America and support the work of the major Gakyils and all the sites and the Gar as a whole, but the teams would have another team supporting them - composed of mentors. The current Steering Committee members for North America are Ed Goldberg of the New York and Tsegylgar Gakyils, Julia Deisler, of the New Mexico Gakyil, Carol Fields of the Northern California Gakyil, Michael Hass of the Southern California Gakyil, and Gisela De Domenico, of the Northern California Community.

Each team's assignment was to review/or develop their own mission statement and list of projects, and try to identify a coordinator, members, and point persons for the various projects to be undertaken. Teams would then prioritize projects and identify tasks, and those responsible for tasks. This experiment is made both more exciting and difficult by the fact that these will be VIRTUAL TEAMS, that is, teams which do much of their work through email and phone conferences. However, as we began to learn that successful virtual teams also rely on face-to-face meetings considerably, especially in the beginning, to allow team members to get to know one another, practice together, and form cohesion in a supportive and relaxed setting; we planned to continue our C2C meetings several times each year.

We dedicated a brief portion of the meetings to learning about team organization principles, drawn from current research in the fields of organizational psychology and development. An effort was made to connect these principles to the core values of the Dzogchen Community as presented in the Principles of the Dzogchen Community text. Some of these accepted organizational principles seem familiar—

- * The successful team needs to cultivate inter-personal relations and cohesion as well as pursue tasks. If the team does not do both, it is less likely to be successful.

- * Leadership on a team is not synonymous with authority, since many teams are self-managing. The team can evolve what it requires in its leader, which will most likely be facilitation and coordination skills.

- * The more that the entire team takes responsibility for various leadership functions, the stronger the team becomes.

We also reviewed the triangle model of teamwork: The first point of the triangle stands for process, the second, for relationship and the third, for results. Within the triangle we added the words "awareness" and "relax". Organizations often rush to get results. They can be strictly task-oriented, while forgetting to spend time on defining and clarifying a process with which they feel comfortable and which they agree to follow. Cultivating good relationships among members is one important guarantor of long-term survival and success. Particularly within a spiritual Community, such as ours, relationships are not just a means to an end - Sangha is fundamental to the work. This is the practice.

Results

As a result of the work done at the New Mexico meeting, ten teams were formed. Most now have coordinators, and all have a number of members. The teams are meeting by email and phone to define their projects and have them reviewed and approved by the Gar, i.e. the major Gakyils and sites involved. This approval process is now taking shape. Many of the inaugural projects focus on information-gathering and finding out more about a topic, such as: North America teams formed so far include Land and Infrastructure, Financial Planning and Development, End of Life, Library and Archiving (includes Publications and History of the Gar), Practice Planning, Membership, Advertising and Outreach, e-Media Communications (includes Karma Yoga), The Mirror, and Legal Relationships. The Tsegylgar web site, <<http://www.tsegylgar.org>> is host to a teams section, mission statements, a list of projects, and contact information for team coordinators and Steering Committee mentors.

Lidian King, a member of the New Mexico Community, surprised the group during the last session of the meeting by offering to donate some of her beautiful land in Crestone, CO to the Community. It was a gesture which seemed to validate our work, since it implied on some level, that the Community was committed to working together and to developing our North American sites for the benefit of all. The synergistic results of teamwork are often consider-

ably beyond the expected. We felt honored that Lidian was placing her confidence in the Community and creating the opportunity to have Sangha members practice in her new location.

Next Steps

Our next steps are to formally present an overview of the teams project to all North American Community sites to collect feedback. Once this input has been synthesized, we will present a complete review of the project to Rinpoche for his consideration.

The next C2C meeting is planned for September 13th - 16th at a location to be announced. Team members, coordinators, mentors, and Gakyil members are especially urged to attend the meeting. And everyone is invited to contribute their activity, experience and talents to the team that inspires them the most.

Conclusion

We tried to bring our whole selves, individually and collectively, to the task of nurturing our Community on this auspicious occasion. We were embraced by nature, art and community in a spiritually dedicated space. We listened to the undercurrent of the ancient harmonious Pueblo cultures and communities surrounding us. We felt we had learned something, and received their blessing.

Dzogchen Community West Coast

Spring 2002 Schedule

2748 Adeline Street #D, Berkeley
Contact phone: 510 644 2260

Web site: www.dzogchencommunitywest.org
Email: aha@dzogchencommunitywest.org

Please check web site and call contact numbers for possible schedule changes!

Newcomer sessions:

Starting April 14th, Sundays at 5:30PM

We will have explanation sessions of the Short Thun (practice session of Guru Yoga) right before Santi Maha Sangha Study/practice group on Sundays at 6:30PM.

Chöd & other practices:

We'd like to start weekly Chöd practice and other Saturday sessions perhaps in May. Please let us know what you are interested in focusing on for a day of practice at the center.

Contact Gene Kim at Geneshk@aol.com

Office Reorganization

The DZCW center now has a new rug and painted walls, it is getting more comfortable for longer practices. We are starting to work on our office organization, bookstore, etc. Please let us know if you can volunteer a few hours to help out with any of the areas that need attention. Thank you.

Contact Patrick Tribble at: Ptribble@attbi.com

Good News!

The Dzogchen Community West Coast is delighted to be able to host Lama Wangdor Rinpoche's teachings on the weekend of July 20 and 21, 2002, in Berkeley.

If Rinpoche considers it to be beneficial, we would like to request a Guru Rinpoche/Mandarava long life empowerment - which we would like to dedicate to our teacher, Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, Wangdor Rinpoche himself, and all our teachers.

REGULAR WEEKLY PRACTICE

at the Adeline Street Center

Sundays 1 PM - 4 PM

(Includes Dance of the Three Vajras, Liberation of the Six Lokas and Dance of the Vajra)

Santi Maha Sangha Group
Sundays at 6:30 PM- 8:30 PM
(No SMS on 4/14 or 4/21)

Yantra Yoga
Sundays, 10 AM - 12 noon

Directions:

Dzogchen Community West Center
2748 Adeline Street, Suite D, 2nd floor
Berkeley, Ca (near Shattuck)
510 644 2260

From Hwy 80 get off at the Ashby Ave exit. Travel east toward the hills until you find Martin Luther King Jr. Way. Go left (if not commute hours) to Ward Street. Turn right a few blocks up to Adeline Street. Go right again to 2748 Adeline. Park in 2 hour spots or parking lot across the street. We are on the second floor above the bakery CRUXA. Enter on left hand side of building.



Liberation of Six Lokas Dance Course held in Berkeley, California on February 7-10, 2002



First Advanced Yantra Yoga and Teacher Training at Tsegalgar, October, 2001

Yantra Yoga Course Tsegalgar June, 2002

Tsegalgar is pleased to announce a Yantra Yoga Course with Fabio Andrico at Tsegalgar on June 18-24, one day after the New York Dzogchen Retreat with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu.

Anyone who would like to deepen the practice of Yantra Yoga is welcome. The first day will start in the evening and the last day ends at noon. There will be two sessions every day from the second through sixth day. Course fee will be \$350 for 7 days /\$30 per session - dorm fee is included.

For more information and reservation:

Tsegalgar Office
PO Box 277
Conway, MA 01341
USA
Tel: 413 369 4153
Fax: 413 369 4165
Email: DzogchenUSA@compuserve.com

New Gakyil Members Needed at Tsegalgar

Tsegalgar is seeking capable Community members for a new Gakyil that will commence in June, 2002. The Gakyil election date is tentatively scheduled for Sunday, May 19th. Rinpoche will be present at this time, and all interested candidates will need to be at the Gar as well.

Candidates must be members of the Dzogchen Community. The Gakyil commitment is a minimum of two years and a maximum of three years. Attendance at monthly Gakyil meetings in Conway, MA is a requirement. Gakyil members should be responsible representatives of the Community, willing to serve and offer one's self to the Sangha. Skillfulness in collaborative planning, organizing, and follow through is essential. Frequent communication between meetings, mainly by email, is required.

We request that you express your intention to the Gakyil or the Gar secretary at DzogchenUSA@compuserve.com by April 1st.

Thank you for considering this special opportunity.

Tsegalgar Gakyil

asia continued from page 9

extreme poverty of some nomadic families of that area, we decided to sustain tuition and boarding costs for twelve very poor students.

Four months after coming back from the mission we are very satisfied to have sponsors for these twelve children and for thirty of the children at the Dongche school, who have now been able to start a career since September.

At the moment we are urgently seeking sponsors for the other thirty-four nomadic children. School education now seems to be extremely important in order to offer these children a chance to build their own future in an area where the rapid climate change and the on going desertification process causes serious problems to traditional farming and nomadic husbandry.

To information on how to sponsor a child at Dongche contact:

ASIA
San Martino della Battaglia 31
00185 Rome, Italy

Ideas and Application of Karma Yoga from Tsegalgar

Dear Vajra Brothers and Sisters,

Karma Yoga is valued and appreciated for all members of the Dzogchen Community members but is required of all students who participate in Santi Maha Sangha. In a message dated February 27th, 2001, Chögyal Namkhai Norbu wrote:

"The training of Santi Maha Sangha is not only something learned in an intellectual way, but this knowledge should be totally integrated into one's condition. If someone is not interested in the Dzogchen Community, there is no way they can be totally integrated. The Dzogchen Community is like a boat: we are traveling by boat in order to arrive beyond a very big river and until we arrive beyond the very big river we should be interested in that boat. Therefore, we can understand how important the Dzogchen Community is for the trainee. If people are interested in any kind of Karma Yoga activity related to the Dzogchen Community it means those people are interested in the Dzogchen Community."

Karma Yoga means dedicated work for the Dzogchen Community and can take many forms. In the same message Rinpoche explained:

"Many people ask me how many hours of Karma Yoga they should contribute for the Santi Maha Sangha Base exam and for each level and so on. The registration of how many times and how many hours someone dedicated to Karma Yoga is relative; it is not the main point. Rather it is in order to know who and how they have dedicated Karma Yoga to the Dzogchen Community. The registration of Karma Yoga is very useful in general for the Dzogchen Community to know who is seriously involved, and particularly it is very important to know how it is related to those people who participate in the Santi Maha Sangha."

The international Gakyil later further clarified Rinpoche's explanation of Karma Yoga:

"All voluntary activities offered to the Community are considered Karma Yoga, not only manual activities. Rinpoche gave as example, that Gakyil commitment or transcription activity, when commissioned by the Community, can be considered Karma Yoga. Rinpoche said that even donations of money can be considered Karma Yoga because it is a way of helping the Community."

Rinpoche has asked that both the Gar and local Gakyils track and verify Karma Yoga activities:

"In any part of the world, if someone contributes voluntarily some good and useful things for the Dzogchen Community, the Gakyil of that place shouldn't view that participation with indifference. The Gakyil should register all the good things contributed by that person and when they go to do the examination of Santi Maha Sangha the Gakyil can present his or her situation of conduct with the list of all the good things they have contributed to the Dzogchen Community."

In order to implement Rinpoche's wishes, Tsegalgar and the Gakyils of North America have agreed to the following procedure:

*Download the Karma Yoga form from the tsegalgar.org web site or contact the Gar to receive a copy by mail.

*Complete the form and send a copy to the Gekö at the Gar.

*Send a copy to the Gaykil, Team Coordinator, or Gar contact person you collaborated with.

*The Gakyil or Team contact will send an email recognizing your contribution to the Gekö.

The Gekö will compile Karma Yoga Information and give it to the SMS Coordinator.

Dzogchen Community of North America

Tsegalgar

PO Box 277

Conway, MA 01341

USA

Tel: 413 369 4153

Fax: 413 369 4165

Email: DzogchenUSA@compuserve.com

Santi Maha Sangha Requirements

Here is a reminder about some requirements to participate in Santi Maha Sangha exams or training at Tsegalgar in May and June, 2002.

1. We must consider that Chögyal Namkhai Norbu is our principal master.
2. We must demonstrate our interest in the Dzogchen Community by being members of the Dzogchen Community. The first question in any SMS exam is "May I see your Dzogchen Community membership card?" If our membership has lapsed since we took an SMS exam, we must pay the membership money owed. Payment plans are possible if we have financial difficulties.
3. We must demonstrate our interest in the Dzogchen Community by performing karma yoga to benefit the Dzogchen Community. If we are newer practitioners, we must demonstrate a willingness to participate in physical, financial and/or intellectual activities which support Rinpoche's vision for the Community. If we are older practitioners, we must submit to Tsegalgar a record of our recent physical, financial and/or intellectual activities at least a few weeks before taking an SMS exam or participating in an SMS training.
4. We must notify Tsegalgar of our intention to take an SMS exam or participate in an SMS training. There are no discounts for SMS training.

Thank you.
Tsegalgar

asia

His Holiness, continued from page 4

Tel: 06 44340034
Fax: 06 44702620
Email: mc8125@mlink.it
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Tax deductible donations to ASIA in the USA can be made to:

ASIA, c/o Dzogchen Community,
PO Box 277, Conway, MA, 01341,
USA

prolonged prayers and many hours of preparation for the conduct of the Kalachakra Teachings I thought in my present health it would be foolish on my part to persist in giving what is basically a very exhausting set of teachings and empowerment. Normally we advise people not to be stubborn and if I myself remain stubborn I see no benefit and reason. Because of this I decided to postpone the Kalachakra Teachings. Earlier on thinking that I would be able to proceed with the Kalachakra Teachings, I thought of making the preparations for the teachings and the accompanying prayers not from the Kalachakra Temple but from my room, linking my room by wireless to the main sound system of the temple. So in this way I would have ended up performing an unusual Kalachakra Teaching preparation. So I thought it will be best if I postponed the Kalachakra Teachings.

As said by Shantideva in his The Way of the Bodhisattva, for the sake of repaying the many kindnesses of the lamas and great masters, it is better to remain in good health and live long to benefit the Dharma and sentient beings. For these reasons, to remain in good health is important and I have decided to postpone the Kalachakra Teachings. So I have decided to hold the Kalachakra Teachings again in Bodh Gaya between the eleventh and twelfth months of the Tibetan calendar next year. I will need to consult with those who are organizing the Kalachakra Teachings on this issue.

I think it has been easier for those who came from the settlements, monasteries, and from close by. But for those who came from great distances and with great dedication and commitment and overcoming great difficulties, I would like to state that you should not be disappointed by the postponement of the Kalachakra Teachings. This is because the reason why you are here in Bodh Gaya is because of your great motivation to spiritually benefit from being in such a sacred place and because of this you will have accumulated great merit for every step you take."

NEW CHINESE TRANSLATION!!!

The Chinese translation of *Dzogchen - The Self Perfected State* by our master Chögyal Namkhai Norbu is now available. This translation by Pema Wangjie is based on John Shane's translation of Adriano Clemente's work of the same name. To order please contact:
Keng Leck
Rinchen Editions, Singapore
Email: kalatime@singnet.com.sg
List price is Sing\$12 or US\$6.65
Special discount for bulk order.

Namgyalgar President's Report for 2001

The year 2001 began with a first for the Gar: a serious three week long Santi Maha Sangha retreat with Jim Valby which was attended by sixty-five plus people.

Also this year we have established an important new relationship with Dr. Nida Chenagtsang and the Tibetan Medicine Department of the Shang - Shung Institute, Italy, which we hope will continue to grow and be of benefit to the Dzogchen Community and the activities of the Shang - Shung Institute. Thanks also must go to all the local groups and Gakyils who organized Tibetan medicine seminars in their regions and to the local groups who organize information evenings, fundraising activities and regular practice groups.

Through the Tibetan Medicine tour we have realized our capacity to move into a more entrepreneurial role. We achieved our two objectives of successfully fundraising and raising the profile of Namgyalgar and the Dzogchen Community. We produced a new brochure and web site ready to be launched in 2002. It is important that we build on the infrastructure we have set in place for the Tibetan Medicine Tour and apply the same principles and energy to publicizing Rinpoche's teachings through information evenings and promoting the Vajra Dance and Yantra Yoga on a national and regional level. Feedback collected from the Tibetan Medical tour provides us with a good model for achieving this and passing information on to others who will take over the work in the future.

While activity at the Gar has been low key in terms of numbers of people turning up for retreats and karma yoga activities, there has been a strong local presence at the Gar and we owe them our thanks for the care taking role they take.

We have been without a permanent Gekö for the year. Thanks to Jean and Maggie for covering for this position. This situation has been remedied with the arrival of Paddy, our new Gekö, who having begun his duties in a temporary capacity may stay on to help prepare the Gar for Rinpoche's return. 2002 will bring many changes to the Gar. A scholarship program will hopefully be in place by May with three or four practitioners in residence for one year. Our first retreat cabin will be built and stage two of development begun.

Rinpoche will return to Australia in December, 2002. His family will accompany him and he will spend some time at his house in Caloundra, Queensland.

Rinpoche will give the usual New Year and Easter retreats at Namgyalgar and a February 5th day retreat in Caloundra in 2003.

There may also be a two or three week Yantra Yoga intensive at Byron Bay in Feb/ March, 2003. As yet we don't know about a Santi Maha Sangha exam program at the Gar.

Dr. Nida will return in January/February, 2003. The success of the Ku Nye retreat and the Dreams weekends will be built on at the Gar and in other venues.

2002 will see Namgyalgar's use as a place of retreat and practice expanded in a new direction. With resident practitioners on the scholarship program and others in personal retreat, and with candidates from Namgyalgar attending the teacher Training in Margarita Island, we can begin to intensify our study of Santi Maha Sangha, Vajra Dance, and Yantra Yoga at Namgyalgar and in the regions of Australia and the Asia Pacific in a more concrete way.

If we can expand our membership base we can have a self sustaining Gar that is the seat of Dzogchen Community in Oceania. All we need to do that is fifty sustaining members. At the moment we have around thirty-four. If each of us who is already an ordinary member changes to sustaining membership or convinces a friend to become a sustainer we will have easily reached our goal. (An easy way to do this is to speak to Viki about having monthly installments deducted from your account or credit card.)

If we each make a commitment no matter how small or big to taking on some responsibility to help the teachings of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu flourish in our region of the world, then we can build the base of a strong working community that will continue to grow and be sustainable far into the future.

Thanks again to everyone who has contributed over the past year. I look forward to seeing you at Namgyalgar this Xmas/New Year if not before.

Extra note:

To our overseas Dzogchen family members, who haven't experienced Namgyalgar yet, I encourage you to do so. Yes we are a long way away, down under, on the other side of the world, but it is well worth the trip.

Why not escape the northern winter this year and come play with us on our fabulous beaches five minutes drive from the Gar. Take the opportunity to gain a unique perspective on your life, upside down, looking back and having fun in the sun with your Aussie Vajra kin.

Jan Cornall

Advanced Yantra Yoga Residential Intensive

February 20th - March 2003

with Fabio Andrico and Laura Evangelisti

The first ten days of this intensive will be dedicated to the preliminary practices of Tsijong, Lunsang, Tsandul and the Yantras and Breathings of the first through the fourth groups. The last three days will be focused on the Kumbhaka and the 7th Lojong.

Those interested in attending this intensive should have received transmission from Chögyal Namkhai Norbu and should already be practicing the Yantras of the first and second groups.

The cost for the entire intensive, which includes Yantra sessions, accommodation and food is AU\$1500 per person.

Please register early. The course will need a minimum of fifteen participants to go ahead.

Inquiries to:

Amare Pearl: amare@amarepearl.com.au

Oni McKinstry: oniyogini@yahoo.com

How You Can Sustain Your Gar for \$15.50 per Week or Confessions of a Lapsed Sustaining Member

(and The Mirror for even much less)

Dear Dorothy Dharma

I am a low income earner, however in the year 2000 after Rinpoche's retreat I was inspired to become a sustaining member of Namgyalgar.

Last year I decided I couldn't afford it I balked at the \$800 lump sum (even though in reality it works out to be only \$15.50 per week) and yet I still ate out whenever I felt like it, went to the movies whenever I felt like it, bought myself a little special something when I felt like it, and managed to pay my credit card off...somehow!

This year I've decided to become a sustainer again, not because I figure I have more money than last year, but because I learned the following facts: At present we need \$50,000 per year to keep the Namgyalgar operating in a most basic, no frills way. That figure will continue to rise. At present we have thirty-four sustaining members. That's only thirty-four people out of all the hundreds of people who come to Namgyalgar for Rinpoche's retreats and expect to see the Gar well looked after in their absence.

If we had sixty-two sustaining members we would cover our \$50,000 basic running costs. That's only twenty-eight more people we need to become sustainers; if I become a sustainer and I convince another person also that brings it down to twenty-six. If you do too and you convince a friend, and they convince a friend and so on that brings our goal even closer.

Last year it was the lump sum of \$800 that put me off, so this year I'm going to arrange with our treasurer Elle, to have monthly payments deducted from my credit card, or you can arrange with your bank to have automatic deductions made from your account.

We do the same to keep our cars insured and running. We do the same to keep our bodies insured and running. Why not do the same to ensure our gar keeps running.....especially in the year that Rinpoche is returning and everyone will be expecting to come and see him at Namgyalgar.

Dear Dorothy, I can't tell you how much better I feel, now that there is something in my life that is sustainable. Everything these days feels so disposable. (I'm not a property owner and I don't have a veggie garden!)

I feel like I'm making a solid, base line contribution to my Gar, community and my teacher. I feel like the rock! It's a good feeling... better than sex (though I think I've forgotten what that feels like.)

I want to shout to the world... become a sustaining member today... you'll never look back!

And so next month when you receive a reminder notice to renew your membership... don't be shy... take the leap! Step up from Basic membership to Sustaining membership. You won't regret it.

Anonymously yours,

a Born Again Sustainer.

P.S. Phone Membership Coordinator, Jenny O'Donnell, at 02-4473 6025 and take the plunge today.

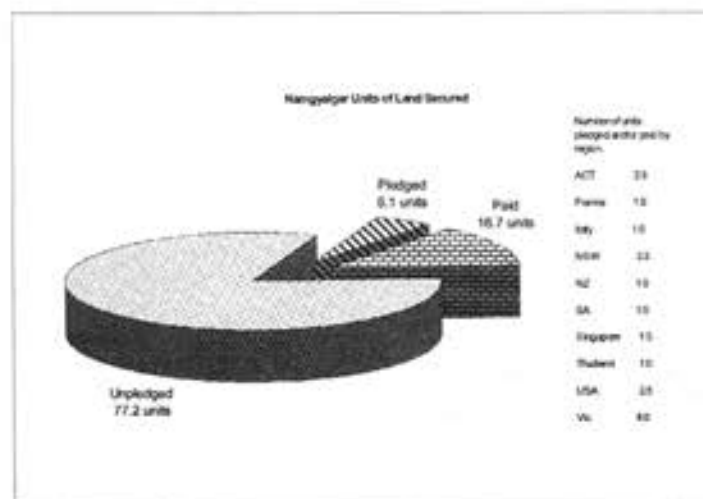
Eat Pie: 100 Steps to a Debt-Free Gar

The call for contributions to the Namgyalgar land fund went out only a few months ago, and the response coming back has been wonderful. Contributions have been coming from unexpected places reminding us we really are a global Vajra community: France, Italy and the USA; you might be far away, but you thought of us. Thank you for your generosity! And the Namgyalgar regions are helping chip away at that big pie of debt you can see in the chart below: Singapore, Thailand, New Zealand, Canberra, New South Wales and South Australia, fantastic! You've all been working to shrink the debt. Wonderful! Where is Japan you may ask? They must be holding back, waiting to make a dramatic contribution any time soon with the mighty Yen.

You can't look at these figures without being struck by an amazing fact: the contributions coming from Victoria are fantastic! Melbourne, Geelong and other Victorian Vajra communities are really getting excited by this project; look at the figures. Eight units of debt bought by Victoria; they just can't get enough of this debt buying thing! They love it! Clearly the idea of Namgyalgar fully owned by the Dzogchen Community, free of debt is exciting them. The Gar may be in NSW, but these guys are trying to have the border moved!

But hey all you other regions out there. Hey world. There is still a chance for more of you to get into this, there's still seventy-seven auspicious units of virtuous debt to available to buy. Don't let the Victorians buy it all...they're hungry for it so be quick! Rinpoche will be back at the Gar at the end of 2002. Imagine him stepping onto land that this maturing community of serious practitioners in the Oceania region have completely paid for, land that will then remain secure as a seat for the precious Dzogchen teachings for generations to come. Let's do it.

Chart by Ivan Barker. Article by Peter Phipps



Unpledged 77.2 units

Paid 16.7 units

Pledged 0.1 units



CALOUNDRA RETREAT, AUSTRALIA with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

There will be a five day retreat in Caloundra late January /February with dates to be confirmed.

Inquiries: Dammika Mills

Tel: 61 7 40382482

Email: bodhicit@iig.com.au

margarita days



Losar festivities with Rinpoche in Margarita

N.ZITZ

tashigar, north & south & south america



N.ZITZ

Easter In Margarita with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu March 22 - 26, 2002

Around seventy people from all over the world attended an Easter Retreat at Margarita Island. Rinpoche taught on Guruyoga, the Short Thun, what is Dzogchen, what is Transmission, the Medium Thun, various ways to give Direct Introduction, the Four Awarenesses, *khordé rushen*, what it means to be free, and how to behave and practice during everyday life.

In the morning Carmen Rivas taught the Dance of the Three Vajras for beginners, in the afternoon Laura Evangelisti led Yantra Yoga sessions and Cheh Goh explained practices for the newcomers.



Rinpoche and Mario D'Ambrosio seal the agreement

N.ZITZ

Historic Land Signing in Margarita February 8th, 2002 Tashigar North is Formed

Dear Vajra family:

We are happy to announce that on Friday 8th, 2002, Year of the Water Horse and an auspicious Dakini day, as well as the anniversary of Ayu Khandro, at 4:15PM Venezuelan time, in the Valley of Pedro Gonzalez, Margarita Island, we signed the acquisition of the land that gave birth to the first Summer Gar: Tashigar del Norte. Rinpoche and Rosa were present and also a group of forty-five practitioners from the International Community.

Before the ceremony, at 2:00PM, we had a Ganapuja. Then the notary arrived with the owner of the land, Mario D'Ambrosio. All signatures were taken and immediately after two Mandalas were set up and there was a wonderful Thun of the Vajra Dance led by Prima Mai and Adriana del Borgo.

The sunset appeared beautifully in the sky embracing all of us.

Many Tashi Deleks,

The Margarita Committee

***Note:

You can view pictures at:

http://homepage.mac.com/loekjehe/Tashigar_del_Norte/PhotoAlbum4.html

Amedex, Medical Insurance Abroad

Dear Vajra Family:

For those who may be moving to Margarita for living full-time, I have information on private medical insurance that may be helpful.

"Amedex" is a medical insurance company based in the US. It has a special plan for Ex-patriot Americans living the Caribbean and Latin America. It may have coverage for people from Canada, UK and other places as well - you would need to investigate this as it applied to your own situation. Amedex is the least expensive private insurance policy that I have been able to locate, and it specifically addresses the needs of this particular group. Features of note:

1. Coverage for Emergency Air Ambulance
2. A pre-approved hospital network in the US and most other countries in the Western Hemisphere. While you don't have to go to their "network" hospitals, the paperwork in their network is easier to manage, and there is a lower deductible limit. There IS an approved hospital on Isla Margarita! This is not an HMO program. Approved hospitals are good ones. There is a long list of excellent facilities in the US, Mexico, and most countries in Central and South America.
3. There is NO AGE LIMIT for coverage. Other ex-pat coverage I located have a cut-off age of 65.

If this is of interest to you, check further by visiting their web site:

<www.amedex.com>

Email: <amedex@amedex.com>

Telephone number in Florida: 305-275-1400

See you in Margarita!

Diane Campbell

New Hours at the Tashigar North Office:

Tuesday - Saturday, 9AM - 1PM

Tuesday - Thursday - Friday, 5PM - 7PM

The Dzogchen Community of Tashigar South invites you
to visit the web site: <http://www.tashigarsur.com.ar>



Vajra Dance: The Teacher Training Level Two

by Jean Mackintosh

The Vajra Dance Teacher Training Level Two took place on Margarita Island from March 8th to March 17th, 2002. Practitioners from France, Russia, Italy, Australia, Germany, Venezuela and Argentina and the US, took their places with the instructors Prima Mai and Adriana Dal Borgo.

It was a retreat of the integration of the elements. The wind keeps blowing and the sound of it constantly rustles the leaves of the coconut trees. The hot sun beats down on the Mandala until the late afternoon when it disappears into golden light over the sea and the sparkling lights of Pedro Gonzales begin to shine as the air cools down and darkness falls.

Integration with the water during the morning swim with Rinpoche as all float on their backs in the water and sing the Song of the Vajra while integrating with water and sky. Integration of movement of the air as the large black birds of prey, soar and glide over the Mandala with their wing tips stretched out catching the currents of the air as the white clouds float over the blue space beyond. Integration with the land as the sheep that look like goats and the chickens and the turkeys all walk on the earth, and try to walk on the Mandala to join the dance.

With our feet on the earth we gaze into space as we dance together on the Mandala in Margarita Island, while Rinpoche sings the Song of the Vajra, at the end of the Teacher Training Retreat.



First Baby Born in Tashigar del Norte

Melissa Metok Parrella Klietmann:
Parents: Gilberto Parrella & Monika Klietmann
Born in: Porlamar, Margarita Island, Venezuela
Time: 0:26AM
April 1st, 2002
Year of the Horse

New Gakyils

Buenos Aires, Argentina

The Dzogchen Community of Buenos Aires, Argentina, has a new Gakyil:

Blue: Marta Trillo
Beatriz Venturini
Red: Elena Gastaldi
Yellow: Santiago Perini

Cordoba, Argentina

A new gakyil of Cordoba, Argentina was elected March 24th, 2002:

Yellow: Miguel Elguero
Red: Paula De Raedemaeker
Blue: Sergio Oliva

Life at the Gar

by Gabriel Fogarty-Phipps

When I'm at the Gar I have heaps of fun with my friends and family and it's not for the entire holidays, so I can still catch up with my school mates.

I think the best part of the Gar is the exploring of the huge property. There is a big creek that runs across the place that you can walk along for ages with friends just talking in a completely isolated area with no one to tell you what to do.

Or you can just have heaps of space to your self and just chill. The saddle is the middle of the two hills that make the Gar. It is a very big slope and is great to lie down the on a starry night and look up at the sky.

Another great place is the snake pit. We've had two snake pits so far, but we need to find another one this year. The snake pit is just a little shelter we find, set up a canvas and move in some mattresses, tables and chairs. It's a great place to hang out with friends, tell stories or sleep and best of all it's a place to get away from your nagging, angry or just plain irritating parents.

The beach is the greatest place ever on a boiling summer's day at the Gar. There is good surf at some beaches, reefs with fish and sea horses at some beaches and some calm clean beaches with rock pools and sand bars. I think that the Community is really friendly.

poetry

HORROR-SCOPE

"DO YOU WANT THE GOOD
OR THE BAD NEWS FIRST?"

Sign: tumor
Ascendant: cancer
Good news:
your prayer with visualization
of suicide
to end your life of misery
had given birth:
you've got cancer!
Bad news:
It's a slow one,
you can last for 5 to 20 years
even longer
the doctors say

Meanwhile everybody in La France
sings of love

Birds glorifying another spring
screeching thru mystical rainy sky

Prevert (Pervert?) saying
It still rains over Breast & his
loved one

Jean Moreau oscillating between
Jill & Jim, singing
"We've met again & again
in circles of life
so let's stay together
this time, why split"

And Bressans, the French bard,
offering his
umbrella, a little piece of paradise
to a beautiful stranger
somewhere in Paris,
and hunting butterflies

Cocteau dreaming his impossible
love

for his sister within the
puzzling children's castle
Oh the stairs leading nowhere
thru the fumes of
just discovered opium

Rimbaud inviting his lover
for a voluptuous exotic trip
to the end of the world

Arteau opening his new theater

Alfred Jarry flying kites of his soul
with his mad brother
&

Maidens looking for unicorns
to sing their virginity
longing craving desiring
the love that
may never
be

Together with ugly Shrek
I say

People see me & say
"What a big stupid ugly Ogre!"
That's why I'll build
A wall around me

I'm better off
alone

(Mont de Marsan, 23.2.2002)

NOISY SILENCE

Discovering the state
I say
Poems are illusory
The state has
nothing to say

(Mont de Marsan, 23.2.2002)

NOISY SILENCE - II

Counting
uncountable mantras
Searching for
the impossible
I find the jewel
of my mind

My song just gasps
Refusing all metaphor
The State Has
Nothing
To Say

(Mont de Marsan, 23.2.2002)

by Zeljka Jovanovic

REFLECTIONS

How Far Does Thinking Go?

by Paul Bail

From an early age I had a passion for writing and reading. I used to compose stories and essays in my head, and revise them in my head, and then write them down. Even if I lost my paper copy, I could usually reproduce what I had written from memory, almost verbatim. I wish I still had such a memory.

Since my family lived in an isolated area, during the pre-television era, I was alone a lot, and passed the time by "conversing" with myself in my head. For the longest time I considered thoughts to be like speech. In speaking you can usually choose what to say and what not to say - except at moments when one is in the grip of strong emotion. When a person is strongly upset he or she can just blurt things out, without intending to - seemingly without control.

In a similar manner, I always considered "my" thoughts to be something I could control. In fact, in the religion I was raised in, we were taught one could sin by having certain thoughts, and one would have to confess that.

As I grew older and began reasoning more, I could see that a person's thoughts were not always under their control. Mentally ill people, who are tormented by obsessive thoughts, often want to shut the thoughts out of their mind, but cannot. People with insomnia toss and turn, unable to sleep, because they cannot stop their mind from generating thoughts. Many people are plagued by worrisome thoughts, thoughts of guilt, or sexual preoccupations that they feel they have little control over.

Eventually I encountered Buddhism and learned basic meditation practices. Through doing simple shamatha meditation I saw that these extreme examples - the mentally ill, the obsessed, the insomniacs - were not exceptional. The mind, "my" mind, was constantly churning out thoughts. In the midst of normal daily activity, most of these thoughts never reached the central spotlight of consciousness long enough for me to become actively aware of them.

These thoughts apparently arose on their own. "I" did not deliberately summon them or create them. I could try to resist them, I could judge them, I could refuse to elaborate upon them, or I could distract myself from them by trying to latch onto a competing train of thought. However, I could not simply will the thoughts out of existence. Although I could ordinarily prevent myself from speaking my thoughts, I could not prevent the thoughts from arising in the first place.

Whereas I had previously considered thoughts to be analogous to speech, I began to see that thoughts assumed many forms. Mental images were also thoughts. I have always loved watching movies, and cinema is primarily a language of images. In many of the greatest movies the verbal dialogue and narrative are less important than the flow of visually arresting images. As I sat in meditation images would frequently arise, unbidden, in the mind. I concluded that these images were also a form of thought.

Music too is a form of thought, which has some qualities both of speech and of image. Unlike conversational speech, music has no easily definable "meaning." But like images, music has an intuitive, unspeakable meaning. As a teenager I listened to a lot of popular music on the radio. And in daily life I would frequently realize that a song had begun playing "in my head," like a movie soundtrack, accompanying my actions. When I noticed the song, I would realize it reflected an emotional reaction that I was having, of which I had not yet become aware.

Music is a kind of energetic pattern, and as I sat in meditation I would sometimes be aware of energetic patterns in my body - muscular sensations and other kinds of internal sensations. These were not exactly images and couldn't really be defined as emotions either (although they might be the building blocks of emotions). They were more like music - like the deep rumbling bass tones that sometimes form the background of music.

Occasionally, in meditation, other kinds of sensations would arise - vivid smells or sounds that were not objectively present in the environment. These must be thoughts as well, since they apparently arose from the mind, not from the external environment. Again, they arose unbidden. They could not be reproduced at will, nor suppressed at will.

From these experiences I came to see that "thought" was not limited to verbal sequences of thought, but included everything that arose in the mind. I did not "own" thought, anymore than I owned the land I live on. Although I have a deed, my ownership is actually fictitious, since no one can "own" the earth.

Likewise, my ability to "control" thoughts was quite limited, like my ability to control the earth. I can plant seeds in my yard, but I cannot make them grow. If they do grow, I cannot extend their life past a season. I can build a house, but I cannot prevent an earthquake or tornado from tearing it down in a day, or the forces of decay from tearing it down over several decades.

But, if the verbalizations, images, and sensations that arise in the mind during meditation are "thoughts," what about the perceptions of the external world. Are these thoughts too? After all, perceptions arise in the mind. In the past I would have concluded that perceptions were not thoughts, since I could control my what I think "in my head," but I cannot control what I perceive in the outside world. However, once I realized how limited was my "control" over so-called thoughts in my head is, this distinction failed.

When I momentarily smell flowers, which are not present, in my meditation, this is a thought. When I get up from meditation and see a blue teacup, this is a thought too. "Teacup" is a verbal formula, so it's a thought. Even the non-verbal feeling that this is an object to use for drinking tea, is a form of thought, based on learning. It would be very difficult for me to view this object as if seeing it for the first time, as just some type of abstract form, without the sense of "teacup." The same applies to seeing it as blue. "Blue" is a verbal formula, used to summarize a variety of shades of color. I actually see a very specific, perhaps unique, color. But this color does not exist in any concrete way. I see the color because my physical body is patterned in such a way as to translate light wave frequencies into a subjective experience of color. A color-blind being, or a being that sees the world monochromatically, does not see a blue cup, as I do.

Since the seeing of blue is produced by my "mind" - the particular patterning of my body, its sense organs, and the way they produce mental experience - then could we not say that my seeing blue is a thought. Like the thoughts that arise in meditation, I have little control over it. It would be very difficult for me to "unsee" the cup as blue. At best, I could turn my head and look out the window, so as to not see the blue cup. But when I turn my head back I will see the cup as blue, not red.

As the years progress, my inquiry into the meaning of "thought" has led beyond what seemed, at first, self-evident. I have not reached the end of this inquiry yet. The thought comes to me: "Do you recognize yourself in any of this inquiry?" If any of these thoughts have crossed your mind, then "whose" thoughts are these? Like the sunshine, like the rain, like the earth, do they belong to anyone? Are these thoughts "in my head"? Or is that just a verbal formula I have learned? Who is thinking? And where does thought occur?

I am looking into the horizon, trying to find the place from which the sun arises. I keep traveling and traveling, but it never seems to get any closer. Nevertheless, the sun keeps shining, warming these aging joints. How wonderful!

"Don't Think Too Much!"

Following is a quote from the latest issue of the *Air & Space* magazine published by the Smithsonian Institute. It's from an article about learning to fly aerobatic air planes. The author talks about what her teacher told her when she first began learning to be a stunt pilot.

"Don't think too much", he warned. "Practice until there is no thought. There is no time to figure things out when you are seconds from the ground." Thoughts can be like static on the radio. I practiced until I replaced thought with [reaction], and that is how I became the airplane.

Courtesy of Jim Raschick,
Hawaiian Dzogchen Community

Dawn Word

by Jay Callahan

There is sometimes a moment in the dawn when one sees clearly the futility of all grasping - even grasping at one's primordial nature.

In the morning, the sun rises up from among the floating trees and its light falls back onto the houses where all the battered armies last night lay themselves finally down to sleep, exhausted by the pursuit of happiness. Now, in a million beds, everyday mind awakes again, and in the moment before the world pulls itself into its wonted shape, it pauses and stumbles, and casts around, formlessness seeking a shape, seeking a need, a desire, a reason. Yet there is none.

In the quiet light, everyday things - the face of an alarm clock, a shadow on the wall - suggest vast truths that still like fluid minnows slip away from all meaning. A shirt on a chair is a sorrow that dodges all explanation, all subterfuge, and goes straight to the empty heart. In the quiet light that is already beginning to take on time and place, still now, no hopes, no plans, no fears, can find a way to be. The hallway leads nowhere, and outside the motionless blinds, the roads lay stunned and uncertain. The things that had appeared so important last night....

In the distance, a truck motor accelerates, whining, and is gone. The face of the one lying beside you is that of a creature whose name and sort you cannot verify. If you reach out your hand, what will it touch? Will it grasp some matter, or go out for a thousand miles and lose itself?

In the quiet, morning wakes and mind gradually takes shape, drifts into a form sufficient for the day. A bird flies into the mirror and disappears; and from out of the arching need building in a million hearts, this world suddenly catches breath, chokes back a cry and launches itself once more into space.

In a million rooms, hands reach out, pulling, grasping, curled in pain, in exaltation. In the uncertain yellow light, the chair, the alarm clock, take on their common disguises, and in the next apartment, the television, in strident expectation, turns in to out. There is an airplane overhead. A bird chirps uncertain. A voice speaks in another room; "What I want..."

Passages

BORN:

Yael Tara was born to Babette Eid and Jesko on March 30th in Germany.

MARRIED:

Cris Galli and Barry Lee Maddock were married in California on November 2, 2001.



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INTERNATIONAL GAKYIL NEWS

BLUE: KARIN KOPPENSTEINER-EISENEGGER
RED: FABIO ANDRICO
YELLOW: STILL LOOKING

International Work Meeting of Gakyils Merigar August, 2002

The Merigar Gakyil and the International Gakyil are happy to invite all Gakyil Members from around the world; of small countries or the main Gars, to join a work meeting at Merigar, which will be held most probably after the end of the retreat held by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu at Merigar in August. The exact date will be announced. Also invited to join the meeting are members of the different Shang-Shung Institutes, ASIA and of the different publishing houses of the Dzogchen Community. There are certain topics that we all should discuss together, there are also proposals for workshops, for example "From the Community to Community; activating Karma yoga" that might be held at another day of the meeting. The main emphasis at the International Gakyil Work Meeting will be on the following themes:

- 1) Presence and future; preservation of the wealth of the Dzogchen Community including its entities
- 2) How to deal with the Data Bases of the Gakyils
- 3) Communication between Gakyils and all entities of the Communities like the Shang Shung Institute,

ASIA, the publishing houses
4) the Communities communication tools - "Mirror", the Newsletters, our different "NET" works, our Web sites - bottlenecks, financing.
5) Fundraising and presentation of balance sheets
6) Communicating by email - difficulties, advantages, alternatives

We would be very glad if the Work Meeting in August, 2002, at Merigar will be joined by many interested members of the Community. If you are a Gakyil member or a member of one of the entities like a publishing house and you want to do a little presentation regarding one of the topics above, please notify the International Gakyil, either Fabio Andrico (red) or Karin Koppensteiner-Eisenegger (blue) at least a month before the meeting, so that we can coordinate the event better.

*Karin Koppensteiner-Eisenegger
(blue IG)*

New Santi Maha Sangha Base Teachers

Following the Santi Maha Sangha Teachers Training held in February, 2002, on Margarita Island, ten Santi Maha Sangha Teachers for the Base of SMS where appointed by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu at the end of the Training. Rinpoche gave little indication regarding the invitation of a Santi Maha Sangha Base Teacher, but he indicated that regarding the invitation of one of these SMS Base Level Teachers; where there is a Gakyil, the Gakyil can invite one of these teachers. At places where there is no Gakyil, in order to invite practitioners one would have to ask the advice of Rinpoche. (Of course, in any case, it is always necessary to ask the advice of Rinpoche regarding the invitation of teachers).

Regarding the payment of these new SMS Base Teachers, Rinpoche stated that unlike the Yantra Yoga and Vajra Dance Teachers, where payment for retreats was stabilized some years ago, there will be no payment for SMS teachers. Rinpoche said "Until now, those who have taught SMS Base courses have received no payment and it will remain like this in the future. It is not like Yantra Yoga and Vajra Dance."

Here follows the list of the ten Santi Maha Sangha Base Teachers, as well as the Yantra Yoga and Vajra Dance instructors:

Karin Koppensteiner-Eisenegger (blue IG)

Diploma Recipients

Santi Maha Sangha Teachers

Constantino Albini
Jim Valby
Jakob Winkler
Grisha Mokhin
Igor Berkhin
Angie Gilbert
Adriano Clemente
Elise Stutchbury
Elias Capriles
Cheh Goh

Yantra Yoga Teachers

Fabio Andrico
Laura Evangelisti
Marisa Alonso
Paula Barry
Elke Glander
Lynn Sutherland
Giovanna Conti
Maurizio Galli
Jey Clark
John Renshaw
Oliver Leick

Vajra Dance Teachers

Prima Mai
Adriano dal Borgo
Margit Martinu
Lioudmila Kislichenko
Nelida Saporiti
Stoffelina Verdonk
Jean Mackintosh
Rita Renzi
Carmen Teresa Rivas
Anastasia McGhee

A N N O U N C I N G

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