

THE MIRROR

Newspaper of the International Dzogchen Community

May/June 2002 • Issue No. 61



Group photo of NYC Retreat

ATSUKO OZeki

New York, New York

Retreat with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu
Synod Hall at St. John the Divine Cathedral, New York City

June 10-16, 2002

by Laurie Bauer

Tsegylgar and the local New York City Community was pleased to host Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche in June on the grounds of Saint John the Divine, the largest Gothic Cathedral in North America. St. John the Divine has also hosted His Holiness the Dalai Lama on more than one occasion.

The week long retreat actually took place in the more cozy Synod Hall, set between the Cathedral court yard sculpture gardens and

primary school. Inside, surrounded by the hand carved painted woodwork, it felt a bit more like a Gonpa. The wonderful acoustics and unique history of the place made for an agreeable atmosphere for practice and teachings.

The evenings had some interesting programs scheduled, such as a talk on Tibetan Astrology with Dr. Phuntsog Wangmo, Chöd practice and other practice explanations and practices with Jim Valby, wonder-

ful music with Community member Mariano Gil and friends, and an Auction/Party to support the activities of Tsegylgar.

Rinpoche was energetic and fresh from his time at Tsegylgar's retreat land in Buckland, Massachusetts. His teachings, as always, gave so much to both new and old students alike. The precious Dzogchen Teachings, for me, are many layered. One's capacity and ripeness can reveal the fruit of real-

ization in time. The teachings nourish my own practice by validating and giving confidence to the practice of awareness in all forms, the continuation of presence and integration of Guru Yoga in daily life. Rinpoche said, "You don't need to go to a special place always - you can practice in any moment this way."

As we had a week long retreat, there was time for Rinpoche to give advice and instruction on many

areas, such as the practice of the night, Dream Yoga, balancing and harmonizing our energies, etc. These important teachings seemed especially appropriate and healing in New York City because of this difficult time in our world.

Many thanks to Ed Goldberg and all who worked to help things run very smoothly for the some 300 or more people who attended.



Rinpoche's retreat cabin at Khundroling

ATSUKO OZeki

Coming Home to Meet the Master

by Malcolm Smith

On winding roads woven among the hills around Conway, Buckland and Ashfield, we traveled to the land every day, in the rain, in the sun, with clouds dancing on the hills, the trees bursting into leaf, birds singing joyously, celebrating their new arrival.

The first afternoon we went up to join Rinpoche for Karma Yoga. I met Rinpoche while he was walking to take a swim in the pond. After we exchanged greetings, he suggested that we could go swimming, saying of the pond, "I checked earlier, it is not so cold, it's like Margarita."

I replied "Yes, but it is cold in the middle."

Rinpoche laughed and smiled broadly, saying, "Do you have courage to go in?"

I said, "Of course." And so we went swimming. But not for very long. The water, warm in the shallows, proved to be very cold. So, as Rinpoche said to some people who had just arrived, "We escaped from the water because it is very cold."

Rinpoche went in again, joined by Adriana and others, who all con-

fessed that this spring fed pond was very cold. I declined a second swim, but videotaped them swimming. The Karma Yoga Retreat thus began with a brisk swim in a spring fed pond.

Our rhythm was set to practice in the morning, attending the Dance course led by Adriana, or Yantra, led by Fabio. In the afternoon, piling into our vehicles, driving to the land bringing food and drink to enjoy around the nightly fire we had at the site of the newly consecrated Stupa after three or four hours of hard labor which Rinpoche led us in with gusto and great enthusiasm.

On the day of the Stupa consecration, we had walked with Rinpoche up the hill to the mandala, where Rinpoche sat by the mandala and explained to us how he received his dreams there, what he had seen, visions of leaping gings*, and many people dancing on the mandala, and began to explain to us that he wished that we would remove the dead and dying pine trees, and the dead wood under them, in order to curtail negative

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This is a transcript of the talk given by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu on May 11th at Shang-Shung Institute, Conway, Massachusetts and was transmitted as a public web cast on the internet to listeners all over the world.

I want to say hello to everybody, near and far, and also to the people of the Dzogchen Community. I am here with Shang-Shung Institute of America, and Dzogchen Community people, and for this reason I want to introduce and explain a little about Shang-Shung Institute.

When we say Shang-Shung Institute, first of all, this name Shang Shung is something very ancient and connected with Tibetan history. The history of Tibet is always explained that there were originally six brothers and these six brothers developed each part of Tibet, the population of West Tibet, Central Tibet, East Tibet, North and South, all the people. This Tibetan history is very universal. That means that in the very ancient time, one of these six brothers was in West Tibet, and that ethnic population is sometimes called *dra* or *khyung*, but they are the same population. And there were other populations called *dong*, *se*, etc.; there are also five others, but between all these, the population of *dra* or *khyung* was most developed. Why was this so? It was because in West Tibet there was a teacher, in the pre-Buddhist period, who taught a teaching and tradition which is called ancient Bön. When this teaching started this teacher invented a kind of writing and this writing is what the population used. That population is called *khyung* in more modern Tibetan language, but in the language of West Tibet it is called Shung. This is the original population, so when we say Shang Shung, *shung* means *khyung* and *khyung* means Garuda or eagle.

In that ancient religion taught by the teacher Tonpa Shenrab, they very much honored the figure of Garuda. Garuda is considered a symbol of energy. At that period, the knowledge of the people, and how they considered the five elements, etc., is different from the later Buddhist tradition. For example, in the Buddhist tradition when we say five elements we say space, earth, water, fire, and air. These are the five elements. Particularly earth, water, fire and air; these are the four active elements. That is diffused also in Buddhism and Tantrism, in Indian tradition, in Chinese tradition, they all viewed them in that way.

Ancient Bönpo culture and knowledge is a little different; Bön and Bönpo still exist today, inside and outside of Tibet. Today the tradition of Bön is modern Bön, and modern Bön means that they developed and increased their knowledge from Buddhism. Sometimes Bön seems like a modified form of Buddhism. Therefore it doesn't correspond to ancient Bön. What I am speaking of is ancient Bön, from very, very ancient times.

For example, when they present the four elements they present four figures of animals. Why? Because animals have life and move and act; not like earth or water. Earth and water are elements, even material, but do not act like an animal. Animals are symbols.

When they present the earth element in Bön, they use the figure of lion, because for Tibetans versus other people, the idea of lion is a little different. In Tibet we say *kang seng*, *kang seng* means lion of snows. We believe that the snow

but for having continuation of the presence of a flame. This is something like a support of energy. If we don't have this possibility then we use at least incense. Incense is also for smell, but when we are doing a rite of guardians or something, it is

dependence. For that reason, if you have some problem, physically, some illness, etc., the ancient Bönpos know that there are some provocations, there is something wrong with the outer elements and the individual elements. Then they do something to correct this so the outer and inner elements work in a more perfect way.

For example, if you have an illness or some disease related to the *naga* class - the *naga* class is the class of beings of water - then generally what do you do when you have this kind of illness? You take medicine, go to a doctor, and try to do something in that way. But the ancient Bönpos didn't treat the illness in this way. They prepared medicine for the person, for the illness, but this medicine was not for the person who has the illness but for the *naga*, because they believed that the *naga* has the problem and you live in that related dimension and so therefore you also have that problem. If you really

want to have no problem and overcome this problem, you must first cure the *naga*. You prepare this medicine and bring it to some spring where there is a *naga*, you do a *puja* of *naga* and put this medicine in water; then the person can overcome the illness.

It seems strange, but ancient Bönpo had very high knowledge of energy and how it is related to the individual and their dimension. This is the main point of ancient Bönpo. Also within ancient Bönpo there are many kinds; in some kinds of ancient Bönpo they don't believe rebirth exists, for example. They consider that there is only this life. But even if they believe only in this life, they studied and worked to have good health, good prosperity, good conditions for everything related to subject and object; to relationship.

It is really important that we know how it was in ancient culture; that means the culture, history and knowledge. Shang Shung is something very ancient, it is nearly 4000 years old now. It more or less corresponds to the origin of Chinese and Indian history; more or less the same moment. Modern Tibetans, particularly Buddhists, believe very much in India as the birthplace of Buddha Shakyamuni. They believed that when Buddhism was introduced from India to Tibet that this was the source of Tibetan culture. That means that we are really ignorant of the origin of Tibetan culture. That is why many people don't know the value of Tibetan history and culture and don't consider it very much.

I discovered this when I started to work in the University. All the professors considered that Tibetan culture came from India or China. For me it seemed a little strange. Also all the teachers and Tibetan scholars taught more or less in this way. I did not have much of an idea. But since that time, I started to do

research and I read many ancient Bönpo books. In Tibet we didn't read Bönpo books because we received a Buddhist education. I had heard some lamas say when I was very young we should not read Bönpo books or otherwise you could have problems, some illness or pain, in your head. So I believed it, and we did not have much occasion to read Bönpo books since we were living in a Buddhist dimension.

When I arrived in Italy I worked in a library where there were so many books, particularly Professor Tucci's collection, and there were a big quantity of ancient handwritten Bönpo books. I really wanted to know what the source of Tibetan history and culture was, so one day I was reading an old handwritten Bönpo book and had a very strong pain in my head. I thought maybe that story was true and for almost one week I didn't read anymore Bönpo books. Then one day I was reading a Tibetan Medical text, also a very old handwritten book, and after I opened and was reading it for one or two hours, I had the same pain. I then discovered it was not because the book was Bönpo, but because it was an old book. It had a very strong smell. Then later I read more and more of these books and I understood many things; particularly about modern and ancient Bönpo. Ancient Bönpo is very, very important for the understanding of the origin of Tibetan culture and history.

There was a teacher called Tonpa Shenrab and his birth year was the year of wood mouse. When we study that time and since that time, we can understand how many years have really passed by comparing many books of ancient Bönpo history to the period of Buddhism and later. Then it's easier to understand how many years have passed. I also understood why when we start the cycle of six years, why we always start with the year of the wood mouse. We start there because it is the birth year of Tonpa Shenrab. Tonpa Shenrab invented the writing of Shang Shung. Before this writing it didn't exist. When we put together all the teachings of Tonpa Shenrab, we discover that he taught many things; calculation of astrology, and medicine. Tonpa Shenrab put everything into that language. This language or writing is called the language of Shang Shung. The language and writing is called *mar*. *Mar* means divine, coming from the sky, very holy writing, divine writing.

When we go ahead through history, there are many Shang Shung kings, very, very famous kings, who used this writing. The culture, knowledge and teaching of Tonpa Shenrab became very strong. The Shang Shung kings lived in West Tibet, near Shang Shung, and very near Mt. Kailash. Mt. Kailash is the source of all the four rivers in India like the Ganges, like Pramaputra, which go down through Central Tibet and from Assam and arrive in India. That means it is a very, very high place; not so easy for everybody. The Shang Shung people at that period were mostly nomads who had no houses and made houses with dried animal or yak skin. The skin was not worked smooth but was dried, and then they made houses using

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ATSUKO OZUE

History of Tibetan Culture

May 11th, 2002

Tsegyalgar/Shang-Shung Institute
Conway, Massachusetts, USA

lion really exists, the white lion on the high mountain, like Everest, like Mt. Kailash, something like this. So the lion is a being living on the mountain, the high mountain. Why do high mountains like Everest exist? Because they are a very condensed earth element; like rocks, very hard. That's why they are very high. In this dimension lives a being called the lion; the lion is an animal moving in that dimension. Elements are moving and acting and that is the symbol.

When they present the fire element they present it as Garuda, an eagle. It is called a Garuda of fire. In general, when we draw a figure of Garuda in the ancient style, there are always flames and Garuda manifests in flames and fire. You can also find some ancient objects of Tibet, for example, which are called *thogchag*, people coming from sky, etc. In any case, they are like the figure of Garuda. Today they make many new *thogchags*, like in Nepal, and they say they are ancient and sell them to tourists. There are really ancient *thogchag*, Garuda, and if you observe well many ancient Garudas, they are presented in flames, in fire.

If you observe well in one of my books on the ancient history of Tibet, I put two or three copies of ancient and authentic *thogchag*. This is how they presented Garuda in the beginning; later how they presented it is not the same. More recently they present the Garuda in a more Indian style. The ancient Garuda is not that way. It is very interesting that the Garuda is always presented as a symbol of fire, because that means a symbol of energy. Fire is always presented like a symbol of energy.

For example, when we are doing practices in a very simple way, like guardian practice, and we make contact with local guardians, we need at least a lighted candle or butter lamp. This is not for light,

not only for smell but for the presence of fire. This is very important.

So the name of this ethnic population is called Shung, and they are considered a powerful people. They are believed to have much power; spiritual power and maybe also physical power.

When the elements were presented in ancient times, like the water element, then they presented the dragon. The dragon has four legs and flies in space, something like that, but in the real sense it is an animal of water. In the dimension of water there is this animal moving and living. That represents the water element.

Then there is the symbol of the air element which is represented by the tiger. Why the tiger? Because tigers live in the forest and the forest is made up of many trees. Also in astrology when we represent the element of air, we say wood. Wood does not mean dry wood, but it means wood which has life. Why do we use wood? Because it means if there is a tree, even if it is an old tree, the tree is always progressing and moving with that element of air. So this is the air element.

Some scholars, when they understand just a little about this, they say that Garuda is the air element because it is flying in the sky, and the tiger is the fire element because it has a figure like flames, but it is not that way. This is how ancient Bön presented the elements, because the knowledge and understanding of the ancient Bönpos is very different than actual Bönpos. Their main point is not like a modern Bönpo; realization, illumination, these are from the Buddhist tradition. Their main study and knowledge is how human beings are related to their dimension, because the human being has five elements and where that person lives in that dimension there are also five elements, and how they are related is something like inter-

some wood and the skins and the houses became very dry and remained. That is how they lived.

In the winter time they lived in caves, like in places like Khyunglung, the valley of Garuda. Khyunglung is the capital of many kings of Shang Shung. Also there was this famous place of Purang; if you go to these places there are mountains full of holes, and the people lived in these places in the winter time, but not in the summer



Khyunglung

MUNASARI

time. They went everywhere by horse and conquered every place around; they were very strong people. There had been eighteen very famous kings of Shang Shung and many others. All these periods developed this tradition of Bön spiritual teachings and culture related with the teachings of Tonpa Shenrab.

Then if we go ahead, the kingdom of Tibet developed. In ancient times when we speak of the eighteen famous Shang Shung kings, Tibet didn't yet exist. The country that is now Tibet, like Central Tibet and Eastern Tibet, were all different kinds of tribes. They were less developed than the Shang Shung region because they had no writing, and had only a slowly developing spiritual culture. Some priests of Bönpo arrived from Shang Shung to Central Tibet.

Tonpa Shenrab arrived in South Tibet and developed it a little, but not like in Shang Shung.

Later there was Nyatri Tsenpo, the first Tibetan king. In the Tibetan language *nape* means here, and *tri* means throne; the king is put here with many people and is honored. But this is not the real translation. *Nyatri* is really *nyagri* and is not the Tibetan language but the Shang Shung language. Also *tri* in Tibetan is throne, honored people sit on a high throne, and this is the Tibetan language, not Shang Shung.

In the Shang Shung language *tri* means divine, like a divinity or god.

Later, for that reason, most Tibetan kings have the name *tri*. Why do they have the name *tri*? Because when the Tibetan kingdom developed it was very small compared to Shang Shung, which was very large and powerful in that period. The Tibetan kings had a relationship with Shang Shung; many times they asked for some princesses and took them and made a relationship. Then Shang Shung protected them and also didn't disturb them.

Then there was the famous king, Songtsen Gampo. There were thirty generations of kings, some people say thirty-two or thirty-one, but in the real sense if we study them one by one, it seems there were thirty-three kings. Through all this period of time they were governed by the Bön tradition of Shang Shung. In Tibet, all these kings still had no Tibetan writing, but they used Shang Shung writing in the Tibetan language. In that way they diffused the Bönpo tradition all over and Tibet slowly developed. Then this famous king Songtsen Gampo, the Dharma King, said, "We need to have a Tibetan written language". If you study Tibetan history well, there are many histories which say Tibet needed a writ-

ten language. In general, people say the Tibetan written language didn't exist, so for that reason Songtsen Gampo said Tibet needed to create one, but it was not that way. They already had the written language of Shang Shung, and Shang Shung language was called *mar*. *Mar chen* and *mar chung*, means big and small *mar*. Small *mar* is written in a more easy way, like cursive. When we write letters like this [demonstrates] and this

was developed very much in Tibet. Also they used *mar chen*, the bigger writing. Then slowly, slowly this writing and language developed into a Tibetan written language; always using the tradition and grammatical system of Shang Shung.

Songtsen Gampo decided to create a new writing, Tibetan writing, so for that reason he sent his minister Thonmi Sambhota to India to study Indian language and Thonmi Sambhota went India and studied Sanskrit and went back into Tibet and created Tibetan writing called *uchen*. Today in Tibet we have two ways of writing; *uchen* and *umed*. *Uchen* means there is a head when we are writing and *umed* means without a head, like the cursive system. In India, at that period, *dewa nagari* writing was very diffused, so Thonmi Sambhota took example from this *devanagari* writing and created the Tibetan alphabet. Since that time we have Tibetan writing.

Thonmi Sambhota also invented a new grammatical system. Taking example from Sanskrit, this grammatical system is called *sumtag*. For example, we have a very famous collection of books called the Tunhuang collection. During the period of the Tibetan kings books were collected; many, many Chinese and Tibetan books. This place, Tunhuang, was found near Chinghai in the desert, a region which for many centuries went under sand which is why it remained for many years, and after some years the sand changed from the wind and Tunhuang was discovered, along with a library of many Tibetan and Chinese books. These books and documents became very famous.

When we read the documents of Tunhuang, we can see that an Indian style of writing was used in that period, the *devanagari* system, which was already created and developed. Today the Tibetan writing in the documents

from the Tunhuang period does not correspond with new Tibetan grammar. Much of the writing still has the influence of Shang Shung grammar. For that reason, some Chinese and Western scholars say that this Tibetan grammar, *sumtag*, was not created by Thonmi Sambhota. When asked why, they say the Tunhuang documents do not correspond. That is not true. Thonmi Sambhota already created *sumtag* and it influenced Tibetan grammar very much; in Tibet they already had that knowledge and had used the Shang Shung system for many years.

Then Buddhist teaching increased in Tibet from the famous Buddhist king, Songtsen Gampo. Why was Songtsen Gampo so interested to increase Buddhism in Tibet? There already was the Bön tradition, not only from Songtsen Gampo, but from the eighth king of Nagche Sempo, a very famous king called Trigum Tsenpo. Also later, two or three kings tried to make a kind of revolution against Shang Shung because they were like a kingdom of Tibet and under the shadow of Shang Shung. Shang Shung was bigger and more powerful, so they were not satisfied. The reason was not only the political power of Shang Shung, but the spiritual

The Future of Merigar Two

An interview with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

by Rosa and Yuchen Namkhai

... It is the day after the end of the Longde retreat and we are with Rinpoche in the beautiful garden at Gadeling. Immersed in that gentle scene and still feeling the sense of beatitude that usually comes after a retreat, we take full pleasure in the joy of the moment. Even though we do not want to interrupt this magic moment with questions, we feel that it is important to do so in view of the future projects for the Gar and so we take advantage of such an auspicious opportunity ...

Question: We know that you have been cultivating a dream for Merigar 2 for several years. Could you let us know something about this? How was this project born?

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu: OK! At first we didn't have a precise idea of what we should do with Merigar 2. But with the passage of time and knowing the place and our needs better, I worked out a complete project. Now I will explain it to you.

First of all, we can say that there are different buildings in the Gar: a house on the hill and another lower down together with other small buildings that are in poor condition. I thought of using all these buildings not only for people of the Community but also to make them available to people in general. Knowing that the Shang-Shung Institute is dedicated to the preservation and continuation of Tibetan culture, and above all Tibetan medicine, I think that the Istituto could promote this by making available some of the curative methods to all those who are interested. So I thought that at Merigar 2 we could organize a place for curative treatments, a health center, or, I don't know what to call it, that would be of interest to everyone.

First I want to talk about the newer building that has been used by the Institute, Shang Shung Editions and the carpentry shop. In the future, the Institute and Shang Shung Editions will move to the 'capannone' (the big barn) where the library is, even though there isn't enough space at the moment. For this reason we will build a new building in front of and linked to the existing one. This will give then sufficient space.

As for the carpentry shop, we can construct a barn for this too which will be at the entry to Merigar 2 as soon as there is an open space available. I think that this will be fine and very convenient for working. In this case the newer house on the hill will be empty. This building has two floors and the project provides for:

- on the upper floor we will create accommodation for guests of the community and the Shang -Shung Institute. This accommodation could also be used for guests of the "Good Health" project. In general and according to the circumstances, this accommodation could be used by everyone.

- on the lower floor, since it is quite dry, bright and in good condition, we thought it could be used to house old practitioners who gradually need help and company because they are alone and guarantee them a pleasant condition of life. Talking about the building lower down the hill which is the main building (it's bigger and older), it consists of two floors:

- on the upper floor there is: part of

the building used by Migmar's family, a small room for a single person, a women's dormitory and a terrace. We thought to cover the terrace and use it as a canteen and restructure the old connecting outdoor oven to use as a store-room for the canteen. An external flight of stairs will connect the upper and lower floors.

- on the lower floor there is: a men's dormitory which will be kept and eventually improved and three adjacent rooms. The first two will be used by the "Good Health" project for various treatments that we will offer: massage (Kunye), therapeutic baths (Lum), moxibustion, etc. The third room will be used as an administrative office for the health center. A veranda will be built outside in transparent material to create space for massages and outdoor activities. In front of the main house (the older, bigger house) there are another two buildings in poor condition. The first, which is larger, has only one floor. The second, even though it is smaller, has two floors and is built of stone. The first building will be transformed into two small apartments to be used privately by guests of the health center. The second building will be restructured so that there will be two bathrooms and a laundry on the lower floor while there will be a medicine room, a small drying room for medicinal plants and whatever is necessary for treatments on the upper floor. The whole complex will have gardens and a green area. There are also plans for a new private road linking Merigar with Merigar 2 that will be in the west and unite the two Gars creating a common complex like a residential park. Regarding the "Good Health" project, this will involve creating suitable structures such as: saunas, baths for therapeutic cures, bathrooms and dressing rooms, spaces for massage. The whole project has already been designed by our architects and engineers down to the smallest detail.

Coming back to speak about one of the treatments, the Lum baths, we can say that there are two ways to do them. The first method simply consists in putting medicinal plants directly into the bath. Another method requires careful preparation of specific medicines linked to the different natures and humors, for example Lung, Tripa and Peken. The ingredients for the medicine are prepared first of all by grinding the plants then fermenting them and finally preserving them in containers. Once the bath is prepared, the body of the patient is covered entirely in such a way that the vapor cannot escape.

In these days I am writing some essential instructions about the preparation of the ingredients, their availability and use so that we will have complete autonomy in carrying out these activities. Regarding the massage, for some time now the Shang -Shung Institute has been giving preparatory courses in Kunye massage and for this there are already several qualified people who are able to be active in this sector and to also take care of the baths and the preparations. Besides massage, we will be able to offer very effective treatments of moxibustion. There are four main traditional methods used: they pass from real burning, for which it is indispensable

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power. In Tibet at that time there was no other religion, only Bön. All Bönpo comes from Shang Shung, particularly the priests of Shang Shung. The priests had a lot of power, so the Tibetan kings couldn't rule very well because most of the power was governed by the priests. The others didn't like this and sometimes they expelled the Shang Shung priests, and also the Bönpo tradition and Trigung Sempo. They didn't succeed. Maybe for ten or twenty years they succeeded to do that, but later they lost. Why did they lose? Because there was no culture for governing, only the Bön tradition and Bön was related to Shang Shung.

Songtsen Gampo was very clever and discovered that many kings and many generations didn't succeed, so he really wanted to work in a different way. Firstly, so as not to create a problem with Shang Shung because at the time of Songtsen Gampo Shang Shung was powerful, he gave his sister to the Shang Shung king. Her name was Semarkar, and then later he took his first wife from Shang Shung. The princess of Shang Shung was called Lithigmen. This is not how it is explained in Buddhist history of Tibetan kings; his first wife did not exist all because they didn't know about her. The historians explained it in a very wonderful way saying that Songtsen Gampo is Avalokiteshvara, a bodhisattva manifestation, and when he was thirteen years old he took his first wife from Nepal to create a relationship with Indian culture and religion and then he took a Chinese wife from China and she was an emanation of white and green Tara. It's very nice story but doesn't correspond very much with history. When we speak of history we must speak of what the real condition is, the real situation. Of course we can consider that Songtsen Gampo is Avalokiteshvara, his teachings are wonderful, but history is not that way.

So Songtsen Gampo took his wife from Shang Shung and his second wife from South Tibet, and then maybe wives from Nepal and China, but when he took a Chinese wife he was quite old and took her for political reasons and reasons of Buddhist introduction. Why was he interested in Buddhism? He was interested because he wanted to create a new spiritual path and culture that was no longer dependent on Shang Shung. That is political, not spiritual.

Songtsen Gampo succeeded and Buddhism became very strong in Tibet. In the end, the last Shang Shung king called Ligmikya of Khyunglung, was going to Sumba, near Chinghai Province, where there was a kingdom under the protection of Shang Shung. So Songtsen Gampo was going there to visit. When he was on his way there from Shang Shung, someone informed Tibet and history says that his sister was also informed, and then Songtsen Gampo, with his ministers and soldiers, went on the road and murdered the king of Shang Shung. From that time, Shang Shung was ruled by Songtsen Gampo from Tibet and Shang Shung became a part of Tibet, big Tibet. Before there was big Shang Shung and small Tibet, so all the generations of the six brothers were later called Tibetans.

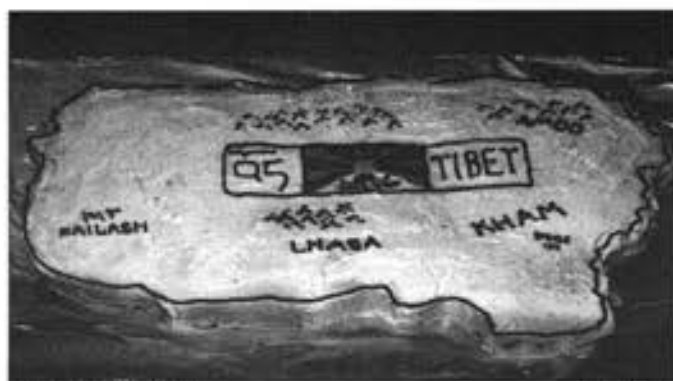
So you see how the history of Tibet is. Later, after Songtsen Gampo, there were more and more kings who were stronger and stronger and did not give much space to the Bönpo tradition. Even though they did not give much space and freedom to the Bönpo tradition, the Tibetans felt Bönpo was something important and powerful and they were also afraid. Since the first Tibetan king the royal priest was Bönpo, not Buddhist. Later when Songtsen Gampo increased Buddhism, the royal priest always remained Bönpo. Why? Because otherwise they would receive some negativities. In ancient times when Tibetan kings named their daughters and sons, they did a purification rite called *tsentru*. So all this should be done by a Bönpo priest, not Buddhist. The famous kings like Songtsen Gampo or Trisong Detsen, Dharma kings - very, very important kings - sometimes had two Bönpo priests. They did pujas for the king, his family, and gave names and did purification rites. For that reason, the priest gave names to all the Tibetan kings in the Shang Shung language, not the Tibetan language.

For example, with ancient Tibetan kings we say *leg trug*, *leg* is six legs, then we also say *asho leg*, *tosho leg*, many, many legs means good, but *asho*, *tisho*, *desho*, have no meaning in Tibetan. They have meaning in the Shang Shung language. Sometimes names with the sky or air element, wind, some of these names are very similar to the Native American names and also their pujas, etc.

The last Tibetan king, who was considered a bad Tibetan king, also had a Bönpo royal priest. For that reason he also gave names in a different way, not in the Tibetan language.

So, it went ahead that way and many Tibetan kings protected Buddhism and the Buddhist community increased very much. For example, before the last Tibetan king there were two brothers and the younger brother was the king. In general, if there are two brothers,

the elder is the king, but the Tibetans observed these two brothers and the elder brother had a very bad attitude. He did not pay respect to the Sangha, the monks, the monasteries; he was not a spiritual person. For example, he liked hunting very much, something like this. The younger brother was very spiritual, so they chose the younger one. Of course, when they chose the younger brother, the elder was very upset but couldn't do very much. The younger brother, for me,



Anniversary cake for SSJ

ATSUNO GIZUKI

exaggerated honoring Buddhist monks and monasteries too much. It was like everything in his kingdom was serving the monasteries. So the monasteries increased fantastically and he was very famous. Tri Ralpa was his name. At the end, the elder brother and some ministers who were more in the Bönpo tradition killed the king. After that the elder brother became the king. Of course, he immediately tried to destroy monasteries, etc., and then he was called a bad king. Everybody considered him a bad king and his name was Langdarma; long means wild bull, something like this, there is not much control. His real name was not Langdarma, but most Tibetans don't know his real name in the Shang Shung language. So from that time, there have been no more Tibetan kings and Tibet separated and divided and was not unified. Tibet became very weak.

In the time of King Tri Ralpa, he very strongly supported Buddhism. In that period Tibet had very much military power, not like today. If we say this today, it seems ridiculous. The Chinese said when they arrived in Tibet the population was 3 million people. Tibetans say there were at least 6 million, but the Chinese say 3 million. In the period of the last Tibetan king they say there was a population of 13 million. That is what the Chinese say officially. So why did the population diminish? In general population always increases but in Tibet it diminished. Later, Tibet was governed more by monasteries, first Sakyapa, Drigungpa, Phagmodrupa, all these lamas, they were the teachers of Chinese emperors, and the Chinese emperors were honored and helped to govern Tibet. When they governed Tibet they increased the monasteries and monks. When you have a seat, a big monastery and many monks, you have a kind of power. Particularly when there are many schools and monasteries, whoever has more monks has more power. It is normal that it becomes more important. For that reason, everyone was interested in having more monks. When one considers it that way, then others do the same way to keep and increase their potentiality. Then the period started of monasteries with many, many monks. In Tibet in ancient times there were no big monasteries like in recent times. Also, it was easier in Tibet in that period because if you were a lay person in the countryside, you had to work very hard and do service to the government and pay the government. There were many problems and not such an easy life. But if you were a monk, you went into the monastery to live, particularly in the Gelugpa tradition, they were considered state monasteries and the government was paying. You lived there, if you liked you studied a little, otherwise you prayed a little, and you lived. It was an easy life. For that reason, everyone went to the monastery to live and they became crowded. Before the Chinese revolution in the Drepung monastery, for example, there were more than 10,000 monks.

Monks don't multiply the population. So if all the males go into the monastery and the females are also trying to be nuns, who increases the population? Instead of increasing it diminishes that way. Then it diminished and in the end there were possibly only 6 million.

These are our mistakes. People believe that being a monk and living in a monastery is a spiritual life; it's fantastic. Maybe if the monk is really living a spiritual life and is a fantastic monk, yes. Even if there is no population it doesn't matter. It's much better everybody realizes, no? But it's not that way. It's only diminishing the population. The Dharma teaching is not like that; it is not necessary you become a monk. You can also be a lay person and do practice. You can realize. But in Tibet we have this attitude very, very strongly.

I remember when I was quite young before I went to Italy and was in Sikkim working in the development office, the Gyalwa Karmapa, a famous lama who was a monk and considered being a monk very important,

sent me a letter. He said I should come to Rumtek and become a monk. He ordered me to become a monk and said I must come. I didn't go because I had a job and I had to go to the office. I said I was sorry, but in this moment I could not come because I had no time. In general I didn't really feel to be a

monk, I had no idea to do that. Later, after a few weeks, he sent a monk with a letter and then I couldn't say that I didn't want and couldn't go to see the Karmapa. So then I went with this monk. I arrived at the Karmapa's place and we discussed and he said you must become a monk and I said I had no idea to become a monk. If I lived in Tibet, in a monastery, something like before when I was studying,

I would have liked to be a monk, because there were many monks. That would have been fine. But today I am living here, I don't know the future, where I will go, where I will live. I can't be a monk. If I want really seriously to be a monk, then I should do confession every fifteen days, in the normal way, but that is not possible.

Then he said it was very important because I was a very important reincarnation and I would have more possibility to benefit others. I negated that and said that is not true because if I want to benefit others, I do not have to be a monk. For example in Mahayana we have important Bodhisattvas like Manjushri, Avalokiteshvara, and they are not monks. They made very

Coming Home, continued from page 1

influences harbored by the excessive population of white pines on the Tsegylgar land.

When Karma Yoga began formally with him, he guided us in picking out trees until he was sure we understood what trees to take and which trees to leave.

Rinpoche guided the activity of Karma Yoga every day after that, stepping in with branch cutters to help strip the trees, sitting by the side overseeing the activity of felling trees.

During this time we also managed to finish the Tsan Khar, the Guardian Cabin, which slowly emerged out of the dense and thick copse of trees as we removed trees and felled wood from all around it. The feelings we developed were of great friendship with, and love of one another, where old bonds were strengthened and new ones were forged, everyone chipping in so we could finish the cabin before the end of Rinpoche's retreat.

It was a time of great sharing, older students passing on what they knew of the Community and the history of the land, newer students bringing in the brightness of new possibility and desire to bring the Community to new levels of development.

During this time, we also had two separate programs, Vajra Dance led by Adriana dal Borgo, and Yantra Yoga, led by Fabio Andrico. Seventeen days of practice, integration and collaboration.

After the work was done, many of us were newly introduced the joy of sampling Brunello, a wine from near Merigar of which Rinpoche is exceptionally fond. While we prepared food and shared music, with Michael Katz, Jim Valby and Lynn Newdome offering impromptu performances for Rinpoche and our pleasure, many of us sat simply, integrating with the bonfire.

great benefits. It is not necessary to be a monk. So we had a big discussion and in the end he accepted and understood I didn't want to be a monk.

Still, when I left for Italy and went to see the Karmapa, he gave me a very nice statue of Buddha, ancient and very, very nice, and he told me when he gave me the statue, "I want to give you this statue to remind you that one day you will become a monk." Then I said, "I promise that if one day I want to become a monk and take a vow, I will come to you." I promised. So that is an example. People have this kind of idea, and then we Tibetans created many problems of population this way. It would not have been so easy to lose Tibet if we had had a population like other countries. In Tibet, most of the country is empty. Most people think Tibet is empty because most of the country is very high, and people couldn't live there. That's not true. There are many places we can really live, can make progress and do many things.

So you see, we made many mistakes and those mistakes still continue and we still we do not have this awareness. His Holiness the Dalai Lama explained many times and I heard, and I also listened to many cassettes where he gives talks and really explained very clearly, but maybe people don't understand very much. When I went to Tibet, traveling to Lhasa and East Tibet, and I met many people I said, "You must multiply the population". I asked many people to please multiply. And they said, "Yes, it is very important to

continued on page 11

The bonfires took on a special significance when Rinpoche told us that the fire before the Stupa was a manifestation of Vajrasadhu, and that if we looked in the flames we could see him there.

Adriana led our Vajra Dance course with tireless patience as we learned the moves from the first half of the Dance of the Song of the Vajra. Her gentle manner, graceful movements and gracious corrections were an inspiration to us all, and we soon hope to have her come again to teach us the second half of the Dance of the Song of the Vajra.

Fabio led the Advanced Yantra course with his characteristic good humor, teasing us all and making fun of himself, teaching those of us with flexibility how to move through the four series of asanas, and those of us with no flexibility how to fake it. He also took this time to give additional guidance to Jay, Son and Naomi, who demonstrated the postures under the watchful eye of Fabio.

The Karma Yoga retreat culminated on the last day in a mad rush to clear wood and paint the cabin a deep red and maroon. With much laughing and joking, Rinpoche made his way under the cabin where he spent half an hour or so consecrating the vase which was sealed under the cabin.

When we finished, about 6:30pm, we went down the Stupa fire, had dinner and some drinks, before returning to the cabin to begin the Protector rite. After opening all the wine for the *serkyem* and placing some of each bottle in the *serkyem*, we placed all the wine inside and began the rite.

Rinpoche began inside leading the practice. The energy was intense in the small cabin, and I am sure all of us felt the presence of the Yavarukshi that Rinpoche invited

continued on the next page



Guardian Cabin on Sacred Buckland land

ATSUKO OZeki

in to take up residence. We practice Naggon for about 45 minutes or so, before resting and moving outside, so that others could take up the practice inside the cabin in our places. During this second session, we heaped fuel on the fire of pine and juniper we had collected specially for the rite. At times the flames leaped 25 feet into the air, and because it was also raining, the heat and dampness and mood were stunning. By the end of the rite we were all exhausted, happy, and looking forward to a good rest.

On the day we took Rinpoche out of retreat, that morning Rinpoche performed a Ganapuja with us in his cabin. We were not sure if it was going to rain, so he decided we could do it there. It was a special ritual, and he talked about how important Karma Yoga was, and how much it meant to the Community to gather together to work and create and strengthen out bonds with him, the transmission and the teachings. As a special treat, Rinpoche read to us a version of the Ganachakra Vajra Song of the Hevajra Tantra, which is about going beyond all limitations. The version he read us was translated from Dakini language into Tibetan by Kunkhyen Pema Karpo. He explained that in the dream he had as a boy, where he first heard the Song of the Vajra, he also heard this Ganachakra Vajra Song from the Hevajra Tantra, and he explained that this was therefore something very important for the teachings and transmission.

Later on I drove up Hawley Road in Ashfield to my favorite view, Little Switzerland, overlooking the Buckland Valley. When I arrived I looked across the valley and realized that I could see the top of the Tsegyalgar. And with this thought I was moved to think how fortunate I was to meet my precious root Guru only a few miles from the place where I was raised. With tears in my eyes, I shared my emotion with my companion, and showed her how we could see the land from this vantage point.

I am tremendously grateful to have spent so much time in the presence of this man from Tibet, Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, who, once upon a time came to my homeland and there dreamed into reality one of the most tremendous blessings our community has, the Vajra Dance.

Now as this mandala dissolves it is our desire and intention to maintain the strength and commitment we had in developing Khandro Ling, the Sacred Land of Buckland, which all of us in Dzogchen Community will always have for practice and retreat, in perpetuity, according to Chögyal Namkhai Norbu's vision.

I also would like to express my gratitude to those who worked so hard before Rinpoche arrived and could not remain when he went into retreat because of personal commitments. Their presence was sorely missed, but their generosity and energy was felt even so, and I hope they come back soon.

* supernatural beings



Boston Retreat group photo

ATSUKO OZeki

A MAY RETREAT IN HARVARD SQUARE

By Stephanie Scott and Mark Alston-Follansbee

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu taught in Boston this May for the first time as a way to bring the teachings to more new people who might not venture to Tsegyalgar. Over 250 people attended the retreat at the Gutman Conference Center at Harvard University's Graduate School of Education in Harvard Square and, unlike retreats we have attended in the past, the vast majority of attendees were there for the first time. As one woman put it, "I had never heard Rinpoche's teachings before and I am smitten."

Rinpoche explained what the Dzogchen teachings were and what it was to be a practitioner. He explained the three introductions – oral, symbolic, and direct – and proceeded on Saturday to give direct introduction to the participants. As we have seen Rinpoche do at past retreats, he gave participants everything necessary to help to attain realization during the course of the seven days. Nothing was missing. We all bathed in our Master's energy and all was perfect. The weather at the retreat began a little cool but as the retreat "heated up", so too did the weather.

Jim Valby gave an explanation of the teachings every afternoon. The advanced Yantra Yoga and Vajra Dances courses dissolved as we realized most people were new. The Vajra Dance for beginners was taught by Anastasia McGhee and drew too many people for two mandalas. We could have used several more. The Yantra Yoga for beginners was taught by Lynn Sutherland and took up the entire space used for the actual teachings. The participation of the people new to Rinpoche's teachings was phenomenal!

Having the retreat in Harvard Square was a real treat. For those who have never been to Harvard Square, it's a unique combination of city and town; of academia and business; of tolerance and diversity. Each day after the teachings people would walk through the Square, have some lunch or cappuccino at the many bistros and coffee shops along the way, or do some shopping. Retreat participants were integrated into the rest of the community and we all felt totally comfortable and at home. A perfect place to have a retreat and to begin to integrate the teachings in a real way!

CHÖGYAL NAMKHAÏ NORBU 2002-2004

2002

ITALY & EUROPE

Merigar

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

2002-2003

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

RUSSIA

May 21st leave

Leave for Moscow

May 28th - June 3rd

Kunsangar Retreat

ITALY

June 6th

Leave for Rome

June 18th - 22nd

Dzogchen Padma Nyingthig Teaching Retreat

June 27th - July 14th

Personal Retreat

Santi Maha Sangha, Merigar

July 15th - 17th

Santi Maha Sangha 2nd Level Exam

July 18th - 22nd

Santi Maha Sangha 3rd Level Training

August 13th - 19th

Retreat about rigs-drug gnas-sbyong

USA

August 25th

Leave for New York City

August 29th - 31st

New York Teaching

September 1st

Leave for Tsegyalgar

September 5th - 9th

Dzogchen Padma Nyingthig Teaching

September 9th - 14th

Longsal Gonpa Ngotrod Teaching

Santi Maha Sangha at Tsegyalgar

September 17th - 18th

Santi Maha Sangha 1st Level Exam

September 19th - 23rd

Santi Maha Sangha 2nd Level Training

September 29th

Leave for Miami, Florida

October 3rd - 7th

Teaching Retreat

MARGARITA ISLAND, VENEZUELA

Tashigar North

October 10th

Leave for Margarita

October 31st - November 4th

Longsal Tsalung Retreat

ARGENTINA

Tashigar South

December 19th

Leave for Cordoba

2003-2004

December 26th - January 2nd Tashigar Retreat

Surgery for Life - A Successful Result An operation for little Pema Lamo

by Chiara Barbarossa

When the doctors at the Bambin Gesù hospital told us that there was nothing to be done because Pema Lamo's deformation was due to polio, we were really discouraged. We had done a lot to bring her and her father to Italy. The communications with the Italian Embassy in Peking, the faxes, emails and telephone calls over a month produced results that fluctuated from day to day. At one moment it seemed that permission had been given for them to come then a few days later we were asked for another document without which, they said, Pema and her father, Dawa Phuntsok, would not be able to leave and so we would start all over again. But thanks also to the people collaborating with ASIA in Lhasa and in Peking everything was finally resolved, and Pema and her father arrived in Rome on February 2nd, 2002. Now this news which really made us sad.

We thought about the hope that father and daughter had put in this trip and their bitter disappointment. But we were not ready to give up. Even if Pema could not have an operation, the doctor at Bambin Gesù had told us that something could be done to help her - to have a prosthesis made to improve the way she walked. In order to do this there were other consultations, other analyses, other research to be done. But we had no doubts, we had to go ahead.

And so early one morning, we went to Palidoro where there is another branch of Bambin Gesù specialized in orthopedics. There Pema had a lot of tests, one of which meant inserting long needles in various points of the body to see the reactions of the nerves. In spite of the pain, Pema never once complained. Finally they made a video to record her posture, her way of walking and sitting. From all of this the consultant decided what type of prosthesis to have made and gave us an appointment for when it would be ready. It was evening when we came back to Rome, tired but satisfied with the thoroughness of all the tests they had given Pema.

A few days later we went to Palestrina, about 60 km from Rome, where the company that specializes in orthopedic prostheses is located. Here they took all Pema's measurements and made a cast of the leg with bands of hot chalk, much to the surprise not only of father and daughter but also us. After so many medical consultations we thought it would be good to let them have a few days of rest. One of our ex-patriot doctors, Giovanni Tundo, who had pointed out this case some time ago, offered to host them at his house in the south of Italy near the sea. Pema and her father had never seen the sea and so we welcomed his invitation. They stayed with the doctor for six days and when they came back they still had the sea in their eyes. Pema went on repeating 'how big the sea is' 'how big the sea is'.

When we returned to Palestrina for the first test of the prosthesis Pema was very excited. Her father, Dawa, was even more excited and when he saw his daughter walking erect and with her feet aligned for the first time in her life, he was very moved and his eyes shone with joy. It was a long precise test with little adjustments and modifications that were essential in order to make the prosthesis comfortable. Pema wouldn't stop going up and down and we had to tell her time and time again 'slowly, slowly'. But the excitement wasn't over yet. The same day we went back to Palidoro because the consultant wanted to see how the brace worked and if there were any modifications to be made. He had spoken with the person in charge of the orthopedic



Pema Lamo

with the ritual "Tashidelek".

Pema was sad to leave and said that she had made more friends here than she had in Lhasa, friends who made a fuss of her, protected her and had fun with her. We too were sad about her departure. We were going to miss her smile, her bright eyes. But we knew that we would see her again. While she grows the prosthesis will need to have a yearly check so in a year Pema will be back with us. ASIA's work does not finish here. Our adventure has just begun.

A.S.I.A. thanks Dr. Antonio Lembo of Bambin Gesù Hospital in Rome who helped us bring Pema Lamo to Italy and who was the first to visit her and suggest what could be done. We thank him not only for his skill, but also for the kindness he showed towards us. We also thank Dr. Giuseppe Di Rosa of Bambin Gesù in Palidoro for his attentive and precise analysis of Pema that led to the making of the prosthesis which now helps her walk well. A heartfelt thanks to him and to all the staff at Bambin Gesù in Palidoro and Rome.

And now the creators of this work who are Mr. Mattogno of ITOP in Palestrina and the team that built the special brace. We thank Elio Traietti for everything. We will never forget the great skill and generosity of Mr. Mattogno towards ASIA.

We cannot forget the person who helped to make Pema and her father's stay pleasant, welcoming them for a month and a half in her home, offering them warm hospitality and helping them in many ways. Thank you Giovanna Ribotta, a heartfelt thanks from ASIA. Thank you everyone.

company and they had decided to make a final correction and so the prosthesis went back to Palestrina and we finally went back to Rome after what I would call a rather exhausting day.

Fortunately the final test went well. There was only a modification to one of the special shoes that had been made for Pema and after this had been done we went back to Rome where Pema wanted to go straight to the ASIA office to show everyone how well she could walk. We were very happy to see how the prosthesis, practically invisible under her long Tibetan dress, had given her a near normality which the disease, unfortunately, had taken away forever. We went back to Palidoro for the last time. The consultant was very satisfied to see the results and before we left he taught Pema some exercises to improve muscle tone and relax her back. Her father followed all of this with great attention so that he would be able to help her do the exercises on their return to Tibet. Dawa said good-bye to the doctor with a very affectionate gesture, touching her forehead to his. The doctor was struck by this and appreciated it very much.

Before their departure on March 30th, we had a party for father and daughter at the ASIA office. Once again they thanked us and wanted to leave a small gift for everyone as a sign of their gratitude. They knew that this operation had been made possible thanks to the generosity of the people supporting the "Surgery for Life" project.

This account is also a way of thanking everyone on behalf of Pema and her father. The day of their departure we went back to Bambin Gesù for the last time to say good-bye to the doctor who had created the possibility for all of this to take place. "Grazie tante", said Pema smiling at him and he replied

Between the Pechas A Meeting With Gene Smith

by David Higgins

Imagine entering a three-story house filled, room to room, floor to ceiling, with Tibetan manuscripts. Such was the vision that greeted a small group of us who had come to visit legendary Tibetologist Gene Smith as we stepped through the doorway into his Tibetan Buddhist Resource Center in Cambridge on May 11th, 2002 (the second last day of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu's Cambridge retreat). Swathed in red and gold, some ten thousand traditional elongated texts (pechas) and modern reproductions packed the shelves, covering every conceivable genre of Tibetan literature from philosophy and history to astrology and medicine.

The sheer number and diversity of works speak volumes about the life and vocation of their collector, Gene Smith. Smith has dedicated the past forty years of his life to preserving and overseeing the reprinting and distribution of Tibetan literature to Western libraries. Among scholars of Tibetan, he is something of a legend, not only for his work at preserving and making accessible Tibetan literature but for his encyclopedic knowledge of its diverse genres.

After warm greetings, Smith proceeded to lead us through his remarkable labyrinth. There was a secular sciences room (medicine, astrology), a Sakya room, a rNying-ma room. In one room, we found his bed, sandwiched between towering stacks. Among Tibetan texts indeed! At one point, I saw him smile mischievously at Jim Valby as we passed through a room that placed collections of two philosophical rivals, the

Jo-nang-pa and dGe-lugs-pa, on neighboring shelves, as if to help heal old wounds. Here among the texts, it seemed, we had briefly entered the mind of their collector.

Born into a Mormon family that traces its ancestry to Hyrum Smith, brother of Joseph Smith who was founder of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Smith took an early interest in Tibetan Buddhism after reading about it in popular works. To deepen his knowledge of Tibetan, he studied at the University of Washington under a number of eminent Tibetan lamas including Deshung Rinpoche, tutor to the Sakya Phuntsho Phodrang.



Gene Smith (left) and David Higgins among the pechas N. ZETZ

Gene met Chöyal Namkhai Norbu in 1962 in Rome as one of the first Tibetan teachers that he had contact with. Rinpoche had been a student of the great Bo Gongkar Rinpoche of Minyak who was also a teacher of Gene's own root lama, Deshung Rinpoche. Gene was in Europe to attend the second Rockefeller conference on Tibet in Bellagio, Italy and when he reached Italy he immediately contacted Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche. The meeting of Gene and Rinpoche during the Cambridge retreat marked a joyous reunion after some forty years.

Smith's interest in Tibetan led him eventually, after a brief sojourn in Leiden for advanced studies in Sanskrit and Pali, to India in 1965 where he continued studies with a number of Tibetan savants including Geshe Lobsang Lungtok, Drukpa

Thosay Rinpoche, Khenpo Noryang and Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche. Beginning in 1968, Smith joined the Library of Congress in New Delhi as an archivist responsible for collecting Tibetan books from Tibetan-speaking communities in Sikkim, Bhutan, India and Nepal. In addition to publishing many single copy texts that would otherwise have vanished and making accessible a vast range of Tibetan literature to academic libraries (including the marvelous PL480 series that was used to repay Indian loans from the U.S.), Smith also wrote excellent scholarly introductions. Filled with priceless thematic, biographical and historical information, these legendary introductions helped clarify and contextualize vast areas of Tibetan literature that were then poorly known outside of Tibetan communities. Originally produced in print quantities of 20, that were then photocopied and circulated among scholars, these prefaces have recently been collected in a single book *Among Tibetan Texts: History and Literature of the Himalayan Plateau* (Snow Lion). In years to follow, as Smith was sent by Library of Congress to new postings in Jakarta and later Cairo, he now speaks Arabic, Indonesian, Mongol, Sanskrit and Tibetan and he dragged along his growing Tibetan library. In 1997 he and his collection came to rest in Cambridge where he and friends established the Tibetan Buddhist Resource Center (www.tbrc.org).

Smith has recently begun to scan his entire collection, considered one of the most comprehensive libraries of Tibetan literature anywhere, onto the internet. He hopes to have the project completed before he dies, at which point the in-print collection will be sent to China. The on-line collection will be a tremendous resource, a veritable wish-fulfilling treasury, for students of Tibetan.

Towards the end of our journey through the labyrinth we passed an upper story room in which a Tibetan Bönpo scholar was busily scanning in the Gzer-myig, a famous compendium of Bon-po teachings. As Gene Smith's passion for preservation adapts itself to the digital age, it is heartening to see his precious life's work potentially reaching the widest possible audience.

SHANG - SHUNG INSTITUTE

Shang-Shung Institute of Italy

Courses held by Doctor Nida Chenagtsang 2002

MERIGAR: July 13th-16th 2002
Mantra Healing (First and Second levels)
Registration fee: 116 Euro
Shang-Shung Institute Secretary
Tel: ++39 0564 966941
Email: ssinst@tiscalinnet.it

MERIGAR: July 20th-23rd 2002
Dreams and medicine (First and Second Levels)
Registration fee for both courses: 116 Euro
Shang-Shung Institute Secretary
Tel: ++39 0564 966941
Email: ssinst@tiscalinnet.it

MERIGAR: September 1st-8th 2002
Intensive course of First Level Ku Nye
Fees include materials (manual and video) 360 Euro
Shang-Shung Institute Secretary
Tel: ++39 0564 966941
Email: ssinst@tiscalinnet.it

AUSTRIA: September 12th-15th 2002
Entrance exam for the Second Level of Ku Nye
First part of the Second Level Ku Nye Course
Information and registration:
Oliver Leick
Email: oliver.leick@utanet.at

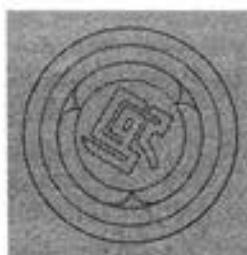
MERIGAR: September 21st-22nd 2002
Diet and Behavior
Registration fee: 114 Euro
In Tibetan Medicine, diet and behavior are considered to be the first two types of interventions to maintain good health and prevent both chronic-degenerative and acute illnesses. The course will cover particular indications on diet and behavior for future mothers in order to guarantee the harmonious development of the fetus and to assist the birth. There will also be instructions on infant massage, useful and precious for invigorating energy and favoring the growth of a developing organism.
Shang-Shung Institute Secretary
Tel: ++39 0564 966941
Email: ssinst@tiscalinnet.it

ROME: September 27th-28th 2002
Course of First Level Geomancy (Sa Che)
Registration fee: 114 Euro
Information and registration:
Anne Marie Clos, tel. ++39 06 588 5142
Email: arura@libero.it

AUSTRIA: November 29th-December 1st 2002
Second part of the Second Level Ku Nye Course
Information and registration:
Oliver Leick
Email: oliver.leick@utanet.at

MILAN: November 9th-10th 2002
Course to review Third Level Ku Nye
Registration fee: 114 Euro
Information and registration:
Elisa Copello
Email: ecop@ats.it

ROME: November 16th-17th 2002
Course to review Third Level Ku Nye
Registration fee: 114 Euro
Information and registration:
Anne Marie Clos, tel. ++39 06 588 5142
Email: arura@libero.it



ITALY

The Shang Shung Institute America Announces a Cultural Exchange Programs for Tibetans

In order to promote educational opportunities for native Tibetans in a variety of disciplines, the Shang-Shung Institute, USA, has inaugurated the first of its cultural exchange programs with an internship in the field of art conservation. Lama Gyurme of Mindroling Monastery has been invited to participate in a training seminar at the Pritzlaff Ranch in New Mexico where he will undergo an internship with conservation experts, Constance S. Silver of Preservar,

USA

Inc., New York and Professor Richard Wolbers, of the University of Delaware. The hundred year old adobe building of the Pritzlaff Ranch preserves outstanding mural paintings by an important Native American artist. The ranch has been in derelict condition for several decades resulting in serious deterioration of the building materials and mural paintings. Over the last year, the building has undergone substantial renovation and Preservar, Inc., will begin interior restoration of the murals this summer. The problems of the building and murals are similar to those encountered in historic building in Tibet. Therefore, the Pritzlaff Ranch is an excellent training venue for Tibetans who wish to learn state of the art techniques for the conservation of mural painting and historic restoration. Lama Gyurme is scheduled to arrive in June and stay four to six months in the US before returning to Tibet. By participating in the Pritzlaff Ranch training program, Lama Gyurme, a prominent Tibetan artist and master of ritual arts, will become better informed to address serious conservation issues at Mindroling which has an ancient tradition of artistic expertise and is considered among the great monastic centers of Tibet with a significant amount of surviving art. From 1999-2001, Lama Gyurme was in residency at the Shang-Shung International Institute for Tibetan Studies in Italy where he taught numerous courses in Tibetan art and acted as a consultant to the Ministero di Beni Culturali for the exhibition and conference on the restoration of Tibetan art, "Arte in Tibet", held in Rome.

WELCOME DIEGO!

On Monday June 3rd, 2002, at 23.00, Egle and Yeshe Namkhai had a baby boy Diego. Diego weighed four kilos at birth. All is well. We embrace Egle and Yeshe and share the joy of Diego's birth. Congratulations to the whole family of our Jewel Teacher, to whom we wish long life and prosperity. The Sangha Dzogchen is pleased for your arrival small Diego, we are happy that you are among us.

MERIGAR

Retreats with CHOEGYAL NAMKHAIR NORBU

Teachings on Longde

July 5 - 9
Starts at 4PM on 5th July.
Cost: 200 Euro with the usual discount for paid-up members.

Merigar Dzogchen Retreat

August 9 - 18
Starts at 4PM on 9th August.
Cost: 450 Euro with the usual discount for paid-up members.

Santi Maha Sangha

July 23 - 25 - Exam for the First Level SMS
Participants must register at the Merigar office beforehand.

July 26 - 30 - Training for the Second Level SMS
Chögyal Namkhair Norbu.
Starts at 4PM on 26th August.
Cost: 200 Euro no discounts.

Merigar Community Dzogchen
Monica Saller - Secretary
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Interview with Phuntsog Wangmo

July 9, 2002
Shang-Shung Institute, Conway, Massachusetts

by Naomi Zeitz for
The Mirror

Dr. Wangmo graduated from the Tibetan Medical School in Lhasa and has been the doctor in residence for Shang-Shung Institute in America for a little over one year.

The Mirror: Dr. Wangmo, when did you decide to become a doctor and why?

Dr. Wangmo: I decided to become a doctor when I was fourteen years old because my uncle, Namkhair Norbu Rinpoche, asked my family that I study Tibetan medicine. My mother took me to one professor, Khenpo Tse-nam, who is famous all over Tibet. He accepted me as his student so I began studying with him when I was fourteen years old. I studied with him for one year and then he sent me to the Tibetan Medical School in Lhasa where I studied from when I was fifteen years old.

M: Was that an unusual age for someone to study medicine?

DW: I think traditionally it is normal, when someone studies with the family, but for school it is a little unusual. My classmates were almost nineteen and twenty years old, so I was the youngest student in my class. I lived at the school from Monday to Friday and went home on the weekends. The rule of the school was that we couldn't go home in the evening during the week because we had to study. The school was in the center of Lhasa near the Lhasa river; about twenty minutes from my house by bicycle.

M: This was the main medical school of Lhasa?

DW: Yes, this was the main medical school of Lhasa at the time, and at that time it was not a university. It was a professional Tibetan Medical School. After 1988 they built the new Tibetan University.



Dr. Wangmo

Call for Grant Writers for Shang-Shung Institute in America

The Shang-Shung Institute in America invites the collaboration of a Dzogchen Community individual or individuals to write grants on behalf of some of the Institute's current projects and programs, as well as help develop fundraising strategies for new projects.

A number of these projects and programs are highly fundable and already invested with a great deal of energy and previous funding which would make viable proposals. Grant writers who work on these proposals will receive a percentage of the funding for their professional services.

The Institute is particularly looking for funding for some of its translation projects now nearing completion (*Light of Kailash* and *Elements for the Study of Tibetan Medicine*), multimedia advancement for the Tibetan Medical Program, and additional funding to expand the Tibetan cultural exchange program for Tibetan artists in art restoration. Other projects may include conferences, traveling exhibitions and research projects in partnership with other institutions, as well as grants for general operating expenses. There may be possibilities for Dr. Phuntsog Wangmo to receive funding for either her education and/or for specialized research in her field.

For further information please contact the treasurer of the Institute, Jacqueline Gens at <shangshungus@cs.com> or <jgens@sover.net>. You may also access further updated information about the Institute at <www.shangshung-usa.org>.

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Tibetan Geomancy or Sa Che

An interview with Dr. Nida Chenagtsang

by Liz Granger for The Mirror

Born in 1971 in Amdo, Tibet, Dr. Nida Chenagtsang studied medicine at Lhasa Tibetan Medical College and then practiced in Lhasa and Tsetang. He worked as a doctor for a Non-governmental Organization in Tibet and had a private medical practice for four years. He teaches Tibetan Ku Nye massage and herbal medicine and has written numerous articles on these subjects. He has been in Italy for four years collaborating with the Istituto Shang Shung and has given numerous courses on Ku Nye, Sa Che and mantra healing both in Italy and abroad.

The Mirror:

The Tibetan art of geomancy is little known in the West. Could you outline some of the fundamental characteristics of this ancient tradition?

Dr. Nida:

Tibetan geomancy is called Sa Che: "sa" means earth, "che"

means to analyze or interpret; Sa Che deals with the interpretation or analysis of the earth. We talk about the analysis of the earth because earth is one of the most important elements that we are in contact with on a daily basis. We live on the earth and it can be considered to be the basis or root of our existence which is why it is the main element that is studied.

While the name most commonly used for the study of Tibetan geomancy is "Sa che", the full name is "Sa chu shin gi che pa" which means analysis of earth (sa), water (chu) and wood (shing) although it actually refers to study of the five elements: earth (sa), water (chu), fire (me), wind (lung) and space (namkha). So the fundamental principle of geomancy is based on these five elements.

The Mirror: Are there different traditions within Sa Che itself?

Dr. Nida: There are two systems of Sa Che: the Tibetan Buddhist Tantric style of Sa Che and the astrological one. In the Tantric style Sa Che is focused on the principle of the mandala which consists of a center with four directions, making five points altogether. In this case we consider the mandala to be the basis of all balance: the right should be balanced with the left, the front with the back, the North with the South, the East with the West. Whatever shape the mandala may take, whether it be square, circular or triangular, balance between the five points should always present. This same principle of balance should be present in our home, our environment as well as in our mind and body.

In the astrological system of Sa Che we use the five astrological elements sa (earth), chu (water), me (fire), shing (wood) and cag (metal) to create horoscopes based on the elements of the year, the month, the day and the hour. The life element of the person is taken into consideration in relationship to the elements present in the house and the surrounding environment. There are four different relationships that can exist between the elements: mother-son, son-mother, friend-enemy and enemy-friend. The idea is to create balance and harmony between the elements.

The Mirror: Is there any particular connection between Tibetan medicine and Sa Che?

Dr. Nida: There is a very close link between medicine and geomancy through both their Tantric and astrological aspects. The fundamental principle underlying Tibetan medicine is that of balance and through the study of Sa Che we can analyze many of the external influences that we may receive from the building we live in and from the surrounding environment. For this reason Tibetan medicine also focuses on Sa Che study to analyze the house, the surrounding area and so on in order to create balance between the individual and his or her environment. This type of analysis can be very useful in order to discover the cause of a disease which can be closely linked to the condition of the house, say, for example, a condition of arthritis could be connected with the fact that the house receives too much cold wet energy.

The Mirror: In the West, the Chinese art of Feng Shui is considered to be the "father" of the tradition of geomancy. Is there any link between Tibetan Sa Che and Feng Shui?

Dr. Nida: Some people think that Sa Che is the same as Feng Shui, but I really believe it to be quite different. Sa Che has its origins in the shamanic Bön tradition of Tibet and we can still

read a few Bön texts on geomancy even today. In the 8th century there was a wave of Chinese influence in Tibet that had some influence on the Tibetan astrological system, but long before this time, there had already been some Sa Che texts written in Tibetan originating in the indigenous Bön tradition. As proof of this the early kings of Tibet had their palaces built strictly following the dictates of Tibetan geomancy, for example the Yumbu Lagang palace of King Natri Zanpo in Lhoka built just over 2000 years ago. One of the most typical examples of the influence of Sa Che in a building is the famous monastery of Samye constructed in the 8th century under the guidance of the Master Padmasambhava which was built in the form of a three dimensional mandala following the guidelines of Tibetan Tantric Sa Che. I believe this Tantric aspect of Tibetan geomancy to be particular to Tibetan Sa Che which is an entirely different from the Chinese system of Feng Shui.

In the early shamanic tradition of Tibet there was a great respect and consideration of nature, of the spirits of nature. This effected the way people lived and behaved towards the environment and created respect

for the trees, the rivers, the mountains and so on. In fact, when misfortune struck, it was usually considered that this was due to a lack of respect or some type of inappropriate behavior towards the environment. This same principle of respect for nature and working with the energy of nature has been carried over into the Sa Che system. It is the continuation of this principle that lead us to believe that the origins of Sa Che lie within the early shamanic system.

We can still find early Bön texts about Sa Che and later on texts by Yeshe Tsogyal, Namkhai Nyingpo and Machig Labdron. They wrote many books about Sa Che. Up to now we have had twelve or fifteen texts about geomancy.

The Mirror: Are there any notable differences between Sa Che and Feng Shui?

Dr. Nida: The study of Sa Che is rooted in the shamanic Bön philosophy of Tibet and strongly connected with Tantric teaching with deep influence from the Buddhist tradition. Feng Shui on the other hand is linked with Taoism.

One of the main differences between them is the approach to analyze and balance the energies of the place or house. When the Sa Ken (the person who carries out the analysis) visits a house, first of all he does an analysis of the environment called *tag* which is followed by two rituals called *thang*, asking permission from the spirits of the earth, and *jang*, purifying any negative energies. In particular the use of symbolic objects to block negative energies or increase positive ones is substantially different in Sa Che. The principle of the energy of some of the directions is quite different as well. Of course there are some similarities but personally I feel that the origin of Sa Che is quite different from Feng Shui. One of the problems with Feng Shui is that there are hundreds of schools and each master creates his own system which is dangerous for the pure tradition. Sa Che is not very widespread and, up to now, it has been a sacred teaching, like Tantrism, and has not been taught very much in public. Somehow I think this is positive because it will prevent it from becoming polluted like Chinese Feng Shui.

The Mirror: How does one approach an analysis of a place according to Tibetan geomancy and what can be done to correct any negative energies?

Dr. Nida: The process of analysis and cure can be considered similar to the approach of Tibetan medicine. First of all the doctor makes a careful and thorough investigation of all the outer characteristics of the physical body of the patient. Once this is done, he considers investigation of the inner organs through reading the pulse etc. In the same way the Sa Ken carefully investigates the outer world surrounding the building and person in question. Once this analysis has been done he enters the building to continue his interpretation.

This process of investigation of the outer world involves an analysis of the sky, space, mountains, water, trees, rocks, the surrounding buildings, roads, fields and gardens. Their energy, position, shape and color are all taken into consideration. The name of the area and the names of any mountains, rivers, hills etc., are also assessed since it is believed positive to have an auspicious name, that the name takes its energy from the

sound. An interesting example of this took place in the 17th century when Terdag Lingpa chose to build Mindroling monastery at Tharpa Ling, the 'Land of Liberation', because the name was very auspicious.

Then in the traditional way we burn some particular herbs in front of the door to make some smoke and see which direction the smoke moves. This is called "checking the smoke" (*duwa tagpa*). After this we enter the house and check the arrangement of the rooms, the directions different rooms are in, the furniture, the colors and shapes of the rooms, the age and sex of the people inhabiting particular rooms. At this point the process of *tag* (analysis) is complete.

If a Sa Ken is dealing with an area where people wish to build a house, after completing this *tag* analysis of the area, he carries out a *thang* ritual in order to ask permission to build there from the local guardians. If the house has already been built, the *thang* ritual will be done in order to make a connection with the local guardians, or if there is a provocation, to apologize to them.

If everything is fine, then fine, but if things are not all right, the Sa Ken will try to discover the "black points" or negative energies (*sa dra*, the enemy of the earth). For example, if the position of the house is wrong or the rooms are arranged incorrectly, he will look for the negative points and then if it is possible to remove them then he will do so. If that is not possible, he will use other objects to block their negative energy.

The Mirror: When you talk about blocking a negative energy what kind of objects can be used?

Dr. Nida: Many kinds of objects: astrological and Tantric ritual objects such as the design of the Kalachakra mantra (*namcu wang dan*), the universal turtle (*kunthup korlo*), the Vase (*bumpa*), symbols, paintings, plants, flowers, stones, mantras, the shell of the turtle, a melong (mirror), a peacock feather, a crystal, shells and other things to block all negative energies in

general.

Then if there is this type of 'triangular' energy in the house which is very sharp and strong, we can block it by placing things such as plants in front of it or we can paint flowers or jewels directly on the point.

We use stones a lot especially to work with negative energies coming from external directions. We take a stone from the direction of the negative energy, cover it with paintings and mantras and then replace it in the same direction in order to block the negative energy.

However, the work of the Sa Ken is not only to block negative energies but also to increase positive ones. For instance if you want to have financial success, you can decorate your office with symbolic designs such as Zambala (the divinity of wealth), three or six jewels, yellow and golden paintings, golden fish and so on. For good family relationships we can use designs depicting the infinite knot or the six animals in which antagonistic animals are combined into a single form with the head of one animal and the body of another (*mi tun tunjor*).

The Mirror: The art of geomancy as developed in Tibet must be more geared towards rural life, since a great part of the population live in the countryside.

Dr. Nida: That's true. In fact, I asked my own teacher (Jamyang Gyatso from Amdo) about that because in Tibet there are only a few cities such as Lhasa and Shigatse, although they are very different from European cities. I asked him how the principles of geomancy can be applied taking into consideration high buildings and other elements that are common to Western cities. He told me that I should analyze the buildings as though they were mountains, taking into consideration their colors, their positions, their shapes, the direction they are in, etc.

Then he said that inside the building, we should maintain the basic tradition through which we can develop more details, this is the principle of the five elements and the four directions. So in the West, even though we usually have more objects, more furniture in the house, we can analyze all of this through the five elements, taking into consideration the colors and shapes of the objects and the interdependent function of the five elements.

The Mirror: Thank you Dr. Nida.

Merigar, May 18th, 2002



One of the most harmonious positions in the mountains according to Sa Che



The design of 'Sa Dag Tache' to find the important points in the kitchen to increase 'si' (food), 'nor' (wealth) and 'long jod' (enjoyment)

Upholding Traditional Tibetan Medicine An interview with Prof. Wangdu

Prof. Wangdu, professor of traditional Tibetan Medicine, has been teaching at the University of Lhasa for several years. He is one of the authors of a Chinese-Tibetan dictionary and has written a complete dictionary of Tibetan medical terms. During his second visit to Italy to teach Western students part of the Fourth Year Course on Tibetan Medicine, he kindly consented to do this interview for *The Mirror*.

The Mirror: Prof. Wangdu, could you tell us a little about your background and training as a doctor?

Prof. Wangdu: I was born in Kham in East Tibet in a place called Gonjo, an area which has great historical significance. It is a special place blessed by Padmasambhava who opened the Vajrakilaya Mandala there in the 8th century. 'Gon' means intelligence and 'jo' means to reach and many Tibetans believe that people can become very intelligent there (laughs). The area is also notable because Nyala Changchub Dorje's Gar is situated in that part of Tibet. I was born in the year of the Pig (1947), so according to Tibetan astrology I am 57 years old. My family was neither poor nor rich. In the past there was a very famous practitioner in my family who was a student of tertön Ranjung Dorje.

When I was 8 years old my family brought me to a Kagyupa monastery where I studied traditional Tibetan studies including reading, writing, Tibetan grammar, poetry, literature and Buddhist philosophy. I also studied the collected works of Druppa Pema Karpo of the Kargyupa school. And then when I was eleven I went to another monastery where I studied with my main teacher Padma Kunsang Rangdrol, a Nyingma master, who was a disciple of Jese Gyurme Dorje, the son of Adzom Druppa. Then I received the preliminary teachings of ngöndro, which I did in this monastery under the direction of my teacher. I also studied the Seven Treasures and Four Volumes of Longchenpa with a learned Nyingma master.

I received the initiations and all the transmissions of Yuthok Nyingtig, the most important medical text for the practice of Tibetan medicine, in which you can find the ngöndro, Tantric teachings, the Three Roots, as well as Dzogchen teachings; everything is there including the practices of all the medicine protectors. In particular I studied medicine with a very famous doctor called Chime Dorje who comes from Gonjo, from a family lineage of doctors with generations of physicians. I studied medical theory and practice with him for seven years.

In 1965 I went to Lhasa where I received medical teachings from Khandro Yangpa, a lady doctor who was very famous for traditional surgery on cataracts but after that there were many political problems there so I returned to Kham.

In 1967 I started working in Gonjo County hospital. With a famous master physician-doctor called Lama Phuntsog Tashi I studied the highest level of Tibetan pharmacology dealing with such things as preparation of precious pills.

From 1975 to 1980 I studied at the Hospital for Traditional Tibetan Medicine, the Lhasa Mentsi Khang, well known for the Chakpori tradition of which I received all teachings from two famous doctors, Kunga Phuntsog and Thupten Tsering.

In 1980 when I finished studying, the doctors asked me to remain at the hospital to continue my research into Tibetan medicine and so I remained in Lhasa working in that department. Besides research I also visited patients and ran training courses for country or 'folk' doctors.

In 1985 a new department of Tibetan medicine was opened at Lhasa University and I was invited to be the director and main teacher. I taught there from 1985 to 1989. When the Tibetan Medical University was created in 1989 I was invited to teach there. I have been director of the University for several years and up to the present about 600 students have graduated from the 5 year course of Tibetan medicine.

The Mirror: We understand that you are the author of the medical section of the famous Chinese-Tibetan dictionary of which we have a copy in the library here at Merigar. Could you tell us about your work?

Prof. Wangdu: In the 1980s the Tibetan Study organization invited me to go to Beijing to help put together a section of a two volume Chinese-Tibetan dictionary with full explanations. I worked on the medical and astrological section for 18 months. Many top scholars were invited from all parts of Tibet to make this dictionary. Every week there was a program of talks and teachings from all those present so I had a very good opportunity to study Tibetan culture in general.

I also had the idea to make a Tibetan medical dictionary, because there aren't very many especially for new students to study. So I wrote the dictionary called Yuthok Gongchen which was published in Beijing in 1983. When the previous Panchen Lama saw the dictionary he said that he was very happy to see it and that it would be very useful for all those who study Tibetan medicine. He also wrote the foreword to the dictionary.

My main concern is that there is a real risk of all these traditions becoming lost in the future. The Tibetan medical tradition is a very rich one and this work will help to explain the real meanings of the terms to future generations.

To keep a tradition it is important to keep it with understanding. To understand a culture we need a precise explanation of the terminology and ideas. This medical dictionary covers all facets of medical usage including the use of herbs. My hope is that it will be useful for the new generation to keep their own real tradition.

The Mirror: Trying to maintain an ancient traditional form of medicine in an increasingly modern world is not an easy task. How do you go about approaching this?

Prof. Wangdu: Before the previous Panchen Rinpoche passed away he called me in Lhasa and said that he needed some information about Tibetan culture and invited me to visit him. When I got there Panchen Rinpoche asked me about my work and plans for the future. I told him that I had encountered a few difficulties working there linked to the political situation and that I preferred to retire and go into retreat. But Panchen Rinpoche told me that I should train at least 500 students to be Tibetan doctors, that it would be very important for Tibetan culture. He asked me to make this promise and I did.

I've done my best to teach students and to carry out other works connected to traditional medicine such as having the 78 medical thankas copied for the university and creating a library. The sole aim of my work is to help preserve Tibetan medicine for the future.

The Panchen Lama told me to rewrite the medical dictionary in a way that it would be more useful. In the revised edition there are more than 200,000 words and over 2000 pages. I completed this work last year and the publishing house agreed to publish it. I have also written a history of Tibetan medicine which is waiting to be published.

The Mirror: Has the way Tibetan medicine is practiced today in Tibet undergone any type of modification or changes or is it still practiced in its pure form?

Prof. Wangdu: In general if you look on the surface it seems that a lot of people are studying medicine, however, not many people have the opportunity to really study traditional Tibetan medicine. Things appear to be going well but actually there is a danger of losing the real essence of Tibetan medicine. Many Tibetan doctors are no longer making their diagnoses by reading the pulse, analyzing the urine etc., as is done in the traditional way. Instead they make their diagnoses using mechanical equipment.

In the medical colleges many things are considered to be superstition and are no longer taught. Students of Tibetan medicine traditionally study the Four Medical Tantras but now many Tantras considered to be useless superstition have been cut out of the Four Tantras. As to the future of Tibetan medicine what we can see is that the number of students are many but the quality is low. There is a great danger that the essence of traditional medicine may be lost.

The Mirror: Professor, how do you view the future of traditional Tibetan medicine?

Interview with Dr. Wangmo continued from page 7

M: How long was your program of study?

DW: I finished after four years and was nineteen years old.

M: After you finished school did you go directly to work as a doctor?

DW: After I finished school I asked them if I could stay for some time and study astrology because at that time I felt a little too young to work. My teacher and the director of the school decided it was OK. We have two different systems of astrology, one we call *nagtsi* and one we call *kartsi*. I studied *kartsi* with Khempo Sonam and *nagtsi* with Khenpo Tsultrim and then I practiced medicine in the central Mentsi Khan in Lhasa. After I finished my study I also worked there.

M: What is the difference between those two kinds of astrology?

DW: *Kartsi* is looking at the planets, stars, dates, years, months, etc., and *nagtsi* is looking for the calculation of the five elements. They are pretty different. For example today, July 9th, 2002 - what the planets and stars are doing today is *kartsi* and *nagtsi* has to do with the animal and element related to this year. For example, this year is the year of the water horse, and there are animals related to this month or day and also to the *nagtsi* and what they are doing; all is indicated in a precise way.

M: How do you use astrology for diagnosis and treatment in Tibetan Medicine?

DW: In Tibetan medicine we distinguish two different diseases. One we call *dunye* and one *dunchen*. *Dunye* is without provocation and *dunchen* is with provocation. When we see patients and we don't know which provoked who, when, or where, then in the case if we see a patient and think we have made a correct diagnosis and give medicine and the medicine doesn't work, we do astrology and try to treat them. One part is giving medicine and the other part is doing ritual practice.

Sometimes we have to call back the *la* (life force). If you just give pills that is not the real work, so we do a ritual to catch the *la* and put it back inside the person. So the Lamas do practice and maybe not only the *la* is gone, but people take medicine as well if the elements are damaged. When the medicines are taken and the practices are done is all based on astrological calculations; diagnosis and treatment are done with astrological calculations in certain situations.

M: Did you go to work after you finished the astrology study?

DW: I could have had a regular job, but at that time Rinpoche asked me to go to East Tibet and work in his Uncle Khentse Rinpoche's monastery. In 1988 I had a vacation from school and went with Rinpoche and my mother to East Tibet. I think the village people asked Rinpoche to send a doctor, I am not positive, but in this village there were no teachers and no doctors; nothing. This village was under the province of Sichuan, Derge, and is called Galenting. That is the village where Rinpoche's uncle's monastery is.

After that, Rinpoche sent me to this village to take care of the monastery and do the doctor's job. I was nearly twenty - one. I lived in my Uncle's house in the monastery. I went there and Rinpoche said I should go for just one year, and after one year and then the village asked me to stay. I liked the village and they liked me. The village was a nomad village. They also have some agriculture; farming. Their main work was that of the nomads.

M: What kind of problems did you find there and did you go outside the village to treat the patients or did they come to you?

DW: Normally people came to me because I had many patients there, so people came or their family would bring the urine of the patient. Sometimes the patient was having a baby or had a broken bone or was injured and couldn't move, then they would come and get me with a horse.

M: How do you use urine in Tibetan diagnosis?

DW: With urine diagnosis we look at many things; the principle thing is to look at color, smell, bubbles, the action of the sediment, and sound (when we stir the urine we can listen to the sound to hear if it is hot or cold). Also we have learned in our texts that you can use taste, but it is not a common practice now.

M: Did you have any kind of medical equipment and how did you treat the patients?

DW: This first year I was there was a big problem because I had no equipment. Also I didn't know how to use all these methods, all this equipment, because I did not practice all these methods enough when I was in school. I studied traditional Tibetan medicine; this was my main subject. I also studied a little bit of Western technique, but just how to give injections or medicine, not difficult things.

The first year I had some big problems, sometimes with delivering babies, sometimes people had broken legs because they ride horses and sometimes they would fall or get kicked by the horse.

M: So what did you do in those situations?

DW: In the first year I was looking in the medical texts and following the instructions, because really I didn't have enough knowledge. But it was almost always OK. I did well.

The second year was a little better and I prepared something, some equipment, some gloves, injections, needles and thread.

M: Did you have anesthesia?

DW: Not really. Fortunately I never had to deal with a very big wound. But sometimes I found a big problem. For example, once there was a young boy, around 11 years old - this always I remember and always I feel a little bad about - he was kicked by a horse and had a big wound on his forehead. We needed to sew the wound up and at that time it was the end of my first year, and I didn't know how to sew the wound and we thought he should go to the hospital in the next town, but that would take more than one hour. The problem was that we didn't know if we could find a ride, because in the village we had no car because we lived on the



Dr. Wangdu (center) and Dr. Nida Chenagtsang

continued on page 25

continued on page 21

BOOK REVIEWS

Dream Yoga and the Practice of Natural Light, 2nd Edition.

By Chogyal Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche.

Edited and Introduced by Michael Katz

New York: Snow Lion, 2002

Many Victorians viewed dreams as the "garbage of the mind." In stark contrast, the Surrealist movement, extending the work of Freud beyond its psychoanalytic bounds, sought to unite dreams and waking reality. Numerous traditional societies have similarly placed great stock in dreams, viewing them as both a symbolic language and a practice. And the Tibetan Dzogchen tradition encompasses this range of perspectives and then some, mastering them all with profoundly practical instructions on what we can do with these dramas in which we find ourselves while sleeping. Like his other publicly available books of teachings, Chögyal Namkhai Norbu's *Dream Yoga and the Practice of Natural Light* is a generous transformative reading experience, a resource that will unknot the thought of readers ready to engage it. Additionally (as seems to be the rule with such public works of his), for those who have received Rinpoche's living transmission, the volume can unlock the real essence of such transmission, reconciling the puzzle pieces of our day with the complete picture we embody from a larger perspective.

Rinpoche may surprise new readers early on with his assertion that dream work and lucid dreaming are not the true point of the book but rather secondary practices. The principal task he encourages us to master, and the reference point for everything else in the text, is the practice of natural light connected with the interval between falling asleep and dreaming. If we learn to integrate pure presence of awareness with sleep in this interval, that integration is the natural clear light. If one does this practice, lucid dreaming and dreams of clarity, i.e., visionary dreams, which must be distinguished from ordinary karmic dreams driven by experience (the garbage or leftovers of the mind), will arise automatically. Rinpoche also discusses several ways in which dharma practices done while dreaming and those performed while awake (as well as teachings received in either state!) can support one another. On a related note, he explains in detail how doing both the principal and secondary practices also directly informs how we can relate to other intervals or bardos throughout our lives and at the time of death. So the book's resources have a truly broad application.

The new edition is sufficiently different from the already pivotal previous version to warrant purchasing it and working seriously with its contents. When the first edition of *Dream Yoga* was released ten years ago, it assumed a unique niche in the existing literature on dreams and their significance. In the current edition, Rinpoche, who has had clear abilities in dream practices since his youth, expands his initial commentary on the "practice of the night" with more specific explanations drawn from an intimate and detailed Dzogchen manuscript he has been writing for many years (translated by Dr. James Valby). These explanations really address the full spectrum of concerns a Dzogchen practitioner may have, yet all from the orientation of

dream practice.

Michael Katz's background as a psychologist, dedicated researcher in comparative ethnography on dream work in world cultures enriched his notes and the narrative history that formed his introduction in the prior edition; it serves him equally well here in his further annotations to Rinpoche's text and incorporation of new material. His contribution is consistently complementary and unobtrusive. He has organized the sections of the present edition so that both newcomers to this material and those more familiar with Tantric or Dzogchen approaches to dream work will be enriched from multiple perspectives. Readers are guided to distill their existing knowledge to its essence and expand in a variety of directions from this basis.

Some of the book's most remarkable new material consists of the exercises Rinpoche provides in training, transforming, dissolving, disordering, stabilizing, essentializing, holding and reversing dreams. Additional chapters of interest offer instructions for extending practice beyond the night into the day, as well as practices relating to cultivating the illusory body, clear light practices for developing contemplation, and teachings on the phowa or transfer of consciousness at the time of death. A new chapter in which Rinpoche recounts some of his own dreams of clarity joins another strong chapter of this type from the first edition. This material rounds out the technical aspects of instruction with the lived dimension of these practices.

The new chapters are useful not in the sense of offering merely supplemental commentary, but really in the way they seem to capture the personal and conceptual nuances of Rinpoche's oral teaching style. They are intimate because they directly engage the reader with a bouquet of vocabulary and language atypical of general introductory books yet nonetheless accessible, as is the signature of Rinpoche's talks. For example, one reads: "When one is familiar with that state [the 'clear light of clarity'], one experiences [that light] where manifestations of perceptual experience and mind arise unified in space beyond concept without interruption." Also, Rinpoche's personal narratives concerning his own dreams of clarity bring to the reader such a level of vividness, inspiration and humor that one cannot help but be encouraged to do these practices and know they are real and can bear fruit.

Dream Yoga and the Practice of Natural Light is really a palimpsest or buffet of interrelated texts which prods us to examine the relationship between dreaming and waking states from several different angles. The inclusion of a lively interview with Norbu Rinpoche conducted by the editor, as well as a text on Dzogchen by the nineteenth century master Mipham, "The Buddha No Farther Than One's Palm", originally gave the book such a multi-layered quality; the new material described above serves to further this. All of Rinpoche's public works provide excellent overviews of Dzogchen; *Dream Yoga* does so with a visionary integrity that makes it both an immediate aid in dream practice and a specialized document of lasting historical authority and value.

by Jesse Abbot

The Great History of Garab Dorje, Manjustrimita, Srisingha, Jnanasutra and Vimalamitra

Translated by Jim Valby.

Shang Shung Edizioni, 2002

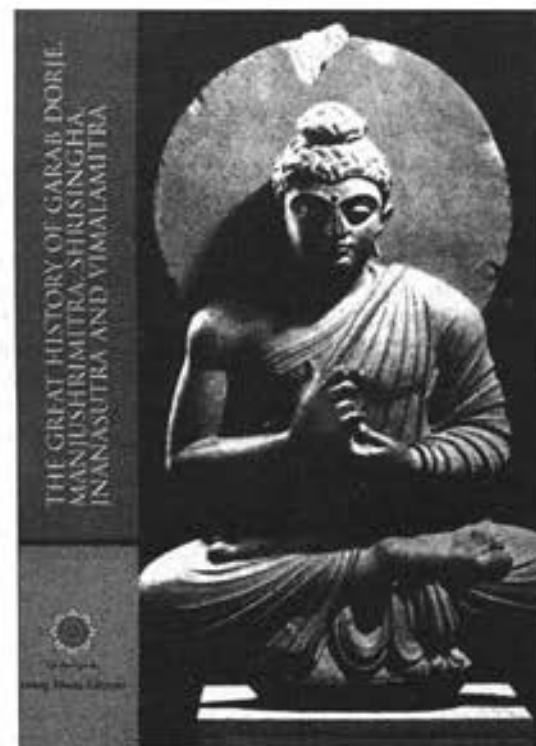
Jim Valby is a long time student of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, who has become widely known within the International Dzogchen Community due to his involvement with the Santi Maha Sangha training. An academically trained Tibetologist and translator, Jim's teacher was Professor Herbert Guenther. The illustrious Dr. Guenther was a pioneer in Tibetan Buddhist studies, noted for the unique and original wording of his translations. Whereas Guenther had the luxury and prestige of financial support from institutions of higher learning, Jim Valby flies beneath the institutional radar screen, and has had to rely upon himself and a small circle of less-than-wealthy patrons for support. In this manner, Jim has been laboring anonymously for years, patiently and methodically translating ancient Dzogchen texts, and staying in touch with other non-academic practitioner-scholars around the world. Jim's "work in progress" constitutes a vast underground treasure of which we are now seeing the first glimpse. The *Great History* represents the first time that Jim has shared one of his translations in print. I asked Jim why he selected *The Great History* as his initial publication. He said that he found these biographies very inspiring because, despite their human weaknesses and errors (such as Shrisimha getting lost for years in the samadhi of emptiness) each of these Masters was able to fully integrate the Dzogchen teachings. Hopefully *The Great History* is just the "tip of the iceberg" will be followed by many future books.

According to Jim Valby's introduction to *The Great History*, this text may have been written by Longchenpa in the 14th century C.E. It purports to relate incidents from the lives of the key figures in the lineage of the Dzogchen teachings, including Garab Dorje, his student Manjustrimita who assembled the teachings into three series, Srisingha who traveled in China, and his students Jnanasutra and Vimalamitra. The book ends with Vimalamitra traveling to Samye monastery in Tibet at the invitation of King Trisong Detsen. Interwoven in the narrative are magical happenings involving wrathful Dakinis, Nagas, and Tantric practices at the cemetery grounds. There is also a pithy explanation of symbolic transmission.

This text is not at all like conventional books. Jim Valby's fresh and contemporary style of translation all the more highlights the strangeness of the narrative.

How do we read a text like this? A scholar might examine its codes and conventions, and compare these to other examples of the genre. A great yogi might penetrate the symbolic meaning of the incidents in the text. And a very pious person might take this history as the literal truth. I do not have the qualifications to read the text from any of these viewpoints. At a loss for what else to do, my approach as a reader was to simply open myself to the text and steep my consciousness in its symbolic images. Perhaps in future books Jim Valby may slip in a few hints about relating to this type of profound material. Or, maybe it is simply up to us to discover.

by Paul Bail



Death of New York City: Selected Poems

by Nina Zivancevic

Foreword by Charles Simac

Cool Grove Press, 2002, 128 pages

In *Death of New York City: Selected Poems*, Nina Zivancevic lives up to her international reputation as one of the foremost living poets of her native Yugoslavia from which she has won numerous prestigious awards since an early age.

In his forward, Charles Simac an expatriate and major American poet wrote: "The genius of her art lies in her ability to make surprising connections between diverse cultures and literature giving her poetry a richness and range that is truly rare."

The key to her poetic genius is very simple. Just as the essence of Guru Yoga cannot be really taught but is a discovery of one's inner nature, so too with syntax, the essence of poetic mind. Syntax—how words are used—is the indefinable perfect harmony of sound, (melopoeia), image (phanapoeia) and meaning (logopoeia), to use Pound's classical definition. One can try conceptually to arrive at perfect syntax but there are some poets for whom this is as natural as breathing. Nina Zivancevic is such a one.

Dedicated to Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, among her other masters; she has not forgotten where homage is due in this first selected poems. Once again Cool Grove Press (Louise Landes Levi's, *Sweet on My Lips*) has distinguished itself in promoting the authentic voices of practitioners. In a world bereft of magic, such a gesture is a magnanimous contribution to literature in a small but meaningful way. Increasingly, reading a cool grove publication is like entering a cool grove of dispassionate

solace, a place of refuge from all the tin ears and harsh materialism of art.

Nina's poems in this diverse selection are a perfect bearing witness, a long love's lament to the sorrows and joy of being alive. Tempered by a lack of the superfluous, her tone is as ample as a Neruda, an Akmatova, a Ritsos. These are the emissaries of humanity beyond cultural boundaries who live up to the art and surpass the mere craft.

I last saw Nina in NYC some years ago. She was in the advanced stages of pregnancy giving a reading in an East Village bar. Louise was there, the late poet, Allen Ginsberg, friends, and the local scene. I remember Nina so well; her black velvet mini-dress about as high up her thighs as possible, beautiful and radiant as only pregnant woman can be, with a voice from heaven.

by Jacqueline Gens

Apart

Under your fingers you hide
The infinite and the fire is
Checking the flow of elements in and out -
Strength of the iron man delayed by water
And his grace - defined by the circumstance
In which he dwells.
Sometimes we become soft like pomegranate,
Sometimes we are eager to fly. What lifts us up
Above the ground is the force
That binds us to good soil and the air,
So we raise our heads above an avalanche
Of public events: sturdy, black and tangible
They pull the strings of
Cosmic unity together
And apart.

NEW PUBLICATIONS from Shang Shung Edizioni

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

The Practice of Contemplation

During the retreat at Monte Fauto in 1980 Chögyal Namkhai Norbu transmitted a complete and progressive method for those who wish to really undertake the practice of contemplation in the Dzogchen tradition.

This book, edited by Constantino Albini, is intended as a manual on contemplation for the use of all practitioners interested in the

Dzogchen teachings. The chapters relating to contemplation have been extracted from the transcription of the teachings of this retreat and the material has been subdivided into three sections which, following the traditional order of fixation-dissolving-continuing, describe and nourish the gradual development of the ability to contemplate.

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 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

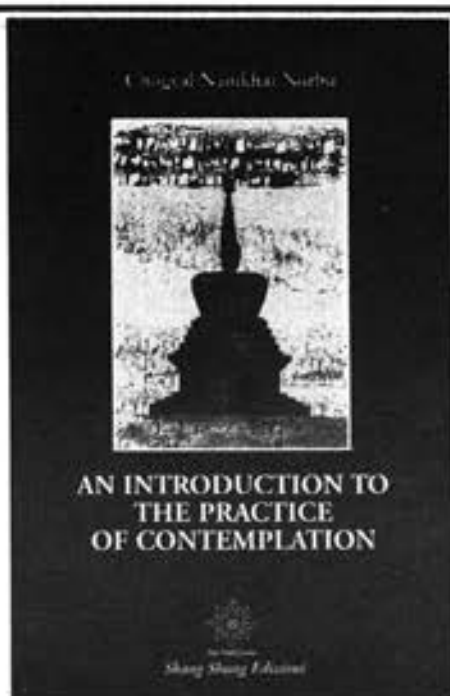
This book is a translation of pages 84 to 165 of "The Great History of the Innermost Essence of Dzogchen". It is possible that in the fourteenth century AD Longchenpa wrote down this history about Dzogchen Masters who lived from about the third century BC to the ninth century AD.

For information on the prices of books and postage contact:

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Email: shangshunged@tiscalinet.it

* see book review on the previous page



CHNN Shung interview con't from page 3

able to have a doctor present, to spreading heat in a more superficial way. However, excluding the first method, in general we could use the other three methods at our center. Regarding the moxibustion treatments, one can refer to the text that I have prepared and to a course for people qualified in Kunye massage which will be held before all these activities begin.

Question: What type of benefits can these types of treatment have?

CNN: We can have particular benefits according to the treatment. For example, if one has a certain chronic illness, he may have some advantages with moxibustion. Or for someone who simply wants to slim, he or she might have moxibustion or curative baths. Even disturbances of the skin that are so common today can have some benefit.

Question: In order to realize this important project, the finances required may be considerable.

CNN: Yes, I think so. But when Merigar was born we had practically nothing but our willingness, our commitments, the sacrifice and effort that we wanted to offer. So if you want to compare the Merigar of yesterday with that of today it strikes you immediately how it developed! Part of the success in creating Merigar was due to the commitment and sacrifice of many people of the Community and of our experts. The greater part of the economic burden was resolved, however, thanks to the generosity of many other people.

From the beginning of the history of Merigar, each time we have presented an important project for the Dzogchen community, the generosity of these people was never lacking. It is for this reason that I am not very worried about the financial side of this project! What is important is that the whole project and the point we want to get to is clear. At the moment, everything is clear and therefore we can go ahead without doubts.

Question: In the past when there have been difficult moments we have invoked the help of the "guardians" to overcome obstacles of all kinds. And help has always arrived. Our perseverance in the practice of the invocation of the guardians has made us stronger and more sure in taking decisions. It has led us to think that before we let ourselves start worrying about different things, it is more important to cultivate this attitude. Do you agree?

CNN: Yes, it is very important to work with the fruit of past experiences. Observing how everything has developed and continued up to now, I think that all will go well in the future. Besides, we shouldn't forget that the Community is linked to the Dzogchen Teaching and thus linked to the practice and to the protection of the guardians. Day by day the people of the Community are becoming more aware of their own condition and the development of the Teaching. For this reason I think that if we go ahead always with practice as we have done in the past, everything will be fine. With the collaboration of everyone, applying the awareness coming from the Teaching to the best of our ability, and respecting the dimension of each one of us, I think that something very useful for all can arise. Something which can become a symbol of greatly wished for happiness and peace for all beings.

Question: Thank you, Rinpoche.

CHNN Shang Shung Institute talk continued from page 3

increase the population, but it is very difficult". Particularly when I went from Nakchuka to East Tibet, many people said that today when children are born they are born strange, as well as many animals. So it's difficult, they said, and they feel afraid to multiply. So this is our concrete condition.

Shang-Shung Institute was started in Italy in 1990 and we invited His Holiness the Dalai Lama for the opening. We opened Shang-Shung Institute to protect Tibetan culture, history, and knowledge; also for study, not only for Tibetans but also for Westerners, anyone who is interested. When there is some important culture, knowledge, understanding on this earth, it is something like a treasure for all sentient beings. Particularly human beings. It is not only for Tibetans. So if we lose this treasure it is a big pity. For that reason our idea is that there is some possibility to study and exchange knowledge. We have hundreds and hundreds of volumes about spiritual teachings, medicine, astrology, art, and all aspects of sciences, in Tibetan. This is Tibetan ancient knowledge. It is important that all these things not become just some books in a library. Sometimes books in a library are very useful, but this is not base of culture. Culture must be alive and it needs its life. Its life is people who are studying, applying that knowledge and also related to the people, the Tibetans, because Tibetans are related to Tibetan culture and knowledge.

Our idea is also that we can try to organize education for Tibetan students, for example, even one, two or three. In Italy, at Shang-Shung Institute, there had been someone studying Tibetan history and culture more seriously. Then these students can contribute and develop that knowledge.

There are many programs within Shang-Shung Institute and we have done many things. For example, people have been studying medicine for years and we have invited Tibetan doctors. In the same way we are translating many books. I remember when I arrived in Italy, there were very few Tibetan books, and today there are many more compared with that period. But when we look in the library and see how many Tibetan books we have, we still have many things to do. Like for example, here we have Jim Valby who is always translating, and we have someone working in the same way in Italy. I feel these things are very important because finally Westerners can study and learn a little. Otherwise there is no way they can understand.

I feel afraid that one day Tibetan books will remain only in a library and will have no life. That's very bad. Something like in Europe, when they speak of the history of the Vikings of Northern Europe, for example. I feel it will end up something like that. Then it will be too late, so we must be aware in each moment. When I went to Chime and talked seriously with many Chinese authorities, I told them that now everything is in their hands and it is not sufficient that they only govern, but that they must save the culture, history, everything, of the Tibetans and the Mongolians; the minorities. Otherwise they will disappear.

For example, when I went to Tibet and traveled to East Tibet by car through central Tibet, I met many school children on the way. When the children came out of school I stopped the car to talk with them. I asked them how old they are? What they are studying? Which class they are in? They understood when I spoke, particularly in East Tibet because I speak a little Eastern dialect, so they could understand, but they replied in Chinese. I asked them if they understood I was speaking Tibetan and they replied in Chinese. I asked if they understood the difference and they said yes. Then I asked something again and they replied again in Chinese. They were completely confused because they study Chinese. They study Chinese because otherwise they couldn't do anything when they grow up.

So you see, in twenty or thirty years it is finished. Older generations die. New generations speak Chinese. It is not necessary to force to change anything. Publishing many books is good, but books remain in the library and don't have much life. It's very, very important that we educate, teach language, and the children are given more possibilities. For that reason our organization of ASIA is creating many schools and hospitals in many places in Tibet, particularly in Amdo and East Tibet. We find it very difficult in Central Tibet because their policies are very rigid.

Shang-Shung Institute is also working in that way and our hope for the future is to develop more. Later we developed Shang-Shung Institute in America and now there are also branches in Germany and Austria. But none of these have a concrete base. In our modern society we need money. If there is no money we can't do anything. For example, if Shang-Shung Institute organizes something, or invites someone, wants to give a scholarship to someone, we need money. Also to maintain Shang-Shung Institute, we need money. Every year we need a great quantity of money. So I always ask Shang-Shung Institute to try and do fundraising and until now we have not succeeded.

I want to ask all interested people how we can really go ahead and work, how we can develop. My idea is that there is some possibility if some people really take care of fundraising for the Institute and really contribute. But if they contribute it does not mean that they only work and not get any money. If someone works on something, that person should get some money, otherwise they can't live or work. So for the people who decide to do something, a percentage of that fundraising will go to the person who does that work. Then there is a possibility that someone can really dedicate and that Shang-Shung Institute can continue.

For example, with Shang-Shung Institute in America, I discovered there are many problems for the economic base of the Institute. It is a pity. We must think a little and we must think in which way we can go ahead. There are interested people in our society and in our Community; there are many expert people in this field. These people have an idea and know how to proceed. So we are asking these people to collaborate, communicate, and give advice to Shang-Shung Institute. The people who would really like to contribute and do something active are also welcome and you can communicate with us and we can do something together in a concrete way.

These are the things I want to say to everybody and I don't want to continue talking too much, so you can enjoy a little here today. I want to send my and our best wishes to all people who are listening in this moment in this world. We can all collaborate and we try to get to the final goal or aim for the Institute.

So this is my hope, and also here, we are here now in Conway in the Dzogchen Community hall, so there are many people and everybody is sending greetings to all people. [Applause and people shouting greetings]

OK. Bye, bye.

This talk is available on CD from Shang-Shung Institute, USA, for \$30US (2 CD's). Check out our web site for other audio presentations at <www.shangshung-usa.org>.

Paldenling - Poland

by Marek Macko

After two years of searching and unsuccessful attempts, the dream of the Polish Community finally came true when we purchased the house and the land that became Paldenling in April, 1997. The same day that the place was legally bought and put in the Community's name, many of our practitioners of the Polish Community went there to do purification practice using the mantra of the five elements. We also met one of our neighbors who lives down the hill and to whom we gave the nickname 'Dorje Legpa'. And so the struggle with this beautiful but very difficult place began.

The main house is a two story brick house with five rooms, kitchen and bathroom but in need of extensive renovation because it had been abandoned for years. There was a second wooden house in ruins which we dismantled so that we could use some of the more useful parts. Of course, in the first year, we could not get much done to the place because it was so far away. During the first winter one strong practitioner did a retreat there and when the thaw arrived at the end of a long winter of snow, the only room, the kitchen, where he was able to live, sleep and make a fire got soaking wet!

Before we bought the house, it had been neglected and empty for many years. For a short time someone had owned it or inhabited it and then returned it to its original owners. In fact, the first time I came into the house, I found a sheet of paper on the kitchen stove with a message on it: "We fed the dog and went to Krakow". On looking more closely, that scrap of paper was the cover of Thackeray's 'Vanity Fair'.

The place has a sad history and some very unfortunate events occurred there in the past. The death of the father and son of the family owning the house led to its being sold. A few years earlier to this two young sisters died there after being struck by lightning. The region itself also has a tragic history and the 20th century brought much suffering to people living

mountains there belongs to the larger mountain range called Karpaty while the mountains themselves belong to the Beskid range and in particular to Beskid Niski; in Polish 'niski' means low, 'beskid' probably means the site of devils.

The view from the Ling is really breathtaking and has all the qualities that we lack in the cities: clear sky above, open space around, calm and quiet and rich vegetation. One of the main roads of the region (there aren't any highways) from Nowy Zmigrod to Dukla runs about 1.5 km to the south. When you take this road from Nowy Zmigrod there is a hill without a peak in the shape of an egg on the left hand side of the road and you can clearly see the Longde cabin on it and a little bit lower down the house. The towering linden trees nearby are visible from far away just like the forest mountains which are on the left

are coming FROM Dukla you turn right) and Paldenling is about 1.5 km.

There is a very nice alternative route to the south from Krakow to Nowy Sacz (which has become Brzesko), then to Gorlice and Nowy Zmigrod. The rest of the route is the same. If you travel from Warsaw which is far away you will need a map or you go to Radom, then Kielce, then Tamow and then proceed as from Krakow.

If you visit Paldenling in Spring or Summer, you may find the weather nice and quiet, however, in Winter you will meet the King of Winds (Kshimharaja, Nyen), not to speak of snow. Try to do some 'sang' or 'serkyem' practice or put up prayer flags. Good luck!!

If you manage to eventually arrive you will find that there are two floors in the house: the ground floor and the first floor. There is an attic but it is still in rather rough condition. On the first floor there is a small Gonpa, the Gekö's room and another two rooms. On the ground floor there is the kitchen, the shower, the WC, the boiler-room and also one small room. On higher ground on the hill in the Dharmakaya Place there is the Longde Cabin (and also the trailer left by the oil-petroleum workers which can be used for personal retreat). The cabin is good for doing Namkha Arte, Zernga, Mandarava, Yantra Yoga and so on. We are going to build (possibly this year) another retreat cabin below the house in the Nirmanakaya Place.

In May 1998, Chögyal Namkhai Norbu visited Paldenling after the retreat in Krakow and gave us many indications. He talked about building a chörten-like structure with two levels, a bit like our Longde Cabin. From this time on we started to organize small group retreats at the Ling. Some people also do personal retreats here. It was also at that time that we started



Longde Cabin

hand side of the road. When you look straight down the road to the horizon you can see a mountain which, from here, has the shape of an Egyptian pyramid. This is Tsegova Mountain which Rinpoche says is sleeping at the moment.

Continuing along this road you arrive in the village of Lysa Gora whose main road is on the left of the road. Just keep straight on and you will see the sign indicating Paldenling on the left. On the left



Main House at Paldenling

hand side of the road as you face Dukla, there is the start of another region that was once inhabited by a people called Lemkas who speak a slightly different language to Polish and have another type of religion. A large part of this forest region is on the other side of the border in the Slovak Republic.

Today the villages there are almost empty or inhabited by new people since the Lemkos were mostly displaced into other regions of Poland by the Commu-

nist government after the war. There along the border of the natural forests of Magura National Park you can find some of the protected species of animals in Europe such as bears, eagles, wolves and lynx.

If you travel to Paldenling from Krakow you move east, first to Tamow, then to Jaslo (Yaslo) and Nowy Zmigrod (which means 'New City of Vipers'). From there you go in the direction of Dukla about 7 km to the village of Lysa Gora (which means 'Shaved Mountain') and you are practically there. Going straight on a little further in the same direction (Dukla) and you will see a tree with a five color strand painted on it on the left hand side of the road. You turn left there (if you

the process of improving the condition of the house and its surroundings.

We managed to resolve many of these things in the last years but we are still discovering many important problems which have only become evident by living at the Ling. There are also projects of development, rebuilding, extending, etc.

If you want to stay at Paldenling it costs 6 zł (Polish currency) per night.

PALDENLING

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Poland

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Longde Cabin

in the area. It is dotted with cemeteries of both World Wars and only a few kilometers from Paldenling in the direction of Dukla one of the most terrible episodes of World War II took place taking almost one hundred thousand lives.

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu gave the name 'Paldenling' to the place; 'palden' probably the same word as in the invocation "Palden Lama! xabba danba dan", so it means 'praiseworthy'. The Paldenling land is situated on a hillside above the village of Lysa Gora, about 160 km south-east of Krakow in beautiful landscape of gentle mountains. The whole region belongs to the south-east part of Poland because Krakow, the old capital of the country, is in the south. The area of the little



merigar

MERIGAR PROGRAM

Summer 2002

July 5 - 9

CHÖGYAL NAMKHAI NORBU

Teachings on Longde

Starts at 4PM on July 5th.

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

July 12 - 21

Yantra Yoga 2nd Level Training course

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.

July 23 - 25

Santi Maha Sangha First Level Exam

Participants must register at the Merigar office beforehand.

July 26 - 30

CHÖGYAL NAMKHAI NORBU

Training for the Second Level Santi Maha Sangha

Starts at 4PM on August 26th.

Cost: 200 Euro no discounts.

August 3 - 4

Lucid Dreams with Michael Katz

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

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

August 9 - 18

CHÖGYAL NAMKHAI NORBU

Dzogchen Teachings

Starts at 4PM on August 9th.

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

August 20 - 27

Vajra Dance

2nd Level Training Course with Prima Mai and Adriana dal Borgo

Starts at 10AM on August 20th and finishes in the afternoon on August 27th. The course is open to those who know both the male and female parts of the Dance of the Song of the Vajra and also those who would like to deepen their knowledge of the Dance, even if they have not done the 1st Level Training course.

Cost: 288 Euro with no discount.

KARMA YOGA

August 31 - September 1

September 27 - October 3

Dance of the Vajra Course - Second Part

with Prima Mai

The course starts at 6PM and finishes at 12AM.

October 5 - 9

Santi Maha Sangha Base Level Practice Retreat

with Jim Valby.

The course starts at 9AM on October 5th and ends at 7.30PM on Sunday. The retreat will be held by Jim Valby who has been a student of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu since 1982.

For further information, contact:

Merigar, 58031 Arcidosso GR, Italy.

Tel.: ++39 0564 966837

Email: merigaroffice@tiscalinet.it

Dear Vajra Brothers and Sisters of the European Dzogchen Community,

We are going to start a new project of translating the Merigar Letter into English. We will be sending it to the Gakyils and from there you will be in charge of sending it out to all members of your Dzogchen Community. The ML will be sent only via email, not printed on paper from Merigar.

As you know, all members have the right of receiving the ML without any cost. If there are people who are not members and would like to receive it, they can pay an annual subscription of 15 Euro.

In a short, while you will receive further information directly from the Merigar Letter's director Tatiyana Minghetti.

We hope this project will help us to better the communication among the European Gakyils and the Dzogchen Community Sangha.

from Merigar

The Longde Retreat

with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu
Merigar, July 5-9, 2002

by Raimondo Bultrini

"Even if a student is new, we do not know what his potentiality is. Although he may never have learned anything about Dzogchen in this life, who knows what type of qualities he could have developed in a past life?". In these few words, Chögyal Namkhai Norbu condensed one of the many great differences between Ati, the path of direct introduction into knowledge of one's own state and the gradual path with its initiation rituals and the taking of Refuge, obligatory for all Dharma practitioners whether they are mature or beginners.

The short retreat of Longsal and Longde at Merigar, as many other retreats held around the world in the last months, witnessed the presence of an extremely high percentage of new practitioners. To be specific, there were more than 100 in the 600 participants who crowded the finally enlarged Merigar Gonpa. This is an important fact for evaluating the impact that the teaching continues to have on a world made up of ever-increasing tensions. It also shows the deeper roots that link old and new practitioners gathered together on the slopes of Mt. Amiata from far flung countries and continents.

The serene atmosphere created during the five day meeting manifested a not entirely unexpected type of "miracle" which, for some time, has accompanied this continuous integration of personalities so different and apparently distant, each one positioned at a point in the long line of transmission that originates with the great masters of the past. In any other social context, the fact that a fifth of the participants are completely new to the scene would mean the creation of a set of delicate yet precarious unstable balances. Basically, however, the Dzogchen Community has seen the

phenomenon of an increasing number of students receiving the teachings which has taken place without any visible changes in the relaxed and hospitable dimension of the practice retreats (with a few samasric exceptions). It has also been accompanied with a level of awareness superior to the role and responsibility that each practitioner has towards the transmission and therefore the future of the teaching. After all, without this requirement we would not have achieved that alchemy of energy and spiritual connection that is able to dissolve the traditional division between "who knows" or thinks he knows and who "doesn't know" or thinks he doesn't.

It has been the Master himself who has created the conditions for this to happen thanks to the different levels of the Santi Maha Sangha. By means of the SMS students from various origins, cultures and nationalities have been able to deepen a knowledge which has, by now, become widespread not only at the level of a few capable and fortunate practitioners, but more and more widely among the base of practitioners of the Community who are generally conditioned by the difficulties of daily life and rarely able to free themselves from the numerous obstacles of their existence through contemplation and Guruyoga.

The Longde retreat at Merigar could possibly be considered the link in a phase of historical passage to verify how deeply certain knowledge has been absorbed by practitioners, considering the difficulty of the subject of the Dzogchen Space Series. In fact the Longde is linked to a concept (an abridged term for the "second testament" of Garab Dorje which asks us to "not remain in doubt") which by definition presupposes that one has overcome the preceding phase of perplexity towards a complex universe of symbols and relative truths which open up after the "direct introduction" from the master's mind to the student's nature of

mind, or the dimension of one's original self-perfected state.

At the end of the Longde retreat, this kind of expansion of the quality of the guru's mind among a greater number of practitioners appeared evident. It was as if the symbols and words used for the Direct Introduction to the State had started to function through the experience of an increasing number of practitioners along the magical route that leads beyond the door of the concept of understanding. The same impulse that had driven so many new practitioners to Merigar to meet the Master's teachings seemed to also be the karmic cause for their entry onto the Path. Or better, the many seeds sown by the Master in all the continents of the globe over the course of years have started to produce fruit which is already ripe. Similar to the Garuda bird mentioned by Rinpoche which, unlike a normal bird, is able to fly as soon as it hatches from its shell.

When the syllable AOM spread through the Gonpa during the initiation of the Heruka Ngondog Gyalpo, at that instant, as fast as lightning in the night, the separation between student and master dissolved letting the barriers between student and student fall automatically as well. It inevitably yet strongly swept away the obstacles arising from relationships caused by pride or by one's past knowledge. It swept away the knowledge of methods and rituals on the part of the old practitioners and the rigid view of the material and spiritual world based on precedent experience on the part of the new practitioners. Moreover, certain esoteric rituals and jargon seem almost fallen into disuse, if not overtaken by the concise and essential way in which the Master introduces the student directly into the state of Ati. Either through the syllable AOM, or the most essential of the wisdom mantras, the white A of the primordial state.

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE DZOGCHEN COMMUNITY

MEETING OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The General Assembly of Members is convened for August 19th 2002. The first convocation will be at 7AM and the 2nd at 10AM. The agenda will include:

- presentation of the annual budget 2001
- election of the Gakyil and Gekö
- any other business

Arcidosso, July 1st 2002

The Director

Sicilia Francesca d'Arista

Renewing the Merigar Gakyil

In August the Gakyil, the Gekö and the secretary will be renewed. These positions are the organizational base that guarantees the functioning of the Community and its many activities. Today it is not easy to find time to devote to others but when we spend time together with others of the Community to practice, study or simply enjoy ourselves, that is the right moment to find the motivation and incentive to offer one's contribution to the group effort. Almost all of us have participated in Karma Yoga even though only occasionally and know the feeling of satisfaction when we work together. The duties of the Gakyil, the Gekö and the secretary ask for a greater commitment but are, without doubt, important for the continuation of the entire structure of the Community. This is why that type of commitment is even harder. If you would like to participate and become a member of the Gakyil, the Gekö or the secretary, please contact the Merigar office at:

Tel: 39 0564 966837.

Email: merigaroffice@tiscalinet.it.



IMPORTANT CHANGES TO SANTI MAHA SANGHA, 2003

Summer 2003

Merigar

July 23rd-25th

1st level exam

July 26th-30th

2nd level training

Autumn 2003

Tsegylgar

September 17th-18th

1st level exam

September 19th-23rd

2nd level training

Karma Yoga for Santi Maha Sangha

Those practitioners who wish to do the First Level exam of the Santi Maha Sangha at Merigar at the end of July should send a list of their activities offered to the Community as Karma Yoga to the Merigar office (merigaroffice@tiscalinet.it) as soon as possible.

The Merigar Gakyil

Vajra Dance Mandala Questionnaire

A Letter from Prima Mai

Hello everyone!

First of all, I would like to thank all who have kindly sent me their information on their local Vajra Dance Mandala.

Please use the form below to send information for a simple database of where there are Vajra Dance Mandalas (excepting string mandalas) on this earth.

Please send the electronic files in JPEG format or via mail to:

Prima Mai

Merigar

Comunita Dzogchen

58031 Arcidosso -GR-

Italy

Email: primamai@tiscalinet.it

I am also asking please that all the Gars send their information as well. The ideal would be that the local Vajra Dance instructor collects it and sends it to me.

Here is the form:

Country/city:

Number of Mandalas:

Photo: (via post: to Merigar/Prima Mai or compressed JPEG attachment)

Material: (material of the Mandala, material of the color)

Size: (size of center...small/medium?)

General information: (For example if it is a stable Mandala, a description of building, the surroundings, etc. and/or other information you choose, for example, experience with the material of Mandala?!)

Contact:

Address:

Tel:

Email:

In the future you might find this Worldmandalainfo on the web sites of the Gars.

Thank you again for your collaboration and help!

A warm hug to you all!!!

Prima Mai

NEW GAKYILS OF EUROPE

ESTONIA

On April 27th, 2002, the Tallinn Dzogchen Community has elected a Gakyil as follows:

BLUE: Mart Viies - viies@hot.ee

RED: Andres Zelmin - zelmin@hot.ee

YELLOW: Svetlana Kolljakova - skol@eer.ee

Rinpoche has approved the Gakyil.

EMAIL: dzogchen@hot.ee

POLAND

BLUE: Maciej Gandys, Marek Macko, Adam Was

YELLOW: Jowita Poniewska (Director), Wojtek Rewinski

RED: Jacek Marciszyn



Rinpoche entering Zhenphenling, Rome

Inauguration of Zhenphenling in Rome

by Ornella Trentin

On June 21st, 2002, on a torrid summer Solstice day, the Roman seat of the Dzogchen Community, Zhenphenling, was inaugurated by Master Chögyal Namkhai Norbu. The large premises which are situated in a central part of Rome are easy to get to, an important fact in a city with so much traffic. Work to prepare the premises was carried out without stopping up to the last moment, with contributions from many people and the tireless energy of the Gakyil who had to resolve all types of difficulties. But at the end everything was ready and when the Master arrived the place looked really splendid and welcoming.

In order to avoid an excessive influx of people both inside and outside the premises, a fact which could have created problems in the near future with the inhabitants of the area, entry was limited to the numerous practitioners of Rome who crowded the room. They were

bursting with excitement partly because they were seeing the Master once again after a long period of time and partly for the concrete impression that the inauguration of the Ling was not just a formality but the start of an important commitment for the future.

After a moving "Invocation of the Lamp", Monlam, the Master underlined the importance of collaboration and respect among practitioners, telling us to bear in mind that projects develop gradually and positively when respect and collaboration are steadfast.

In the afternoon Master Chögyal Namkhai Norbu gave a conference on "Dzogchen, the Teaching of Total Perfection in the Tibetan Buddhist Tradition" at the Faculty of Oriental Studies of La Sapienza University of Rome. During his talk he explained the difference between Sutra and Tantra and the particular characteristics of Dzogchen to an attentive and interested public. It was a memorable and intensive day before the coming summer retreats at Merigar.

"Dzogchen, The Self Perfected State" available soon in Spanish!!!

Contact:

Editorial La Llave

c/o La Dulzaina, 11 bajo

01006-Vitoria

Spain

Email: info@edicioneslallave.com

Czech Retreat with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

October 5th -7th, 2002 in Prague

The Czech and Slovak Dzogchen Community is happy to announce the information about the Dzogchen retreat with Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche to be held in Prague on October 5th -7th, 2002.

More information follows:

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu - Dzogchen Teachings

Prague Oct. 5th -7th, 2002,

Czech Republic

Ballcourt, Prague Castle

Time Schedule:

Dzogchen teachings:

Saturday Oct. 5th, 10:00AM- 12:00

Sunday Oct. 6th, 10:00AM - 12:00

Common practice, 16:00 - 18:00

Monday Oct. 7th, 10:00AM - 13:00

The time schedule for introduction to ritual practices, Yantra Yoga (with Andrico Fabio) and Vajra Dance (with Margit Martinu) will be provided.

On Saturday, October 5th, at 16:00, a public talk with discussion will take place in the Ballcourt of the Prague Castle.

Price: CZK 120

Take your meditation pillows or sitting blankets (chairs will be provided as well).

Prices of the retreat:

Price: Paid before July 31st until Aug. 31 & later
CZK 2.400, CZK 2.800, CZK 3.200 83 Euro, 97 Euro, 110 Euro

With membership discount:

CZK 1.800, CZK 2.100, CZK 2.400

63 Euro, 73 Euro, 83 Euro

How to register: via registration form or via internet at web pages:

<www.dzogchen.cz>.

The registration will be accepted after receiving the payment in CZK or Euro to the account no.:

834092001/2400, variable symbol: 108

If you cancel your application until August 31st, the paid fee will be refunded with a 10% reduction, in the case of cancellation until Sept. 30th with a 20% reduction. No refunds will be provided in the case of cancellations after Sept. 30th.

Place: (Ballcourt) of the Prague Castle, The King's Garden area, Praha I - Hradcany

Transportation:

Prague transit - subway (underground) to station "Malostranska", transfer to tram No.22, 23 - station "Pražský hrad"

By car: Due to lack of parking in the vicinity, we recommend to take public transit or come on foot.

Accommodation:

Cheaper options (hostels Vetrnik and Kajetanka) may be paid together with the retreat fees; in interested in more comfortable or other accommodation, please see: www.pragueaccommodation.com, where you may get other accommodation with approx. 10% discount, if you register as participants of the Dzogchen retreat with Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche. Description of the accommodation at the Vetrnik Hostel (CZK 260 per person without breakfast) or Kajetanka Hostel (CZK 390 per person without breakfast), incl. transport, may be found at www.czechaccommodation.com. Vetrnik offers accommodation in double or three-bed rooms with social amenities outside the rooms, while Kajetanka offers single and double rooms with common kitchen and bathrooms. Accommodation in those two facilities must be paid until Aug. 20, 2002.

The more detailed information leaflet about the retreat, including maps, will be available at www.dzogchen.cz. The information leaflet including the registration form will be also available at Merigar and at local European Gakyils in a printed form.



kunsangar

Retreat with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

Crimean Peninsula in the Ukraine
September 25th - 29th, 2002

Dear Vajra Brothers and Sisters!

Kunsangar and Ukrainian Dzogchen Community are happy to invite everybody to the Crimean peninsula for the Dzogchen retreat with our beloved Teacher Chögyal Namkhai Norbu.

History

Crimea is a peninsula (almost an island) dividing the Black and Azov seas. It's a one of the most beautiful places in the world with a long and rich history. There you can find Scythian sculptures, ruins of Khersones (an ancient Greek colony), Genovian fortress built by Italian traders and soldiers at the time of Renaissance, gorgeous Bakhchisarai palace that belonged to the Muslim Tatar khans that were governing Crimea under Osman patronage. A couple of years ago there was discovered a giant upside-down pyramid, contemporary with those of Mesopotamia. Complex labyrinths of Marble Caves and Red Caves used to serve a place for ancient pagan mysteries as well as later becoming a refuge for an early Christian Catacomb Church. For the army of pre Christian Russian dukes it was a starting point for their victorious raids to Constantinopol, and their steps were later followed by the hosts of Ukrainian Kozak Republic named Sech that were terrifying Osman Empire. Later the southern coast of Crimea became a favorite resort place for the Russian Czars. There were built great palaces: Livadia, Count Vorontsov's palace etc. The cellars of Massandra that supplied Russian rulers with wine still are producing delicious white and red dessert wines.

In the royal parks you can walk along a juniper alley and see a lot of endemic plants like snow palm trees etc. Soviet rulers also enjoyed Crimea although this place was not very lucky for some of them. Gorbachev was kept isolated for three days in his summer residence in Foros during the attempt of the military takeover in 1991 that started the collapse of the Soviet Union. The residence of the Ukrainian acting president is also there.

Nature

The nature of Crimea is surprisingly manifold for such a small territory. Subtropical forests in the South, alpine meadows in the center, prairie in the North, rocks in East and West. And much of this you can observe from the top of Ai-Petri mountain connected by funicular with Yalta, a city where Joseph Stalin, F.D.Roosevelt and Winston Churchill signed a treaty in the end of the second world war.

The retreat place is on the very coast 15 km before Yalta if you go from the Simferopol (Crimean capital) airport. The sea is usually still warm in the end of September (so called "velvet season") and we expect regular swimming thuns with Rinpoche.

Transportation

If you go by plane via Kiev (by Ukrainian companies) or via Stambul (by Turkish airlines) you come to Simferopol. There you can take a taxi to Maly Mayak (lit. Small Beacon), Sanatorium of Kharkov Politechnikal Institute.

Drivers may charge you any money but the reasonable fee is about 20\$ for the 90 km drive. You can also take a bus to Yalta which will cost you about 1.5\$.

Accommodation

There's a plenty of hotels in the vicinity where prices range from 2 to 100\$ per night and this time of the year they are almost empty. It's hardly possible to rent a car for driving yourself but you can find a car-equipped aborigine who will be happy to drive you for 10-20US\$ per day. We will also arrange tourist buses for numerous

trips to Crimean sighting places.

Dates

Rinpoche comes to Ukraine on September 17th from Hungary and leaves for Prague on October 1st. The retreat is taking place for five days from 25th to 29th of September. Before the retreat there will be a Yantra course for the beginners. Its dates will be announced later.

Fees

Retreat fees will be officially announced later by Kunsangar but they are not going to be high (for example last year in Kunsangar the fee for the 7 days retreat was 70\$).

Visa

Now it's not difficult to receive a tourist visa to Ukraine especially if you say that you want to spend a week or to in Crimea. So please consult with some tourist agency in your country. If for some reasons you encounter problems please contact me on dharmadonapex.net. Please note that we can make invitations from a Buddhist community but not too many otherwise it will attract unnecessary attention from what was formerly known as KGB. It's known from the experience that a private invitation may be ready when the retreat is already over. So if it's really difficult for you to get a Ukrainian visa without an invitation please send me you passport data and address and we'll try to do our best.

PLEASE DO YOUR VISA INQUIRY AS SOON AS POSSIBLE SO THAT WE COULD SEND INVITATIONS SOON.

You can find out a bit about the Crimea at: www.tour.crimea.com/english (German version doesn't work).

Flights to Crimea:

There are several international flights directly to Crimea:
Frankfurt - Simferopol, 2 flights on Saturday at midday (International Ukrainian Airlines), arrives 15-15, returns 16-35 also late Saturday evening and arrives on Sunday early morning 2-30, flies back on Sunday 3-35.

Stambul-Simferopol, Turkish Airlines, arrival to Crimea 23-50, Wednesday, Sunday departure from 7-15, Monday, Thursday.

Tel-Aviv - Simferopol, EL-AL, Sunday arrival to Crimea 10-10 departure from 11-15 Wednesday arrival to Crimea 19-20 departure from 20-30

Local time (GMT +2:00). Information from the Simferopol International Airport. Please check everything with your travel agent.

If you go via Kiev (Boryspil International Airport) you can consult <http://www.airport-kiev.kiev.ua/rus/eng> please check your dates because most of the season flights are terminated in September-October.

There are also flights on every working day Kiev-Simferopol on 8-00 and 19-30, but it's from Zhulyany airport, which is quite far from the international airport and you'll need a bus or a taxi. Return flights are also at 8-00 and 19-30 every working day. If you need other days information please let me know.

From the Organizing committee of Crimean retreat
Igor Berkhin
Donetsk, Ukraine

Events in Tseggyalgar

2002

GAKYIL MEETING: The next Tseggyalgar Gakyil meeting will be Saturday, July 20th, 6-9PM. The agenda for the meeting will be posted on Tseggyalgar about a week before the meeting. All are welcome to attend and/or to submit any comments or feedback via fax or email (email is preferred). There will be a short period before decisions are made at the meetings for those present to make comments, as well.

C2C: Dates for the next Dzogchen Community to Community (C2C) Meeting: Oct 18, 19 & 20, 2002 at Tseggyalgar. An agenda for this meeting will be posted as the time of the meeting draws nearer.

GAKYIL ELECTION: The next Tseggyalgar Gakyil Election will be in May 2003. An exact date is forthcoming.

GUARDIAN PRACTICE: every Friday night at the Guardian Cabin at 7:30PM. (please let us know if this is a convenient time for people).

July 13-14 Karma Yoga Weekend at Khandroling
July 18 Anniversary of Guru Padmasambhava Guruyoga
Transmission Worldwide Practice, 11PM EST
July 19-21 Chokyi Nyima Rinpoche
July 27-28 Rushen Practice Weekend at Khandroling

August 10-11 Semdzin Practice Weekend at Khandroling
August 17-18 Karma Yoga Weekend at Khandroling
August 24-25 Yantra Yoga Practice Weekend

Sept 7-8 Vajra Dance Practice Weekend
Sept 14-15 Karma Yoga Weekend at Khandroling
Sept 21-22 SMS Base Level Practice
Sept 27-29 Dream Yoga Workshop with Michael Katz

Oct 12-13 Practice Weekend
Oct 26-27 Practice Weekend
Oct 31 Anniversary of Adzom Drugpa Guruyoga Transmission
Worldwide Practice

Nov 9-10 Practice Weekend
Nov 22-24 Thanksgiving Practice Weekend

Dec 8 Chögyal Namkhai Norbu's Birthday Tara Practice & Party
Dec 27-31 Christmas SMS Practice Retreat with Jim Valby

Ganapuja's are held 4 times every month for Dakini Day, New Moon, Guru Rinpoche Day & Full Moon.

tseggyalgar & west coast

Regarding: Financial Planning and Development Team From Carol Fields (Northern California):

This is a newly forming Tseggyalgar North America Dzogchen Community team which will focus on topics of interest to all North America Dzogchen Community sites, such as Tseggyalgar's on-line bookstore; fundraising resources, suggestions, and assistance; financial planning; Yellow group chats on finances and fundraising; and budget development.

We are looking for participants who have some financial interest or background including accounting, bookkeeping, management, entrepreneurial skills, fundraising, analysis, grantsmanship, financial planning. We know that there are many untapped skills in our Community.

We seek to promote the financial well-being of all of our sites in North America, to encourage financial collaboration, good financial practices, and creative fundraising.

We will be acting as a resource to the Gakyils and Community sites of North America.

Current members are Jim Casilio and Craig Fiels of New Mexico; Kyu of Conway; Diane Campbell of Belize.

Most meetings will be by e-mail or by phone (no cost to members), and members will be invited to attend the twice-yearly Community-to-Community meetings (the last one took place in January in Santa Fe, New Mexico).

Please respond to Carol Fields (Northern California), carolmfields@aol.com, who is mentoring the team, if you would be interested in joining. A GREAT karma yoga opportunity.

Community to Community Meeting Scheduled for 2002 North American Dzogchen Community

October 14th to 16th, 2002

Venue to be announced.

For further information contact:

Tseggyalgar

PO Box 277

Conway, MA 01341

USA

Tel: 413 369 4153

Fax: 413 369 4165

Email: DzogchenUSA@compuserve.com

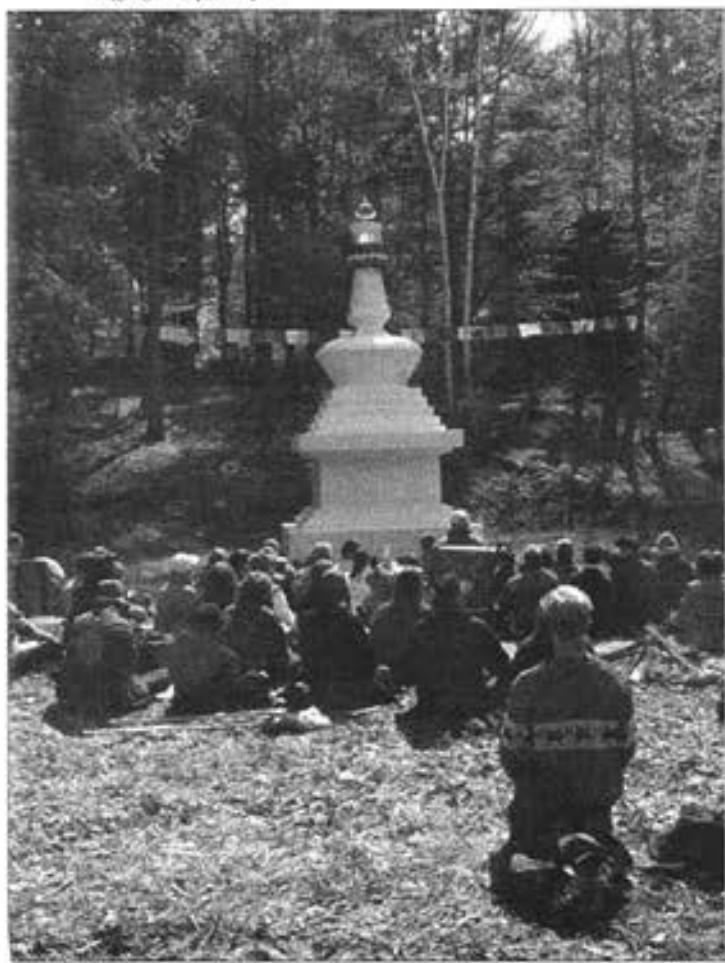
SSI/USA ONLINE

The Shang -Shung Institute in America now has an on-line it's 2002 newsletter, audio excerpts from Chögyal Namkhai Norbu's May 11th talk, a full list of all audio educational resources in Tibetan Medicine, and other updated program information at:
www.shangshung-usa.org



Tsegvalgar Stupa and fire

M. SMITH



Tsegvalgar Stupa inauguration day

J. CLARK

TSEGYALGAR STUPA INAUGURATION MAY 20, 2002

Dear Sangha,
On Monday, May 20, 2002, Chögyal Namkhai Norbu consecrated the newly completed Stupa dedicated to his long life, at Tsegvalgar's Buckland retreat land. The following are attendees' appreciation of the day:

"The singular beauty of that brilliant morning on the land is unforgettable - prayer flags fluttering in a light breeze, the deep quiet of the forest, the burning logs crackling, smoke rising from the fires, tangy fragrance of pine and fallen leaves, birdsong and our voices, small in the immensity, as we prepare for Rinpoche's arrival. He comes and we sit at his feet, facing the Stupa, which seems to grow out of the earth itself, golden sun and moon shining at its top, (radiating light in all directions). Chanting together the ancient syllables of purification and power - all of us become one voice, one force - potent and timeless, him at its center. And afterwards, a quiet walk to beloved places on the land, laughter and wine, and we disperse. But only after returning to the city, moving through the chaotic streets, preoccupied with the surge of noise and emotion, the tangle of lives being lived, does the full impact of the Stupa take hold - when distraction has gripped me, and suddenly it arises in my deepest being, gleaming white, solid and strong as the mountain, generating primal power from its silent place in the forest - awakening and strengthening, and

around it, the prayer flags, sending the Song of the Vajra across the sky."

Tulsi Reynolds, New York City

"Being at Khandroling for the dedication of the Stupa for the long life of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu was like entering a pure realm. Everything on the Buckland land seemed so fresh and exquisitely perfect. Above the Stupa is a finely groomed little grove with nascent grasses and flowers and lovely pine trees. Following the path around this grove one arrives at the summit where there is a Mandala for the Vajra Dance. This land has existed for millennia and will be there as long as there is a human realm. We are all so privileged to be its temporary guardians in this life as a place to further our own and countless other's realization."

Jacqueline Gens, Vermont

We hope that all of our Sangha will have an opportunity to visit the Buckland retreat land and enjoy the beautiful Stupa that resides there.

Some of the expenses of completing the Stupa have yet to be funded. If you would like to make a contribution to help with this, please send a check payable to:
Dzogchen Community in America (or DCA)
P.O. Box 277
Conway, MA 01341
Att: Stupa Fund

Thank you,
Jim Smith
Tsegvalgar

About Stupas Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

The Day of the Stupa Consecration at Khandroling, Tsegvalgar
May 20th, 2002

by Malcolm Smith

On the day of the Stupa consecration, some time after we were finished, Chögyal Namkhai Norbu shared with us some of his knowledge of the function and purpose of Stupas, as well as relating to us a little bit of Changchub Dorje's terma of Stupas:

protection cord.

When I saw this letter I was there in Khandroling, and Changchub Dorje put this letter of the Dalai Lama (the Dalai Lama was very young), and this kadag, a very elegant kadag, with this protection cord; were all put on the srog shing [life pillar] of a chorten. Changchub Dorje built one more chorten in that

thing, but somehow he made the cement that way. Maybe he burned stones in a fire, and then made the cement some way; but I don't know how he made it.

That had been very useful, because for that reason the cultural revolution couldn't destroy the main points of the chortens. All on the top [waves hand to show they were



Tsegvalgar Stupa inauguration day

P. BAIL

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu: ...it's a terma, not only ordinary chorten [mchod rten]. These are ordinary chortens [pointing to the Tsegvalgar Stupa]. We have rNam rGyal [complete victory] chortens, Byang Chub [enlightenment] chortens, bDe bShegs [tathagata] chortens, like this, in different forms, but they are more traditional. But Changchub Dorje's terma are very different; maybe he built more than forty chortens in Khandroling. During the cultural revolution all of the upper part was destroyed, but they did not succeed in destroying the lower part because Changchub Dorje built them with a kind of cement. That was his way of doing it. It is very, very hard, like a kind of stone, so they couldn't destroy it. Changchub Dorje's terma, these chortens, are originally related to the benefit of Tibet. He had these terma teachings of the chorten. Also there were instructions saying these 108 chortens should be built in all important places of Tibet. If one succeeded to build all 108 chortens, which one should do, negativities would be controlled under these chortens, called gdra 'dud 'phung gsum mnan pa [controlling enemies, demons and misfortune]. mNan pa is "controlled"; dGra sri [recurring enemies], 'dud sri [recurring demons], 'phung sri [recurring misfortune], they are three. If this was done all over Tibet, in his indication it said there would be a guarantee there will not be a problem for Tibet.

For that reason Changchub Dorje also asked the Central Government to build chortens, and many of his students, Kagyupas, Drukpa Kagyu, important Lamas, built six or seven in different places and did so in a very precise way. Then Changchub Dorje himself built more than forty different chortens in Khandroling. He sent a letter to the Central Tibetan Government, but they didn't do anything. In that period Dalai Lama was very young, so the Regent was the power. I saw the reply to his letter from the government of the Dalai Lama, saying, "You can try to build many chortens for the benefit of all Tibet. That is very good action and also your intention is very good. So we are very happy, you should still try to go ahead." This was the reply. There was a nice kadag, and a nice

period. This was all, so his terma have did not function in a perfect way, because many, many chortens were missing.

Q: Is this specifically for building in Tibet?

ChNN: It's not so very difficult if my teacher, Changchub Dorje, who was a powerful Lama, something like Dalai Lama, asked then immediately they would do. [laughs]. My teacher was...now we say Changchub Dorje has become famous, but at that period he was in a village at the frontier, only a few people gave him any consideration, so it was not so easy. Some of his students in Dzigar monastery, Hamgar, and also Trungba, two or three small monasteries, important Lamas of Kagyupa, were students of Changchub Dorje and they built six or seven chortens in some important places. That is all. So maybe, at the end, he realized more or less, less than half, then problems arose [for Tibet].

Q: Are these big chortens, or how tall, what size?

ChNN: Most of Changchub Dorje's chortens are this size [indicating the Tsegvalgar Stupa], but they are very different in form, very different.

Q: Would it be possible to build them now?

ChNN: rTa rgyug 'tshar, thal ba yal 'tshar [the horse race is finished, the dust has finished settling]. That is what the Tibetans say.

Q: What does that mean?

ChNN: Explain [pointing to Fabio]

Fabio: The horse has already gone, even the dust has already settled, then you get to see the races.

[general laughter]

Fabio: He [Chang] with this special cement.

ChNN: Yes, this is his knowledge. He built all the chortens with this kind of cement because it becomes like a kind of stone, it's very hard. I really don't know how he made this cement. He had no factory or any-

destroyed]...now all are repaired. But the main points are important because inside there is mantra, and all other things.

Q: What is the function, generally, of the chorten.

ChNN: Stupa? Stupa, it depends, for example, some Stupas are particularly for controlling such negativities in a country. Some Stupas are also for increasing prosperity in a country. In general, Stupas like this are called Byang chub chorten, rnam rgyal chorten, etc. The main point is for having a little benefit for all these dimensions. For example, negativities diminish, prosperity increases, not only for a person, or a group of persons, but for that dimension too. It is something important. When people discovered the Stupa in Merigar, all the local people were interested and donated money, and effort, etc. It was very nice.

Fabio: Most local shops have a picture.

Q: Rinpoche, why did you choose this site for the Stupa?

ChNN: This site?

Q: This place.

ChNN This place? This place, in this area, this is the connection for these two hills. Like when you are going on a horse you have a saddle, no? This is the saddle. If you remain on the saddle you can go ahead.

[general laughter]

This is an important place. Yes...Building a Stupa can really bring benefit for all around.



Santi Maha Sangha Level One Training at Tsegvalgar, May, 2002

ATSUKO OZERI



PHOTO CREDIT: J. LAFRANCE

A Visit to Philadelphia

by John LaFrance

On a mild Saturday evening on June 8th, Rinpoche entered a packed theater at the International House in Philadelphia on his first visit to this city. For this public talk, he sat on a beautifully lit stage in front of an eight foot high Shakyamuni Buddha thanka and filled the room with his energy and wisdom. For two hours a crowd of over 250 people sat spellbound as he explained the Three Gates in relation to Sutra, Tantra and Dzogchen. Rinpoche noticed that not only were many in the audience meeting him for the first time, but that it was also their first Dharma teaching. On leaving many were heard to say that they wanted to hear more about Dzogchen. Hopefully, they will have their chance.



New Tsegvalgar Gakyil

ATSUKO OZERI

California Summer Program

LAMA WANGDOR

July 20 and 21, 2002

Lama Wangdor Rinpoche
Teachings TBA soon!
Dzogchen Community West Center
2748 Adeline Street, 2nd Floor
Berkeley, CA 510.644.2260

SANTI MAHA SANGHA STUDY AND PRACTICE SESSIONS

There will be no sessions on Sunday July 7, 14 & 21.

There will be SMS session on July 28th.

WEEKLY CHÖD PRACTICE

For the month of July

Beginning July 1st

Monday at 7:30PM

This is a chance to deepen one's Chöd practice. We will spend some time discussing the practice as well as working with the use of the drum and bell as needed. The focus will be on doing the practice. There are a limited number of books showing the drumming as well as a new Chöd book available to buy.

VAJRA DANCE

Starting July 2nd

Regular weekly Vajra Dance moves to Tuesdays, 7:30-9:30PM

Please note: on Ganapuja nights dance will start at 8:30PM

Everyone is welcome.

YANTRA YOGA

Yantra Yoga Basics

Sundays at 9:30AM - By prior arrangement ONLY
please call (510) 525-5779 if you want to come

The 11:15AM practitioners' group will meet as usual.

Sunday July 14th - no Yantra Yoga sessions due to the practice retreat

Sunday July 21st - no Yantra Yoga sessions due to the retreat with Lama Wangdor

Yantra Yoga Practitioners' Group

Sundays at 11:00 AM ongoing

Dzogchen Community West Coast

Dondrub Ling

2748 Adeline Street #D, Berkeley

Contact phone: 510/644-2260

Web site: www.dzogchencommunitywest.org

Email: aha@dzogchencommunitywest.org

NEW GAKYIL OF TSEGYALGAR

BLUE

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c/o Tsegvalgar
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Tel: 617-876-4311
Email: mfe.smith@verizon.net

Bosley Hiss

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Cambridge, MA
Tel messages: 617-354-8281
Email: bosleyh@buddhamail.net

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YELLOW

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Kyu Khandro

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RED

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Martha Tack

PO Box 54
Sutton, VT 05867

NEW CALIFORNIA GAKYIL

YELLOW:

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Email: carolmfields@aol.com

Patrick Tribble, Treasurer

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Email: patdcl@aol.com

Amy Beddoe

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Email: abeddoe@baymoon.com

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Laurel Bellon

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William Sboncho Wright

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#6511
Email: wright@cybersource.com

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Email: geneskh@aol.com

Ann Clarkson

Tel: 707-745-6325
Email: aclarkson@mindspring.com

Margaret Bradford

Tel: 925-798-8748
Email: vajrapamo@aol.com



Chökyi Nyima Rinpoche to Teach

in Northampton, Massachusetts and Tsegalgar

July 19th, 20th and 21st, 2002

Chökyi Nyima Rinpoche, the eldest son of Tulku Urgyen, will give Dzogchen Teachings at Tsegalgar, Conway, Massachusetts, on Saturday and Sunday, July 20th and 21st. Rinpoche will give a public talk entitled "The Noble Spirit" on Friday, July 19th, in Northampton.

The schedule Saturday and Sunday is:
10AM to Noon, Saturday and Sunday
3:30PM to 5:30PM on Saturday
1:30PM to 3:30PM on Sunday

The Program is \$125.00 excluding personal offerings to Rinpoche.

For further information and registration contact:

DzogchenUSA@compuserve.com or the Secretary at Tsegalgar at 413 369-4153



ADVANCED YANTRA YOGA and TEACHER TRAINING COURSE

at Namgyalgar
March 23 - April 6, 2003
with Fabio Andrico
and Laura Evangelisti

This will be two courses combined in one with the Yantra Yoga Teacher Training 1st Level from March 23-30 and the Advanced Yantra Yoga from March 31 - April 6.

People who are eligible can do both or one of the courses. To undertake the courses it is necessary to be a student of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu and have completed and be familiar with the Eight Movements. For the Advanced Yantra Yoga Course, participants will have already practicing Tsijong, Lungsang, Tsandul, 1st and 2nd groups and the corresponding breathings.

For further details and registration please contact the Secretary of Namgyalgar:
Namgyalgar Dzogchen Community in Australia
Vicki Forscutt - Secretary
PO Box 14 Central Tilba,
NSW 2546
Tel/Fax: 61 02 4473 7668
Email: namgyalg@acr.net.au
Web site: www.dzogchen.org.au

TENZIN GYATSO, HIS HOLINESS THE DALAI LAMA OF TIBET, VISITS VICTORIA

by Prue Forbes

Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche's students flocked to Melbourne from NSW, Western Australia, far North Queensland and even from far away places such as Margarita Island. Students from different Tibetan lineages, Buddhists from other traditions were among the crowd preparing for this visit.



DZ Community Booth

Five Dzogchen practitioners from Cairns camped all over the floor in my tiny place in the city. We met our friends Carol and Karma. Karma Phuntsok, the famous Tibetan artist, was exhibiting his paintings. We had lunch with him and heard that His Holiness was arriving at the airport in a few hours.

We arrived at the airport to welcome him, meeting up with many of Rinpoche's students. Tibetan incense, bright colors and happy faces added to the golden glow that seemed to surround His Holiness wherever he went. Suzana Dewa was clearly leading the media on behalf of the Dalai Lama visit committee. She worked tirelessly for both this committee and the Dzogchen Community. The Dzogchen Community was visible throughout the teachings, especially at the stall which became a meeting place.

At the airport, as always, His Holiness was accessible to each individual. He seemed to be passing us quickly but he suddenly swung around and saw Natasha from Cairns. Her fortunate unborn baby received a blessing from His Holiness as he bent to touch foreheads and accept the flowers from our garden. We slept well that night, knowing he was nearby, in the same city. On Sunday, May 19th, more than 30,000 people attended the public talk at the Rod Laver Arena in Melbourne. Instead of watching tennis, this crowd experienced a colorful spectacle. Rows of monks sat beside the Dalai Lama. Their bright robes added to the golden surroundings. Thousands of people could not get inside, despite the aisles being packed. Large video screens in cold, wet and windy weather were the closest some came to being with the Dalai Lama.

His Holiness came in, smiling and humble, greeting fellow monks warmly and lovingly. He looked well and happy. He often shook with laughter over the next few days. The first day he spoke about emotions. He also encouraged us to reduce the gap between perception and reality. He explained that physical pleasure cannot reduce mental pain but that mental pleasure can reduce physical pain, reminding us of the power of the mind. He answered questions with great wisdom, intelligence, clarity and wit.

He reminded educational leaders and the media of the great influence they had in society. He reminded them (and all of us) that prayer and meditation do not bring happiness. Happiness requires effort, intelligence, experimenting, confidence and the understanding of reality.

The next day over 9,000 secondary school students from years 10, 11 and 12 filed in while we were relaxing between teachings. His Holiness spent this time in dialogue with them and some of us watched this on the video screens. He replied directly to direct questions from the students. The students laughed a lot while he joked. He was serious in his answer about conservation of the Tibetan land. The damage being done to the Tibetan environment can affect 40 million people in surrounding countries downstream as well as the 6 million Tibetans.

Over three days we studied Atisha's *Lamp of the Path to Enlightenment* and we were given Chenrezig empowerment. This was a profound experience. In Geelong we had a White Tara initiation. Thousands more attended the public talk there in the afternoon. Geshe Sonam Thargye and the Mayor of Geelong acknowledged the great benefit His Holiness had brought to the Geelong city and region by being there. Sunshine streamed into the stadium during the whole day. Football there will never be the same again! Again, hundreds of school students were ushered in to hear the wise words.

As His Holiness gave his final bow, we had tears in our eyes. Many people followed him to the Yuroke center just north of Melbourne, then on to Canberra and Sydney. But finally we were left behind. Unlike us, he appears to have unlimited energy and travels so quickly.

Afterwards we said good-bye to friends from the Dzogchen Community. We will be meeting again soon when Rinpoche returns for the December retreat at Namgyalgar to continue the good work of His Holiness. We are so fortunate to have access to these great men (dare I say, Buddhas). May all Tibetans have access to His Holiness and other Masters, just as we do.

namgyalgar

Namgyalgar Gakyil Report, June 2002

by Paul Mortensen, Blue Gakyil

The purpose of Namgyalgar is to further the practice of present and future practitioners of Australia-Asia-Pacific and global Dzogchen Communities. To establish that aim, our focus is now shifting from development of the public retreat areas to the "inner" part of the land and the building of three retreat cabins in the saddle, between camping areas and Mt. Gulaga. Before we start on that project, however, we need the approval of the local council. After submitting our development application to council, we now await an inspection of the land by councilors. We expect a decision in June and remain confident of approval. Meanwhile, development of the public-retreat area remains a focus: the Gonpa is getting a new wooden floor - one half of that new floor will have a painted Dance Mandala.

As the future of the Gar also depends on members - here the good news is that we now total 101

with 67 basic and 34 sustaining members; and more new members are expected at the beginning of the membership year, July 1st, 2002. But for a stable financial future, we need to pay off the mortgage as soon as possible. Individuals are now contributing to Namgyalgar's Land Fund. There are still 77 "auspicious units of virtuous debt" available (each unit is A\$1000). So far, contributions have come from unexpected places, reminding us we really are a global Vajra Community: France, Italy, and the U.S. You are welcome to contribute. As for the Gar's involvement in Margarita Island, the Gakyil agreed to support Mark Farrington's proposal to Rinpoche to invest \$10,000 in the aloe-vera project. Meanwhile, congratulations to Margarita Island-returnees Elise Stutchbury, Angie Gilbert who passed SMS Base level teacher training and to Jean Mackintosh who is now a certified Vajra Dance teacher.

This year the Gakyil welcomed a few new members: to Blue, Jan

Taylor and Paul Mortensen, to Yellow, Peter Phipps and Ivan Barker and to Red, Steph Kerr. We also have a new Gekö Paddy Joos who has settled into his role very quickly.

The web site for Namgyalgar is now on-line at <www.dzogchen.org.au>. Additions to the site in coming months will include pages for a book shop and images of Namgyalgar. Our Vajra-brother David Sharp, who died Jan. 23rd, 2002, in Auckland (N.Z.), generously bequeathed in his will A\$350,000 for preservation of the teachings of Rinpoche; we expect those funds to support future resident and visiting translators to Namgyalgar. Finally, Namgyalgar is preparing for the return of our precious Master on Nov.25th, 2002. We would like to extend our welcome to you to join these retreats in 2002 and 2003.

Namgyalgar

New Retreat Prices

Dear Dzogchenpas,

Things change. Sometimes it's wonderful, sometimes a little hard for us to handle and sometimes both! They just keep changing anyway. Here's some information about a couple of changes on their way at Namgyalgar and how to prepare for them. Last year the International Gakyil decided that it was necessary to introduce a fee at Rinpoche's retreats for sustaining members at 40% of the full rate (previously sustaining members could attend these for free). The Namgyalgar Gakyil is now announcing that we will follow this new policy at Rinpoche's Namgyalgar retreats from now on, and wants all sustaining members to be aware of this before renewing their membership on July 1st, 2002. Perhaps, as when we raised the sustaining membership rate, this will lead to a surge of new sustaining members joining up contrary to all our expectations!

Last year Merigar made a significant increase in their retreat fees. We have realized the importance of doing so at Namgyalgar as well for a number of reasons. In the future our precious master will travel less. He has not been to Namgyalgar for three years, we do not know when he will return after 2003, and in the past retreats with Rinpoche have been a major source of revenue for Namgyalgar. The upshot of all this is that we are incredibly fortunate to have Rinpoche coming to Namgyalgar to give his precious teachings. This is an increasingly rare opportunity. So definitely come to Namgyalgar at Christmas and Easter and start saving NOW for these retreats; it's much, much cheaper than flying to Venezuela! There are a whole range of payment options, including direct debit from your account starting before the retreat if you like! Contact Viki at the office for details when you book for the retreat.

Peter Phipps (Yellow Gakyil)

The Land Fund

It is really not long now before our precious Master once again teaches and walks on Namgyalgar earth. Wouldn't it be lovely to have him step onto the land owned completely by the Dzogchen Community, a stable base for generations to come? This need not be a fantasy. Namgyalgar can be ours in these coming months if we all contribute. With the financial year coming to a close consider the land fund for your tax deductible donation. Simultaneously you can practice generosity and think practically. Now is the time! Please contact me and to organize your contribution.

Ely Loudon

Tel: 0403 843 913

Email: eleanor.c.loudon@uts.edu.au

PS. Those who have been regularly offering to the land fund throughout the year will receive their tax deductible receipt for the total amount at the end of June.



The Dzogchen Teachings of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu Australia, 2002 - 2003

The Dzogchen Community of Namgyalgar is pleased to announce the following program of retreats and courses in Australia, 2003 -2003:

Namgyalgar Program
Retreats with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu
Namgyalgar Summer Retreat
December 26, 2002 - January 1, 2003
Namgyalgar Autumn Retreat
April 18 - 22, 2003

Program

The retreats will commence at 3PM on the first day and end at midday on the last day. Chögyal Namkhai Norbu will teach one 2 hour session each day, starting at 4PM on the first day and from 10AM -12noon for the remainder of the retreat. Introductory Yantra Yoga and Vajra Dance will also be taught daily.

Accommodation

Namgyalgar Tent sites

A total of 65 tent sites are available in the camping ground at the Gar. During Rinpoche's retreats these will be for use by members only, with some sites being reserved for overseas members. Tent site reservations for the Summer Retreat can be made now but are only confirmed upon registration for the retreat with payment of \$100. deposit. (NB: the \$100. deposit paid is for the retreat. Camping Fees are additional). Several tent sites have been reserved at a nearby caravan park for people unable to camp on the Gar.

Rental Accommodations

As rental accommodation in the vicinity of the Gar is in high demand during peak holiday times it is advisable to make bookings well in advance (like now!) for both Summer and Autumn retreats. An accommodation list is available from the Secretary, or you can check out the Narooma Visitors Center web site which features up to date information on accommodation in the area at: narooma@naturecoast-tourism.com.au. Available are caravans, cabins, houses, bed and breakfasts, hotels, motels, youth hostel.

Share Cabins

A number of share cabins have been reserved by the community which will be available to single people and couples who are unable to arrange accommodation for themselves and require people to share with. Further details available from Viki at the Office. Some cabins are located close to the Gar and others are located near Wallaga Lake. A minibus will assist people without transport.

Meals

Three catered meals per day will be provided at the retreat which are included in the retreat fees. Cheaper retreat fees apply if you choose the option of not having catered meals. Note that people camping at the Gar are not permitted to cook or have fires at their tent sites and there will be not be any cooking facilities available for self catering except for parents with very young children. (Meals are free to children under 18 years).

Child care

Professional child care will be provided during the time Chögyal Namkhai Norbu is teaching. This is fully subsidized but donations are most welcome. All children under 18 years must be in child care or else under supervision by their parents. Please register your children well in advance of the retreat so that the number of children requiring child care can be determined.

Transport

An information sheet about transport from the nearest cities of Sydney, Melbourne and Canberra to Namgyalgar is available from the Secretary.

COST FOR NAMGYALGAR RETREATS

Retreat Pricing	Catered Meals / No Meals
7 Day Summer Retreat	
Non-members	AUD \$ 720. / \$650.
Basic Members	AUD \$ 600. / \$530.
Concession cardholders	AUD \$ 600. / \$530.
Sustaining members	AUD \$ 440. / \$370.
(AUD\$ Australian dollars)	

5 Day Autumn Retreat

Non-members	AUD \$ 515. / \$465.
Basic Members	AUD \$ 430. / \$380.
Concession cardholders	AUD \$ 430. / \$380.
Sustaining members	AUD \$ 315. / \$265.

A deposit of \$100AUD is required upon registration. This is refundable up until November 1st. (not after that date)

An Early Bird discount of 10% applies on full retreat fees paid before September 31st.

Work Exchange

A limited number of places will be available in the areas such as pre-retreat set up and kitchen. Work exchangers will be required to work up to eight hours per day outside the time of Rinpoche's teachings. Job descriptions will be provided. Please register your interest with the Secretary.

REGISTRATION FOR NAMGYALGAR RETREATS

Registration for the Namgyalgar retreats and reservation of tent sites (for members only) can be made as of now.

Please post your deposit of \$100AUD by overseas bank draft payable to the "Dzogchen Community" to:

The Secretary, Namgyalgar, PO Box 14, Central Tilba, NSW, 2546, Australia. To make a credit card payment please phone or fax the following details:

Cardholders Name; Card Type: (Visa / Master / Bankcard);

Expiry Date; Amount to be paid (in AU\$) to the Namgyalgar office at:

continued above

Namgyalgar retreat info con't

Tel/Fax: 61.02.4473 7668

Or you can send the details in two separate emails to:

namgyalg@acr.net.au

Please indicate if you need a single or family tent site (large sites are limited).

For further information about retreat prices, transport, accommodation, and visiting Namgyalgar please contact the Secretary at Namgyalgar.

Santi Maha Sangha

April 8th - 10th, 2003

Base Level Exam

April 11th - 15th, 2003

Level 1 Training

To undertake the SMS Exam and training it is necessary to be a member of a Gar. Please prepare your record of Karma Yoga undertaken in the community to send to the Karma Yoga coordinator of Namgyalgar before the exam. The exam is free but fees will apply for the training retreat.

VAJRA DANCE COURSE

January 2nd - 18th, 2002

with Adriana dal Borgo

For further information/registration for SMS and Courses please contact the Secretary.

Namgyalgar Dzogchen Community in Australia

Vicki Forscutt - Secretary

PO Box 14 Central Tilba,

NSW 2546, Australia

Tel/Fax: 61 02 4473 7668

Email: namgyalg@acr.net.au

Group Retreat in Cairns

by Dieter Kirchner

On Saturday, January 26th, 2002, nine of us came together at the Smithfield Vihara for the Dzogchen Group Practice Retreat. The three days of practice were dedicated to the long lives of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, our Rinpoche and all Dharma teachers in this world. We received explanations of many of the practices from those among us with much experience. It was amazing how much detail, nuances and stories were remembered by those who had attended retreats with Rinpoche in the past. The program was stretched, amended and rearranged as the retreat progressed. Some of the more memorable times were the Vajra Dance, during the Dance of the Liberation of the Six Spaces, blessings in the form of a tropical shower poured down, leaving us all drenched to the bone. The three days culminated with a Ganapuja, and feelings of togetherness and closeness as we all went on our way. Many thanks go to all who came and made the three days possible, especially Dhammika and Lawrence who are always there!

Retreat with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

Caloundra, Sunshine Coast, Australia.

January 24th - 28th, 2003

The Dzogchen Community in Australia is happy to announce that a 5 day retreat, with Dzogchen Teachings by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, will be held at Caloundra near Brisbane, in Queensland, Australia, from January 24th to 28th, 2003. The retreat will include instructions on the Vajra Dance by Adriana dal Borgo and Yantra Yoga by Fabio Andrico, and also explanations of the practice methods by senior practitioners.

It will be held at a lovely place called Ewen Maddock Dam Recreational Center about 15 minutes drive from the town of Caloundra. (Please see pictures and information by clicking on Bush Camp at the web site: WWW.campsrus.com.au)

The retreat will be residential with a choice of dormitory accommodation or tent sites available. This area is a very beautiful part of Australia, situated close to the sea and the Glass House mountains, with a subtropical climate where it is deliciously warm between November to April.

The retreat venue is situated beside a lake surrounded by a large area of bushland and retreatants will be able to enjoy walks in the bush, swimming, sailing, relaxing, and visits to beaches, the glass house mountains and other tourist attractions.

Caloundra is only one hour from Brisbane to where overseas visitors can fly and then travel by hire car or bus or train or ride to Caloundra. Further details (ie: directions to the venue, accommodations and other information) are available from Dammika Mills - please see below.

REGISTRATION AND INQUIRIES - please contact:

Dammika Mills

Bodhicitta Buddhist Center

Tel: 07 -40382482

Fax: 07 -40382682

Email: bodhicitt@iig.com.au

Important: Please do not contact the Ewen Maddock Dam Recreational Center to register for the retreat, make accommodation reservations or inquire for information. All inquiries are to be made with the Dzogchen Community by contacting Dammika as above.

ACCOMMODATION

Accommodation includes several large bunkhouses and cabins with dormitory style accommodation (which do not include facilities for self-catering).

For campers, a limited number of tent sites with facilities for self-catering are available.

CHILD CARE

Professional child care will be provided. Possible activities for kids include: Swimming; canoeing, ropes courses, nature activities, etc. When registering please inform Dammika of children's names and ages.

COST

The prices include the retreat + accommodation + meals or no meals:

FULL PRICE:

Dormitory / catered meals	- AUD\$420.
Camping / catered meals	- AUD\$395.
Camping / self catered meals	- AUD\$295.
Concession card holder:	
Dormitory / catered meals	- AUD\$340.
Camping / catered meals	- AUD\$325.
Camping / self catered meals	- AUD\$240.

MEMBERS:

Sustaining Member:	
Dormitory / catered meals	- AUD\$270.
Camping / catered meals	- AUD\$245.
Camping / self catered meals	- AUD\$190.

Basic Member:

Dormitory / catered meals	- AUD\$340.
Camping / catered meals	- AUD\$325.
Camping / self catered meals	- AUD\$240.

(Note: For self catering simple barbecue facilities only are available in the camping ground. There is no separate kitchen. Anyone wanting to self cater would only have access to the barbecue area.)

MEALS

The catered meals will be mostly simple vegetarian with some meat meals included. If you have special dietary needs, you may want to consider self-catering (please inquire with Dammika about facilities available.)

Special Needs:

The site is wheelchair accessible. If you have special needs please check with Dammika.

NAMGYALGAR'S WEB SITE

Dear Vajra Brothers and Sisters,

The Dzogchen Community of Namgyalgar is happy to announce a new web site has been launched. Please check out the site at:

<http://www.dzogchen.org.au>

Note that additional information will be added to the site in the coming months.

Best wishes to everyone,

Viki

Namgyalgar Secretary



tashigar, north & south & south america

Margarita Community Land Update

by Diane Campbell

The Land at Margarita is concretely developing! Here are the highlights of "what's happening":

All 35 lots at Tashigar del Norte are sold.

Locations for Rinpoche's House, the Gonpa, Aloe Processing, etc., have been established.

Urbanization is in final planning stages and work will begin this summer.

Almost half of the lot owners (!) have indicated that they plan to begin construction of their homes as soon as is practical. Most hope to commence this year. Much mutual discussion has occurred amongst members as to styles, building materials, etc. This process continues to be a lively and creative collaboration.

Documents for the formalization of a Community Land Association are in their final stages of legalization.

Members are communicating with each other regularly. A concrete sense of a living community is developing amongst us. Our membership has a remarkable pool of talent that is perfect for such a project. In the group we have people with deep professional expertise; lawyers, geologists, builders, bankers, financial planners, estate planners, community land development, international marketing and sales. We are experiencing a clear and dramatic manifestation of the teachings and whatever our needs have been, we have found the resources right here in our little boat. Also, we are having LOTS OF FUN!!!!!!

Om-A-Hum.



Aloe babies

An Update from the Board of Directors of the Aloe Vera Land Project at Margarita

by Rosemary Friend

During the Longsal retreat held near Pedro Gonzalez on Margarita island there were several energetic meetings held with the purpose of finalizing the sale of the thirty-five lots of land made available to those Dzogchen community members interested in participating in the land - aloe vera project that was inspired by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu in collaboration with our Venezuelan Vajra kin. Many aspects were discussed including the housing development, the aloe vera project and the relationship between the shareholders and the Gar.

At the final meeting at the end of April a Board of Directors - Dick Drury, Diane Campbell, Mark Farrington, Gian Paolo Imola, Michel Dubourdieu and Gilberto Parella - was elected and they have been meeting daily via email since that time in order to attend to all the legal, financial, strategic and practical issues that accompany the development of such a project. Mark Fulton is financial advisor to the Board and Rosemary Friend is the secretary.

It is impressive to witness the energy, enthusiasm, willingness to engage in debate, respect for difference and complete commitment that the board members continue to display as they collaborate with

each other and maintain Rinpoche's vision. There has been recent clarification of the relationship between the five entities associated with the Gar at Margarita.

They are: Tashigar del Norte - the Gar of Tashigar North; Proyecto Comunitario Tashigar del Norte - a Venezuelan company that holds title to the land and allows use of parts of it under lease agreement by the Gar and by Agricola Tashigar c.a. for agricultural purposes; a Community Land Association that is responsible for the governing, development, documentation and running of the housing project; Agricola Tashigar c.a. - a Venezuelan Company concerned with the cultivation of Aloe Vera on the land leased from PCTN; Margarita Aloe Co. - a company which will be concerned with the processing, packaging marketing of the Aloe Vera produced by Agricola Tashigar c.a. The financial contribution made by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu on behalf of the Gars at the end of the Longsal retreat will be incorporated into the development of Margarita Aloe.

A shipment of the first 30,000 aloe plants arrived a couple of weeks ago from Southern Venezuela with the generous aid of our partner Mario D'Ambrosio's transport trucks. Planting has begun and we await eagerly the birth of the baby aloes. This is a very exciting project and we look forward to seeing its development and subsequent hoped for benefits to the local Margarita as well as the international Dzogchen Community.

New Gakyil Tashigar North Margarita Island

YELLOW:

Raul Barattini
Paola Civile
Monika de Parrella

RED:

Melissa Johnston
Andy de Mora
Gilberto Parrella

BLUE:

Michel Dubourdieu
Herbert Mora
Carmen Rivas

Secretary: Ingrid Lucke

Director: Michel Dubourdieu

NEW GAKYIL 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

MAKING THE WAY WHILE WALKING

by Griselda Gálmez

The members of Tashigar South convened the annual assembly to choose the new Gakyil on March 17th, 2002, after meeting the day before to reflect about and evaluate the current situation in the Gar. The blue Gakyil decided to organize the meeting to continue with what had been inaugurated in the past year and considered it a healthy habit to clarify the shared topics among everybody; also to be aware of how problems increase or decrease through time.

Nélida Saporiti and Elena Gastaldi coordinated the meeting with security and dynamism and I will try to systematize the opinions that the participants wrote when they were consulted about the following topics:

Regarding the Dzogchen Community in Tashigar South: What we have been working on (2001-2002)

Achievements and difficulties to resolve
Each participant (self criticism)
Achievements and difficulties to resolve

This is an attempt of systematization to make comparisons between the Community's and the individual's achievements, Community's and the individual's difficulties, Community's and the individual's

From the Namgyalgar Gekö

Dear Dzogchenpas,

Since Losar, the start of the water horse year, Namgyalgar has a new Gekö. I feel very fortunate to have been given this opportunity to help everyone in the Dzogchen Community "Down Under" to develop this Gar dedicated to retreat. The land is certainly marvelous and radiates out a divine energy.

How I came to meet Dzogchen? Through Massage! During my Natural therapy course in Sydney I heard about a Tibetan Massage course being held at Namgyalgar. I luckily slipped into one of the rare spaces, which only became available, because people who had booked months in advance could not attend. The course held by Dr. Nida Chenagsang was brilliant and all its participants were very keen to learn about Ku-Nye, a brief but thorough introduction into Tibetan Medicine. We enjoyed every minute of it!

So at the end of September 2001, I landed at Namgyalgar for the first time and met quite a few Dzogchenpas. Subsequently I received The World Wide Transmission in November on the Anniversary of Adzom Drugpa. Then I attended the Christmas retreat and by the Easter retreat this year I already saw myself in the role as being the Gekö.

Some of you may have met me at the Gar during these retreats or at the Longsal Teaching on Margarita Island, which I was so fortunately able to attend thanks to so much help from Community members and friends, as well as my family, who live over in the Black Forest in Germany. I was quite delighted to meet our precious Master Chögyal Namkhai Norbu for the first time and the international Dzogchen Community, hundreds of people from all around the world. At times I was peacefully overwhelmed!!!

I am certainly happy to have found my seat in the "Dzogchen-Boat" and looking forward to seeing you at Namgyalgar some time or at the end of this year.

Patrick Joos

New Namgyalgar Gakyil

June 2001

BLUE

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achievements and difficulties.
Here we go!

A)THE COMMUNITY Achievements

**The organization has improved very much. The Gar is functioning in a more orderly way. Special mention for food service.

**Development of the infrastructure in spite of the economic problems in the country.

**Gakyil meetings are more dynamic, efficient, concrete with a relaxed atmosphere, respect, excellent coordination and less arguments.

**Better communication among the members because they try to handle conflict in a more adult way. The Gakyil put order always clarifying things. More participation of others countries.

**Books: publications in Spanish, good study and practice material. Special mention for the Newsletter.

**Transparency with money and better control on the expenses.

**Great devotion for the Master

Difficulties to resolve

The need to increase the communication among the members, with the newcomers and with the Latin American Community.

++ Regarding conflict: It is necessary not to make others responsible for the situation which creates tension. Also it is important to find a way so that conflict among people doesn't affect the Community's development so much.

++ Regarding the habit to criticize: It is considered the reason that conflict never ends. It would be important to find some collective method to avoid and stop gossip about people not present

++ The need to increase the participation and work of the members who are not Gakyil members; the responsibility of the Gar's order and cleaning not only being up to a few people because they become overloaded. It is recommended to create work areas supervised the Gakyil.

++ With respect to the money, it would be necessary to clarify the situation of members who don't pay their membership for courses and generate resources for the economic independence of the Gar.

++ Clearly establishing the Gekö's tasks and control that they have been accomplished.

++ Understanding the Teachings in their true essence.

B) INDIVIDUALS (SELF CRITICISM)

Achievements

** Participation is increasing
** Diligence is increasing
** Increase in communication aptitudes
** Increasing awareness

Difficulties to resolve

++ Insufficient participation
++ Communication as a problem
++ Insufficient patience
++ Problem with the rules



PASSAGES

DIED:

Albert Benson died on Monday, June 24th, the day after his 64th birthday of pneumonia in London, England.

I first got to know Albert after I had put out a request to the Community for somebody to help me get to a retreat at Merigar. My health was very poor at the time and a lot of effort was required by the person helping. Albert stepped forward without even giving it a second thought. We went and through the kind efforts of Albert got through with little problem. From then on we were great friends.

Albert's view of the Dharma was simple. Application of Bodhicitta and Karma yoga. Nobody had to ask him a second time for help he was always ready and willing. He wasn't one for complex philosophical discussions or intellectual arguments. He had his understanding and he applied it. Some of the people at Merigar may remember how he left England to offer his abilities to the production of the Mirror.

It was while he was in Italy that something strange happened to him. While in Rome he was found by the Police with his head bleeding and he seemed unable to remember what had happened. From then on he had difficulty with his memory. This became gradually worse until it was necessary for him to live in a special unit. Sadly his last years were not his happiest. He had very few visits and some may remember my request on the Norbunet for people to visit him. It was a strange irony that a man who was always the first to visit anybody suffering in the U.K. community should have spent his last years so isolated from us.

I think there were many lessons for us to learn from Albert's life and I leave you all to draw your own conclusions. My own memory of Albert was of a kind, caring, gentle man who without judgment offered the true hand of friendship to all he met. I will miss him greatly.

David Meyer

Interview with Dr. Wangmo continued from page 9

mountain. People would go downtown on the main street and wait for a car and then ask for a ride. But in the middle of the night that was not so easy to find.

We decided to sew him up ourselves and I said I didn't know if I could do it because I had never practiced this. The villagers said there was one village lady who had training as a Western nurse, she worked twenty years for some clinic and was now retired, so we could ask her to help us. I said that was an excellent idea and they asked her and she was very gentle and came. She came and said she had no equipment, no needles or thread, nothing. We decided to use a normal needle and thread and the boy's father agreed. We tried to do this and chose a very thin needle, but it was still not so thin. I told this woman who was the nurse that I didn't know how to sew, so I asked her to do it and she said yes, but we had no lights, only candles and flashlights, and the poor lady couldn't see and she was old and it was dark and her hands were shaking. Then I thought it was better do it myself because it was dangerous; it was a vulnerable point so near the eye. So I asked her to tell me how to do. So I tried and she taught me everything, how to make knots, etc., and this boy was very good. He said nothing and had no anesthesia. Then I medicated the wound. I know very well how to medicate. Then we finished.

After these three years I went to Italy and I thought I really wanted to study something about these things, maybe I am not a surgeon, but what is already opened I want to know how to close. That is very important. I also thought I wanted to study this and orthopedics. So I told the village people that I wanted to go out and learn these things and they said, "No you don't need to learn, you are already very good, we don't want you to go out and then we will worry about you", and I promised to come back after I learned these two things. After that, I received an invitation to Italy and also went to Germany and found one doctor/professor who helped me to study surgery and I learned a little. And after that I had the opportunity to work with Italian doctors and read more books and learned how to sew wounds. After two or two and a half years, I went back close to this town, with the ASIA project, and I worked there for five years and the people were happy.

M: Now you have been living in the West for a little more than one year and you live in Shang-Shung Institute in Conway, study English and teach Tibetan Medicine. Are there other methods of Western medicine that might help you when you return to work in Tibet?

DW: I have been here a little more than one year and I am happy. I would like to learn more about women's health problems and about delivering babies. I would also like to learn about using machines, like for example sonograms, electrocardiograms, etc., all these things. They can be very useful and helpful in diagnosis.

M: Now that you are teaching Tibetan medicine here through Shang-Shung Institute, how do you see the future of Tibetan Medicine in the West?

DW: I think Tibetan medicine with a good doctor who really knows how to use Tibetan medicine can be very useful in the West. If they really know how to diagnose, how to do practice, I think it is very useful. Medicine is medicine, these herbs exist all over the world, and I don't think herbs and medicine that work in Tibet will not work here. So far it seems Tibetan Medicine is effective here.

M: Do you see things here that you have never seen before or that are more predominant in Western people?

DW: I have not seen anything I have never seen before, but very common here and not so much in Tibet are mental problems. Depression and nervousness and just a little abnormal mental condition; people work, live, eat and it all seems normal, but their behavior is a little abnormal. I can't explain this easily. In Tibet, of course we have this problem, but it is not so common as we have here. I think this is related to the life, there is more

DIED:

Mother and practitioner of practitioner Mark Warta, Mary Warta, passed away Wednesday, May 15th, 2002, at 12.40AM New Zealand time (GMT + 12hrs) in New Zealand. Mark had the privilege to do practice at her bedside for the remainder of the night after her death and thanks everyone for their support.

stress.

M: Do you see a certain pattern or a certain element imbalance?

DW: Most people have what in Tibetan medicine it is called a *lung* (wind) disorder. There are many different kinds of *lung* disease; we have five different *lung* functions: upward, descending, all pervading, *lung* that goes with movements, etc. I think most people who have this disorder are a little bit strange, either the *lung* is going in the wrong direction or is too much or too little, or the channel is blocked and of course can be combined with another element disorder, but most predominant is with *lung*.

M: What is this *lung* disorder related to? Life style and too much stress, diet and the speed of Western society?

DW: I think the first thing is that life is too stressful. Without stress you cannot live here. Another thing is work, and the view that you should do this today and you should have this, she has this I should have this, she does this I have to do this; competition. Then sometimes that doesn't work, she and I are two different people, maybe she has and maybe I can't have, what she did maybe I cannot do. With Tibetans it is more simple, if I haven't it's my karma - if she has, it's her karma. If I cannot do today I will try tomorrow because I will try my best. Our basic mental outlook is more relaxed. And the Western mind is more tense.

M: Do you think Tibetan medicine can help Western people with these kinds of imbalances and how?

DW: Of course it helps. But not only medicine, they also need to change a little their idea, diet and everything. In the West everyone wants health and to be slim and beautiful, so the diet makes the *lung* problem worse because the food is too light, clothing is too light and this creates this a *lung* disorder. Diet is important because outside the seasons are changing and inside it is changing, so we must adjust our diet according to when the outside season is changing; we need to change what we put inside. Now if the outside is changing and we keep the same diet it doesn't work. We think it is for health, but the result is bad. I know many people with this problem, when I question them and speak with them, many people have this reason. I think if they take the herbal medicines, change their diets, habits, and mental ideas, I am sure the herbs will work.

M: Tibetan medicine comes from a country based in Buddhism so the people you treat have that base. Here many people you treat and will treat in the future are not practitioners and does that affect how

49 Days and Real, Real Gone
The Death of a Vajra Brother

David Sharp died on Sunday, January 23rd, 2002, in Auckland, New Zealand. We, his sisters and brothers of Auckland Tamaki Makoura, had the privilege to accompany him in his leaving the David Sharp thing behind. David was passionate for the teachings of Dzogchen. He practiced as a barrister representing the mentally ill. His knowledge of the law, it was said at his funeral, was prodigious. This could be said of his knowledge of the teachings.



David in Conway

N.ZITT

He had many years to consider his dying, but my feeling was that it wasn't until about November, 2001, that he turned his attention fully to it. For those last weeks of 2001 we Community people started to meet at his house to practice Shitro. He made sure we got the tunes perfected - that we were up to scratch!

He died late on a hot Sunday morning. Within an hour people had started to arrive. His sister Glenda had been well prepared and was more than happy for the Community of Dzogchen practitioners to gather and practice with him. And we did practice with him - he was never alone. Never alone, there in his bed overlooking his gorgeous flower garden. The garden that had given him so much joy over the summer. There where he lived like a lord, ate wonderfully and received streams of visitors and offers to help him remain in his home until the end.

Old girlfriends, judges and lawyers, Dharma bums, and a little community of Shitro practitioners were there. He was never alone or touched. Dying with his hands meeting at the heart. Glenda had arrived in the morning to hear him reciting mantras. Some minutes passed and he was silent. A few more minutes passed and his breathing stopped. Chögyal Namkhai Norbu was contacted, as was Lama Samten who usually lives close to Auckland; he was in India at the time. So we practiced with a friend; a man with whom most of us had vigorous debate. I enjoyed many arguments with him myself.

On Wednesday his Vajra kin lifted him into the coffin. A lovely funeral. Judith Pickering sent the CD of her singing the sublime "Miserere Me" and Van Morrison's Real, Real Gone.

For 49 days we practiced Shitro, setting up a roster and then coming together on Sundays for more practice at 11:15AM. (Such a civilized time.) I remember the sparkling energy in the room the night David died, and seeing him the morning of the third day. Gone. Today after we had finished practice, real, real gone. That's how the room looked.

Gabrielle

you can treat those patients? Sometimes Tibetan doctors give advice related to practice to balance energy or work with provocations. How can you work with that here?

DW: So far most of the people I have treated do not follow Buddhism. When I talk about elements, they understand, because elements exist and it doesn't matter what your religion is. Elements relate to your concrete physical condition; everything grows from elements. I explain about the elements and how you do visualization with breathing, and the people are open to that. I also teach simple movement with breathing. Of course, practitioners are more comfortable; when we talk; we don't come from the same culture but the same religion, so they understand what I mean. I say you need to do some mantras and you know what that means; if they are not practitioners it is strange for them. When we talk about elements, channels, movements and visualization most people can understand. So far there is no problem.

M: My last question is, you have been going on herb walks to look for medicinal plants around here and what have you found?

DW: Yes we went to the Dzogchen Community land and found forty-three different plants and the next day to a mountain in North Adams and found thirty-eight different plants. I found something, but so far I can't find a real place where medicines grow. The first day, the plants I found grow in the forest where it is cool and damp, so they have a particular quality. They are similar to the plants in Tibet and I can identify them as having the same properties, but the leaves are bigger or longer and the shape and flowers are the same. Also, the spring is over, so the flowers are gone and it's harder to identify them.

I think we can use these plants to make medicines, but I am not sure of their quality, because in Tibet when we look for herbs we go to a certain mountain. For example, we go to one mountain for cold diseases where there is sunshine and another where it is cold for hot diseases. For some medicines we go to a rocky mountain. Here I found many plants under trees in the forest so I don't think they are the same quality. I would like to continue to look on the mountains here and maybe in the future to a West coast mountain and do a little research.

M: Thank you for your time, Dr. Phuntsog.

Interview with Babeth VanLoo

NYC, June, 2002

Babeth VanLoo, programming director of the Buddhist Broadcasting Foundation, was one of the founders of the first Buddhist broadcasting station in the world. Buddhist Broadcasting Foundation or Boeddhistische Omroep Stichting, was founded in 1999 as a non profit foundation to execute the Buddhist Union of the Netherlands broadcasting license, which was granted for Buddhist programming by the State Secretary of Culture for the period of September 1st, 2000 to September 1st, 2005. After seven years of preparation, meetings and lobbying, of which Babeth was an active part, the BOS was finally able to start broadcasting Buddhist programs in January 2001.

The Buddhist Broadcasting Foundation includes both television and radio. Ms. VanLoo is the director of the television and new media branch and was recently in New York City to film Rishi Bernard Glassman, a well known American Zen Master, for Buddhist television.

Ms. VanLoo is a student of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu and attended part of the retreat at St. John the Divine, New York City, this past June. The Mirror had the good fortune to meet and interview her in the midst of her very hectic schedule.

The Mirror: When did you actually begin broadcasting in the Netherlands?

Babeth VanLoo: We went on the air in January of 2001, but it was a very long process to get started; seven and a half years. In Holland all kinds of religious groups should be represented in the media but they rejected a Buddhist station because they said Buddhism was not implemented enough in Western society and was too much of an Eastern religion.

We were originally a small group of practitioners and members of the Buddhist Union of Holland. We counted Buddhists and had to show how Buddhists were actually contributing to society. After seven and half years, a few law suits, and proof, our TV station was approved.

M: How many remain from that original group?

BVL: I am the only one remaining from the original group. I guess it had to do with patience and since I am from an art background, I believe in the presentation of mental concepts. I always assumed that if the seed was planted for this idea, some American would like it and realize it. When I realized that some American wouldn't make it happen, and so since patience is one of my weaknesses, I saw the opportunity to use this as a practice to develop patience. Also, once I turned fifty, I felt that I had to bring my belief system and my professional field together. I had received many teachings and recorded them for different communities, starting with Dudjom Rinpoche, and basically had begun building a Buddhist archive.

M: Can you talk a little about your own training and profession and what work you have done?

BVL: I am film maker and studied film making in the US and got my Masters degree here. I studied in NYC and then in San Francisco. I got my Masters in San Francisco and then taught at the San Francisco Art Institute for almost ten years. That was from the 1970's to the 1980's; then I moved back to Holland. Before that I had been a painter and had a degree from an art academy in Germany.

I made films that had a relationship to culture or music and especially social activism. More or less I was a political film maker with a personal approach and personal point of view.

M: Were your films shown in cinemas or on Dutch TV?

BVL: My work was shown not only on Dutch television but other television, and in the gallery circuit and museums. I have done what is called in the US "expanded cinema", using several projectors. I also made documentaries, mostly on my teacher Josef Boyce, who was a German artist and the founder of the Green Party. In 1991 I was invited to New York City for the Year of Tibet because I made film sculptures using 35 millimeter film; they were lit from within and were based on the form of prayer wheels. One was of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and so for Year of Tibet it was shown at Madison Square Garden and was quite a large piece. You can actually turn and activate them and it had a prayer inside made of film, and through the optical illusion of moving the wheel it was like His Holiness was giving a blessing.

Because I have this broader concept of film and what the medium television can do, I believe in the value of Buddhist TV. There were several people who helped, of course, I didn't do this alone. There was a lot of bureaucracy to go through if you wanted to get funded by the government. I feel very blessed that we realized it.

M: You are funded by the government of Netherlands and it is enough funding to function as you would ideally like?

BVL: It is not a huge budget so we produce almost everything ourselves. We have enough of a budget to have a few quality professionals working. We usually don't travel much, like coming to New York City like this, and more than half of the films are locally produced.

M: For example, you are on the streets of New York City doing a story on Bernard Glassman for your television station. How many crew members do you have?

BVL: There are three crew members besides me. One of the more important things is that we started BBF on a completely professional level; I had been working with other TV stations and am from a professional film making background, so I have large network of professional crew members. Some are from film and television, so they have a very good visual and editing capacity as well as. I work with three directors who are employed by us. That is my steady crew, but we also have radio every week, so we have a lot of free lance people.

M: How many productions have you made since your beginnings?

BVL: We have made about 35 films. What is important to know is that we try to make films where the implementation of Buddhism in the professional field or in culture or sciences is visible. For example, we make about one third of our films about teachers, because obviously it is not just a Tibetan Buddhist channel, it deals with all types of Buddhism. We have Theravadin programs, Mahayana programs, and different fields of Buddhism. Then one third of the programs are from people represented from Buddhist countries within Holland, the Thai people, Vietnamese, and Chinese. Next to that, we have one third about Buddhist teachers.

M: What kind of response have you had from the viewers?

BVL: Where we did best was with the other broadcasting stations, but also the public at large became very, very positive. Most people thought - there is this cliché that Buddhists only meditate alone in a little room, trying to get rid of their ego, but are really very self centered - so we are making programs that show exactly the opposite and how Buddhism can contribute to soci-

ety. That has really awakened a lot of people and corrected their vision of Buddhism. From the Buddhists' background, there was a period of time where the Buddhists were disappointed, at first they thought we would make programs about them, about this and that center. Many people who were well meaning, thought that they could make a film because they thought it was so easy, you just pick up a video camera and make your own program. These people were disappointed because they thought they themselves would be portrayed or would be able to show their films. But we want professional caliber films. After a half a year people realized the benefit of being professional and after one year we had almost doubled our viewers and had so much good response from people.

M: Can you talk about some of the films you have made?

BVL: Our programming is quite diverse, and maybe some examples are that we made some programs with David Bohm, the modern scientist, and how Buddhist thought has a parallel with modern Western science; about how the Vietnamese boat people try to make a good contribu-

tion and integrate into Dutch society and keep their Buddhist roots, and the problems and advantages they have having the Buddhist faith; about Philip Glass and how he as a composer uses Buddhism in the composing of his music and he sees it as a parallel practice, music as practice and practice as music; a film organized by Tricycle Magazine about the practice of inquiry into Western Buddhism, is there such a thing as new Western Buddhism which included people like Joseph Goldstein and Robert Thurman and Sogyal Rinpoche and Gelek Rinpoche contributed; a film called *The Next Step* about a Zen master here in New York who works with the AIDS Community together with Bernie Glassman; one on Sharon Salzberg who runs the Insight Meditation center; a program about a Dutch Catholic nun who became a Buddhist nun living in Burma and why she did that; and about Mark Epstein, the psychiatrist. These people talk about the application of Buddhism in their own work. We have one about Buddhist nuns called *Dance of the Dakinis*, about how women are at the verge of being able to get a Geshe degree, and are now allowed to perform certain rituals that were only previously done by monks, so you could say that deals with the modernization within traditional Tibetan Buddhism.



Babeth VanLoo



M: How much time do you have each week to broadcast?

BVL: We generally have half hour slots and then six times a year we have one hour slots.

M: You are planning to make a segment about Chögyal Namkhai Norbu?

BVL: Yes, I have commissioned a production and we will produce a film about Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche and it will be directed by Jennifer Fox. It will up to them to determine the focus of the film.

M: Have you seen anything developing other places in the world that has been influenced by your activities?

BVL: Since the beginning we wanted to keep low key in terms of publicity because I wanted to solidify first, and because it is very difficult to find professionals who are Buddhists and that was my main concern. I wanted to work with Buddhists making these films, so I had to find out that I would have enough people working with me to really do that. I needed to get it together before we started to move out into the world and we are just starting to do that now; therefore many people didn't know about us.

I have just started to do co-productions with other countries; we will start our first one with an Australian TV station, a film about the nun Tenzin Palmo based on the book *Cave in the Snow*.

M: Have you made any connections with anyone in American television?

BVL: No, but two months ago we shot something about spirituality and big business in the US, and we got in touch with the Wisdom channel which does something similar to us, but is not purely Buddhist and is a cable channel. My concern in Holland is that everyone has access and doesn't have to pay for our TV; we are available on the largest main channel in Holland. In France and Europe they also have Buddhist television, but they only have fifteen minutes so they come to the studio and talk about Buddhist subject matter. They don't have the capacity to make documentaries; in that sense we are really the first ones. There are people who would like to do similar things.

M: People can go on-line and see all your productions?

BVL: Something I believe very much in is the internet and all of our programs can be seen on the web at <www.buddhistmedia.com>. Most people still find it too expensive to do that, so you can get a few minutes or see the whole thing. I also believe we have an archiving function, especially because we have live streaming radio. The radio programs are less interesting to many because they are mainly in Dutch, but most of the television production is done mainly in English with Dutch subtitles.

M: As you are entering this coming out stage is there anything you would like to say to the readers of The Mirror as far as what they could look forward to, or what kind of input they might have?

BVL: First of all I would like to call upon everyone in the professional field of film making and are practicing Buddhists, if they have made any programs they can send us copies and we could air them. If not, we will expand next year to an on-line capacity and what we don't show on television we will show on-line; we will have Buddhist programming. We could take shorter pieces and also on an international scale. I feel it is important that people know that we are looking for material that is professional and reaches an audience at large - particular kinds of teachings are not meant to be on an on-line circuit - but at the same time it is important that the work illustrates how Buddhism relates and benefits society; how it impacts society and how society impacts it. That is an important aspect of our intention, that Buddhism is portrayed in that way and not just as a personal growth, self centered kind of activity, but that it can be something that benefits society and all people. We want to show that Buddhism doesn't only benefit Buddhists, but people of all religions and that all people can benefit from understanding Buddhism. Buddhism has so much to offer. Also all people can benefit from how Buddhists view the mind and work with thought.

What I notice, for example, when we air programs with the Dalai Lama, all ages and backgrounds are reacting and everyone gets something out of it, and its a way for them to get in touch with the teachings. So you don't have to become a Buddhist to benefit from this. But you can study it like a philosophy. Buddhism is not just a religious practice but a way to train the mind; its a science and a philosophy, therefore a larger audience can benefit.

For example, we made one film called *Life is an Illusion*, a film about a leading German and Japanese scientists involved in brain research, they analyze how brain function actually changes through the process of meditation and how meditation and mind training can be recorded scientifically. We intersperse it with the talks of

continued on the next page

Tengar Rinpoche and he explains the healing effect meditation can have on the brain's activity, especially in terms of perception, how the brain works related to training the mind and getting the right view. It is trying to show that meditation has a particular brain function and how that corresponds to the view. When they did this research they discovered that in reality such a small percentage of our brain really works and that a big amount of what we think is related to our past and what we have created and are conditioned by; having a wrong view. This film was made by Kuby, a very interesting German film maker who also made the film on the Karmapa, *The Living Buddha*, and he is a person we work with directly and he has made several programs for us.

M: Do you foresee your work expanding to be more global and you will travel more to do a wider variety of programs?

BVL: Yes, but maybe I don't need to travel in person but to put it on the internet; it's more global by having it on the web. Also other stations are trying to pick it up - for the first time this year I was in a TV festival - and our programs were presented there for the first time, so people from the European documentary network and from other stations suddenly found out that we exist and now we slowly started getting mail from other stations who want to have Buddhist programming. It is spreading around that there is such a thing as a Buddhist TV station.

M: Do you envision that there will be more international involvement and other countries will join you under the umbrella of the BBF?

BVL: I hope so and I also hope we can have a kind of archive function and people can use our material to study, because when we make programs like this we shoot ten or twenty hours and show only one hour for the program but maybe have the whole teaching recorded. I hope we will have the financial resources in the future to make that material available for people who want to study it. That's my hope for the future; we can provide an audio visual research archive and library.

M: Is there anything you would like to sum up with and say how people might be able to participate in BBF?

BVL: The reality of this work is - people always think it's something glamorous and what a great opportunity - but it is an enormous amount of work, and specifically because we really only want to have the authentic Buddhist teachings implemented in these programs, so we have to be very careful and discriminating. We get a lot of material and it's a challenge and a lot of responsibility, but I am happy to be part of it. It is a collective effort, this film making and television business and I hope that it inspires enough people and can benefit anyone who sees it and in the correct way.

People can become members as a Friend of the Buddhist Broadcasting Station and can contact us through email at: <babethvl@boeddhistischeomroep.nl>. The Friends pay a very small amount of money, like \$10US or \$11US a year and then are on an email list to know what kind of programs we have. After five years a government committee looks at us and determines if we are allowed to continue within that Public Broadcasting System, so it is very important that we have a large membership. That is something that would be beneficial and a way people can help us to stay alive. People can become members either via the web site or by email. The web site address is <www.boeddhistischeomroep.nl>.

M: Thank you for your time.

passages

BORN:

On June 15th, Mauro and Irene Nascari welcomed their first child, Lorenzo, into this world. Mauro has worked tirelessly for many years for the Istituto Shang-Shung. Congratulations to the happy parents!

Events Web Site

An internet friend has set up a web site which aims to be a compendium of Buddhist events. If you are organizing an event let her know at <wolfdogcircle@webtv.net>. It has a dedicated section for Dzogchen events and some of Rinpoche's program is listed there. If anybody knows of other events please notify her.

Lotus Net Calendar of Buddhist Events - new look, find by place of event.

<http://www.lotusnet.150m.com/BuddhistEvents.html>

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Tibetan Calendar of Special Practice Days and Astrological Indications

This handy pocket size calendar produced by Shang Shung Edizioni each year is an extremely useful point of reference for practitioners of the Dzogchen Community. In one slim booklet, you can find all the practice days for the Community listed as well as the "Buddha" days and the anniversaries of important Masters. The calendar also contains the global timetable for the anniversaries of Garab Dorje and Guru Padmasambhava when all members of the Community around the world do the practice at exactly the same moment. This means that you can find your local time for starting the practice wherever you are.

At a glance, one consulting the calendar can note the symbols for the days that are particular to the Buddha, Padmasambhava, the Dakini and Ekajati. The full moons and new moons for each month are indicated as well as lunar and solar eclipses with their times.

For those who wish to consult the astrological aspects of the day in order to decide whether a particular day may be auspicious for an activity, the calendar indicates both the Western and Tibetan date, the day of the week and its astrological element, the constellation of the day and its element, the *mewa*, the major combination of the day and other indications such as positive and negative days for Naga practice, particular combinations and negative days in general. This may sound a little complicated for one who is not well versed in Tibetan astrology however, with a little attention it is simple to check the most important combination of the two ele-

ments that represent the day of the week and the constellation of the day in order to obtain an astrological evaluation of the day. The interpretation of this 'minor combination' or 'Trodchung' is given at the front of the calendar so that when it is possible, a fortuitous day may be chosen for a particular activity. When the calendar is used together with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu's "Key for Consulting the Tibetan Calendar" (Shang Shung Edizioni, 1991) a full and detailed interpretation of each day can be made.

The last pages of the calendar give the individual astrological aspects for the year referring to the life element, the body element (health), the capacity element, the fortune element and the element of protection. These aspects are indicated by combinations of one, two or three black and white dots together with some brief notes on interpreting the

aspects.

This Tibetan Calendar is presented in both Italian and English with a clear explanation of the symbols and indications for each day. There is also ample space for each day so that it can be used as a diary at the same time. An essential reference work for every practitioner, the "Tibetan Calendar 2002-2003 Water Horse" can be obtained from Shang Shung Edizioni at Merigar, GR, 58031, Arcidosso, Italy.

Email: shangshunged@tiscalinet.it

reviewed by Liz Granger



SPECIAL PRACTICE DAYS

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 Nalor, 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 Nalor, 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, terton and reincarnation of Yeshe Tso-gyal and consort of the terton Gugu Chowang. Therefore it is an ideal day to do Akar Lamai Nalor, 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 Drupa 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 Nalor, 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

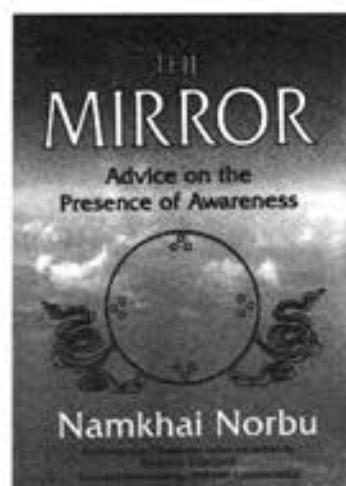
DARK MOON. This day is ideal for purification practices. Try to do either the "Purification of the Six Lokas" or the "Namcho Shitroi Nalor", the Yoga of the Peaceful and Wrathful Manifestations, either collectively or on your own. Try to do a Ganapuja as well, if possible.

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".

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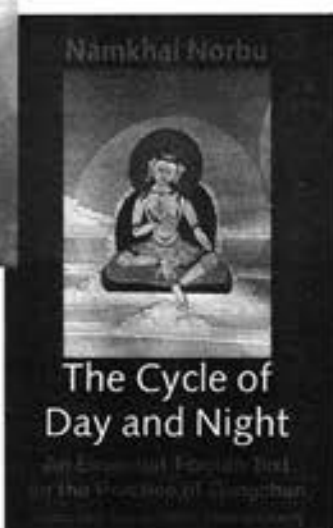


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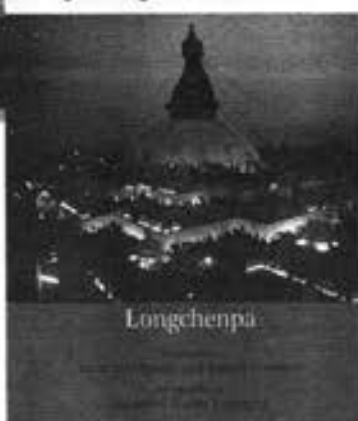
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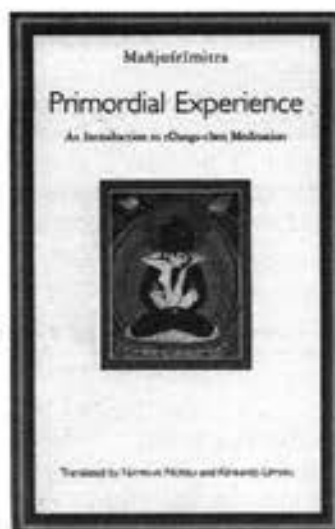
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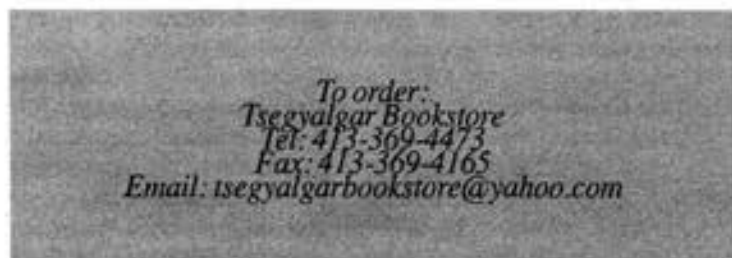
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Homage to the Master

by Malcolm Smith

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ཤིང་ལོ་ལྷོ་ལྷོ་ལྷོ་ལྷོ་།
ཤིང་ལོ་ལྷོ་ལྷོ་ལྷོ་ལྷོ་།
ཤིང་ལོ་ལྷོ་ལྷོ་ལྷོ་ལྷོ་།

Body
The vast Dimension of the essence is Dharmakaya,
Play's nature is Sambhogakaya,
Vajra compassion is Nirmanakaya,
Homage to the Dharma King.

གཞུངས་།
ཤིང་ལོ་ལྷོ་ལྷོ་ལྷོ་ལྷོ་ལྷོ་།
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Speech
The vast Dimension of emptiness is the original expanse,
Play's clear appearances are a primordial encompassing display,
The Vajra, free from activity, is non-dual,
Homage to Space free of limitation.

ཐུགས་།
ཤིང་ལོ་ལྷོ་ལྷོ་ལྷོ་ལྷོ་ལྷོ་།
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Mind
In the vast Dimension, unimpeded original purity,
Self-perfected Play is clear all the way through,
The Vajra of compassion's energy guides all,
Bless us with the Jewel of primordial liberation.

These simple words of homage and request for blessing were composed in Tibetan by Malcolm Smith, slightly revised according to the instructions of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, and then translated into English by Malcolm Smith on May 31, 2002. Also thanks are due to Dr. Phuntsok Wangmo for her valued assistance in reviewing the first draft.

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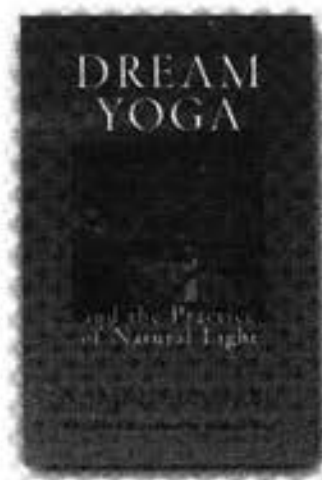
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TISE, NEW TIBETAN INPUT UTILITY

Tise, a new Tibetan input utility that works under Windows 2000 and Windows XP, is now available for free download for the members of the Dzogchen Community from:

<http://www.xs4all.nl/~loekjehe/Tise/lgm.zip>
<http://www.xs4all.nl/~loekjehe/Tise/thook.zip>
<http://www.xs4all.nl/~loekjehe/Tise/tise.zip>

Tise readme file can be viewed on-line at:
<http://www.xs4all.nl/~loekjehe/Tise/readme.txt>

Tise will not work for older versions of Windows, because it uses low level keyboard hook API available only starting with Win2K. For older versions of Windows an excellent tibwin utility by Marvin Moser is available elsewhere.

Tise is intended for use with Microsoft Word as a text processor. Wylie transliteration is used for typing Tibetan. Tise intercepts user input and converts Wylie syllables into proper codes for the Tibetan text to be displayed using LGM true type font. Compatibility with older Tibetan documents typed in L or LTibetan true type font is implemented in LGM font.

Rinpoche is already using Tise on his new computer.

This project would not be possible without support by Jim Valby, Igor Legati, Mark Fulton and Mark Farrington. My deep thanks to them, to Fabio Andrico, who gave me his advice and inspiration, and to Carisa O'Kelly and Anastasia McGhee, who brought a font editing utility that was used for designing new Tibetan font.

Ciao and thanks,
 Grisha Mokhin

MIRROR SUBSCRIPTION CHARGES

The cost of a six issue subscription to The Mirror has cost \$35US in the USA for some time. Up to the end of 2001, the equivalent of that amount was 60.000 Italian lire, which was the subscription price in Europe. With the change to the Euro currency at the beginning of 2002, it was decided to convert 60.000 to Euro with the result that a subscription in Europe cost 31 Euro.

Since the beginning of this year there has been considerable fluctuation between the Euro and the dollar and the editors of the newspaper feel that the subscription price in Euro should be equal to the dollar price.

Hence all new subscriptions made in Euro from July 2002 will be 35 Euro instead of 31 Euro. We are sorry that the price has been increased but since the newspaper is an international organ, its costs must be met equally around the world.

Thank you,
 The Editors

Interview with Dr. Wangdu from page 9

Prof. Wangdu: As things are now there is danger so that means that the future is without great hope. I have trained more than 600 students but many of them can't find work, they don't have homes or medicines so many have to change their profession and become businessmen in order to survive. For young students it is very difficult to work with Tibetan medicine because while on the surface they use the medicines, they have not been taught the deeper part of medicine.

However there is a prophecy in the Yuthok Nyingtig from the father of Tibetan medicine, Yuthok Yonten Gonpo, that in the future Tibetan medicine will prevail all over the universe and will benefit all sentient beings. I put my faith in this prophecy. There are many Westerners are interested in Tibetan medicine and are studying and translating Tibetan texts. Here people are more free and there are more possibilities to keep the traditions alive. I am very happy about the work the Shang Shung Institute is doing for Tibetan medicine and I have great trust in the students who are studying in the west to preserve this tradition for the future.

Merigar, June 2nd, 2002

Translation from Tibetan by Dr. Nida Chenagtsang

Edited by Liz Granger

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Printer:
 Turley Publications
 Palmer, MA
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Distribution:
 Tsegvalgar at
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**Subscription Rate/
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After three months of work, we have finally finished the CD-ROM "The Eight Movements of Yantra Yoga". Perhaps you don't know what a CD-ROM is. This term is used for the kind of Compact Discs that must be used on a computer for playing video, audio and text simultaneously. This publication is a multimedia application; the first issue from Tashigar South.

Based on the one-hour video edited by Shang-Shung Institute, several people added their efforts to begin by translating into Spanish and giving subtitles to Rinpoche's explanations.

The next goal was to fit this video into a CD-ROM and give it interactive controls for allowing simultaneous watching of the video and reading the text with optimal breathing schemes for each of the Eight Movements.

The CD works on PCs with Windows (any version) and also works fine on Macintosh computers. Audio and text are both in English and Spanish.

Tashigar South aims to sell copies of this CD-ROM for supporting the work of these kinds of projects, as well as for maintaining the Gar's installations. To order copies of this CD-ROM, please contact Tashigar's secretary, Sara, by email at: <tashigar@dcc.com.ar>.

Credits:

Translation into Spanish: Nélida Saporiti

Speech in Spanish: Daniel Simonelli

Multimedia: Ramiro Fernández

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REFLECTIONS

A Glimpse of Isla Margarita

by Angie Gilbert

Teacher Training, sea practice with Rinpoche, new friendships in the Community, living in Pedro Gonzalez, a trip to Los Frailes, parties and Isla Margarita. What can I say? It was one of the most amazing times in my life filled with experiences I will not forget.

I found the first nine days very intense. It was the Teacher Training; the main reason I went to Margarita. The wind was wild on the Gar, the mountains beautiful, the sun hot, the mangoes ripe. I had the love and support of others - especially the people back home in Australia - the Dzogchen Community of Namgyalgar and my family.

But my anxiety was foremost as I waited for my turn to give a talk and it grew each day so that I was unable to think of much else. So much so that I went up to Rinpoche a few days into the training and withdrew my application. Going up there and giving a talk was to be a very revealing thing, not knowing what the topic would be until a few moments beforehand and not knowing when it would be our turn. Some topics were hard. Giving our best. All these things got too much for me.

Then a couple of days later I asked Rinpoche if I could rejoin. Rinpoche has dedicated all of his life to us, teaching us and guiding us on the path and it is a way of giving back something to him. To help and show that we are working with the teachings and taking responsibility.

After the training it all seemed like a dream. It became hard to remember going through the fear and anxiety of trying to hold those emotions and integrate with them. And I thought of how much the experience could be related to the Chöd, where we are learning to work with our attachment and the demons and discover our nature. Now some weeks later along with the others who passed the training, I hope I may truly uphold my responsibility to instruct on the Base in the way Rinpoche always talks so much about to us.

The sea was cold, calm and inviting in the heat of the days. Even more inviting because Rinpoche swam every day in it and it became a daily ritual to swim each morning with him for those who didn't feel the cold or mind losing their land legs! We would slowly swim out past the small boats bobbing in the water, a resting place for the pelicans and then out to the big boats where we would float on our backs, legs and arms outstretched and sing the Song of the Vajra, integrating with the water. It was a magical experience and at times I felt like we were really part of the sea or that we were creatures that belonged in it. And then we would slowly make our way back

happy and relaxed, diving and torpedoing our way to shore sometimes joking, sometimes quiet, with the mountains and the sky spread before us. It was my favorite practice of all on Margarita.

I loved staying in the village of Pedro Gonzalez with Jean and Rose. It was right in the middle of things. A ten and fifteen minute bike ride to the Gar and a fifteen or twenty minute ride to the beach. We could see the mountains surrounding the Gar from the front of our house. During the heat in the middle of the day in Pedro Gonzalez, in the donkey's hour, it's very quiet. In the mornings and late afternoons, though, many of its residents can be found sitting in their doorways or under the trees in front of their houses, most with a welcome smile and an "hola". A lot of their life is on the street as they sit around and watch what's going on, chatting and playing music. They make a small living off such things as setting up small shops in the front of their houses or selling food, fish or fruit and vegetables. Also taxi driving in their big old American cars. On Friday and Saturday nights they have lots of fun and the streets are buzzing and the air is filled with music as they gather in groups at their houses, at the Licoreria or drive round in their cars. It was infectious, even though the hall in the next street from us where the people held their techno parties got closed down for a few weekends because of the fighting.

The nights on Margarita are beautiful. They are warm and balmy and sometimes breezy, filled with the stars of the northern sky and they carry you away. It was in her street where we stayed that we met and made friends with Nikko. A resident of Pedro Gonzalez for all 73 years of her life. Nikko has never been off Margarita and she has lived on the same street and house all her life. She lives with her daughter and grandchildren and has other children living nearby. She sang us some songs about Margarita and Jean and Rose learnt some of the words to them. She is also a wonderful dancer and she came to our parties getting to know the other Community members, showing us how to dance salsa and having fun.

Our adventure to Los Frailes was a wild and fun day. Los Frailes are three small islands to the Northeast of Margarita; about forty minutes by boat. Los Frailes is a good place to snorkel which is an activity Rinpoche loves, and a few days after the teacher training Gilberto and Rose organized a trip there for us.

The day was overcast but still very hot when the sun broke out, as Rinpoche and about twenty-five of us sped across the water, bouncing over the waves with the wind whipping our clothes and hair, the boat full of snorkeling gear provided by its owners. The beautiful mountains of Margarita were hazy

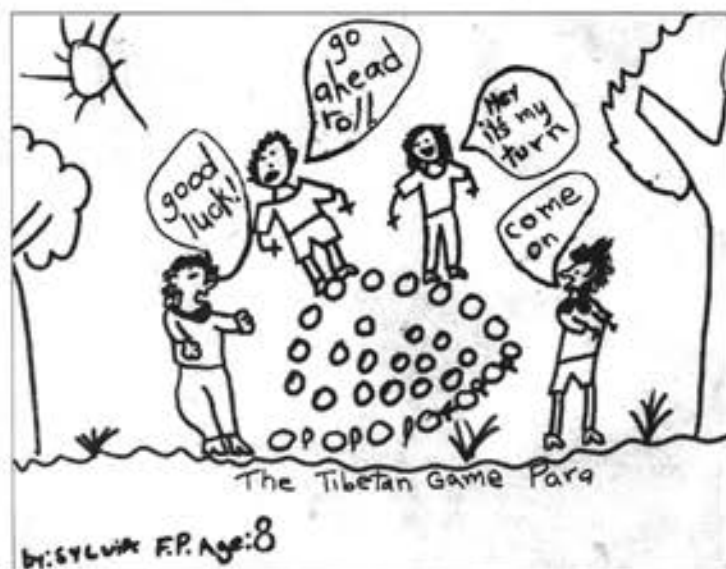
and receding behind us. A smaller boat followed behind with a few others and the days supplies. Pulling into Los Frailes the islands, the islands appeared like small mountains covered with low dry scrub and cactus and overhead there were birds circling. Other fishing boats similar to ours were tied up along the shore and old shacks nestled into the shore along the island.

The island became a hive of activity in the overcast atmosphere as we unloaded with the help of the fishermen. Immediately Rinpoche, sitting in his chair, donned his snorkeling gear and became a creature of the sea doing a mudra. He also had his own big bag of snorkeling gear which he handed out. It set the tone of the day and after a few of us had a quick snorkel in the sea there in front of the shacks we set off to one of the other islands to snorkel in the cool, clear watery world among the rocks, coral and small fish. And then to sit on its rocky shores warming our cold bodies in the hot sun which had by then emerged, inventing a game with Rinpoche.

We returned to the first island a couple of hours later to be greeted with an amazing meal of fresh fish, which the fishermen had cooked for us at the shack. There was also fish soup and we washed it down with plenty of beer as we sat on the verandah salty, burnt and happy with the sea of the Caribbean stretched out in front of us. Not long after we set off back to Margarita, stopping once again while Rinpoche and some of us snorkeled and swam off the side of the boat and Prima spotted the Barracuda. Then off we went again speeding along in the boat. It felt wild as some of us laughed and played games getting drenched in spray. But not fun for the others who didn't like the spray!

I loved it on Isla Margarita. The island is dry with low scrub and flat areas and it has lush mountains and areas with beautiful beaches. When I was there the wind was sometimes very wild, especially during the teacher training but it calmed down after a few weeks and the breeze helped cool things. Many people who live in the villages like Pedro Gonzalez don't have much money. In some places there's lots of rubbish around. There's a mixture. There are rich areas. There are the tourist spots like the beach of Zaragosa where the locals swim and where we swam every day and where Rinpoche lived.

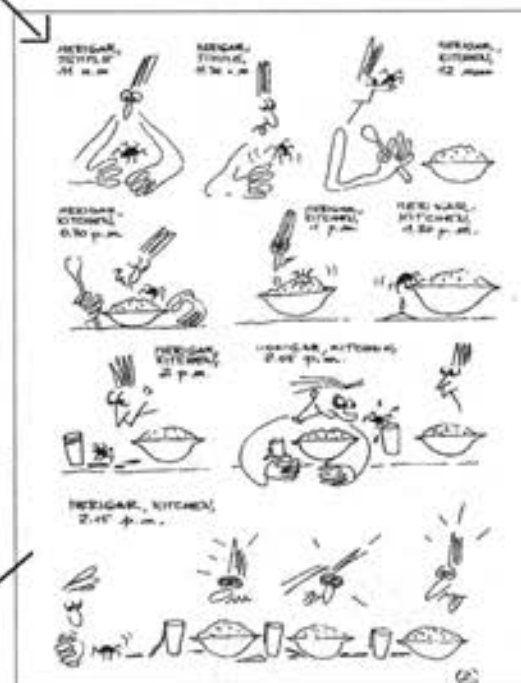
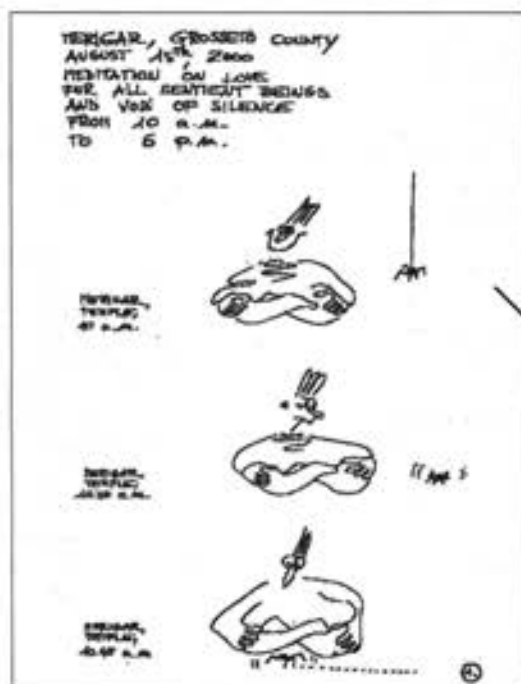
And what makes it most wonderful is that it is part of our Dzogchen Community and the plans Rinpoche has for the last years of his life there. I hope that in the following years many of us have the opportunity to go to Margarita and be with Rinpoche. Thank you Carmen, Michelle, Gilberto and Monica for everything. It was wonderful. And my deepest love to my Master.



Playing Para at Namgyalgar

By Sylvia Fogarty-Phipps (8 years old)

Gabe, Josh, Ana and I played a Tibetan game called Para. You put spirals on the ground and if you had two pieces of say, rocks, you could send people to the start of the spiral again. Andrew taught us that game. The next day was Easter. I had lots of chocolate! On Monday we had a Ganapuja. That is where you chant mantras and afterwards you eat. But you have to leave an offering for the spooks.



To subscribe to the
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Liberation through Contact

by Mary Gilliland

Upon the death of loved ones we often notice a transparency in the borders that normally seem to separate the spheres of existence. Their favorite unusual bird may hover in the vicinity of the living; their mirror may slide from its hook to the floor. I am one of many siblings and the first of us to die was not quite forty. After my brother Tom's funeral in early 1999, I deeply missed our sensory contact, and wished for it aloud. Between that evening and next morning three epiphenomenal electrical events occurred in my motel room, including a recurrent blinking light on the telephone's message button. I would raise the receiver, call for my message, listen to the silence, and then hear the recording "your message has been received." Tom had lost his life but not his sense of humor. After death, it is as though the energy contained in one body has been released for the awareness of all beings. The two triangles that form the symbol of the Dharmodaya are one.

During the June 2002 retreat in New York City, Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche reminded us that when placed on the dying, *tag drol* creates a cause for their joining the Dzogchen path. *Tag drol* means liberation through contact, through touch. Some years ago, at the end of a Ganapuja held before he departed from New York following treatment for leukemia, Rinpoche gave a *tag drol* to each of those present, a miniature paper mandala on which are inscribed hundreds of empowered mantras. He also gave each of us a packet of powder called *chin lab*, meaning ocean waves of the blessings of the teachings, the empowering energy of the lineage. The powder is made of things from Rinpoche's own teachers. He taught us that these two objects are especially helpful for the dying. Placed on the head,

they connect the person with enlightenment here in the Nirmanakaya.

I have had several occasions to use the gifts that Rinpoche gave us for those in need, and one of these was as my brother moved toward death. He had been ill for seven years. Following his last, and merely palliative, surgery for oligodendroglioma he was discharged, upon his prior request, to rejoin his wife and children, to die at home. He had been in coma about ten days, and the surgeon would give my sister-in-law medications for only 48 hours since in his view that was more than enough. It was a somber gathering of family and siblings who had traveled long distances; at bedtime I took the first watch.

I placed the *tag drol* and a bit of the *chin lab* on Tommy's head and then a large chunk of crystal from Tibet on his chest, of the type known as self-healing because of the way it was formed. I told him what I was doing, where he was, what had happened. I talked about how much love surrounded us, and that whichever way he chose to go was okay. Feeling my own emotions and those of the sleeping household, I took a long time with these prayers for all of our letting go. Then I settled into my chair. I felt like putting the blanket that draped my shoulders over my head. It was winter. It was dark.

Of the eight siblings, Tom got the blue eyes. Two hours later I looked up to see those eyes staring at me, with expression. "Mary," he whispered urgently, "I have to go." "You have to go?" I said, from the realm of grieving metaphor. "Yeah. I'm thirsty. And I have to go!!!" "It's okay," I said, realizing what he meant, "just go. You're catheterized." For perhaps half an hour I could see consciousness reassemble in his eyes, in his face, as we talked. At one point I asked where he had been during those days in coma. "I was in God's heart," he said; then after a pause, "I was in God's belly." For three weeks a miracle unfolded. With the use of only his face and one hand free of bodily paralysis, he dispensed love, comedy, memory to those

present. One day his wife, who is a nurse, took him to a hospital for rehydration. They insisted on an MRI as well, and declared (a bit huffily, according to Marie) the man should not be a live, as his breathing reflex had been destroyed in the surgery that had taken place next to the brain stem. Tom made it though the Christmas holidays and his son's thirteenth birthday before moving on.

"Most important is not [that] you are integrating in a calm state. That is easy. For everybody. Most important is you are integrating with movement. Then you are educated. You can integrate more in daily life." These words are among my notes from Norbu Rinpoche's teachings in New York City on Friday, the day before he transmitted the *lung* of many practices, communicating their syllable in the ear of his students. A retreat increases the capacity of our practice; our challenge when retreat is over is to apply the teachings. On Sunday, both humorous and poignant in tracing the possible foibles of our intentions, Rinpoche prepared us for reentry to our daily lives: "In our idea....how I like this practice and one day I will do. But that famous one day....Our lives are very busy. And so pass months, years."

Being with the dying has brought me moments beyond measure. But measure applies to every moment I am living, when time and obligations seem so pressing. The day for practice is today, for I may never see another. Like *malas* and *thankas* and other sacred objects used in our practice, *tag drol* and *chin lab* help to increase awareness of our intention and our circumstance. Life is not infinite, but it is boundless.

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SKYLIGHT

The peonies have blossomed four times since
I heard your voice. They sway

on long stems as I sit and strike
lines from poems in my lap. When

you died the world of the dead
flared open like a blossom

to the vastness that is all we don't
know and like a bee

I drink its twilight nectar and carry
its starry light back to my heart. Sky

outside and sky inside; nothing
between us but emptiness.

Barbara Paparazzo

also published in the River Oak Review

poems

Song Written While I Was Sick

This human body,
If it ain't doing Dharma,
Is nothin' but trouble,
So what good is it?

This human voice,
If it ain't doing Dharma,
Is nothin' but trouble,
So what good is it?

This human mind,
If it ain't doing Dharma,
Is nothin' but trouble,
So what good is it?

These family and friends,
If they ain't doing Dharma,
Are nothin' but trouble,
So what good are they?

This primordial state,
If it ain't recognized,
Is nothin' but trouble,
So what good is it?

Malcolm Smith 6/29/02

POEM WRITTEN IN ISLA MARGARITA

For the Master

There is no silence enough
to overflow
the profundity of their words.
The sky smooths
to receive the birds
of my gratitude.
The sky deepens
toward all the breezes
that caress the soul.

Griselda Gálmez
04/22/02

The Elephant in the Corner

I must have brought it home with me,
so I threw my coat over it.
It may still be there,
but of course I don't look.
Friends come around, bringing their own,
we watch the movie, or the ball game,
talk and kid around, listen and laugh.
We even talk about them, huddled,
stacked awkwardly on top of each other
- but only by pretending they're invisible.

I suspect it follows me everywhere -
It must, or I'd never get enlightened.
I have to ignore it very hard.
It's there when I relax, and when I narrow
my focus, really zoom in, I have to admit,
that doesn't help. It's still there.
I hope it's not there when I drive the expressway.
I think I'd be kinda embarrassed.
Taking no notice doesn't affect it
one tiny bit, it just carries on regardless.
Me being blindly, mindlessly unaware
careless as all hell doesn't bother it.
It's never been hurt by stuff that I've done,
can't be improved by things that I do.
Relaxing a bit, my body dances and sings.

I like the sounds of exotic names,
Rigpa, Mahamudra, Dzogpa Chenpo, I can enjoy
words and ideas like these forever.
Still, I'd better get on. Must be lunchtime.
I'd better tidy up a bit, don't want to be
too sloppy. Hang the coat up.

Ohmilordwhatonearthwhoputthatthere

Malcolm Fraser

soft gaze
from the end of the driveway
in the deer's eyes

summer night
bullfrog commentary on
firefly constellations

k mcgrane

YORK BEACH, 1995

Small actions ripen too
like the time you chose
a lobster from the wreck
of tangled claws
at the bottom of a swampy
tank and carried
the brown paper
sack past tilting store
fronts and sheets
like starched sunlight
in the wind, all
the way down
to the ocean.

Who knows
what debts we owe
from what lifetimes
you said as you
released the ties
from the lobster's
claws and set him
free to the happiness
of the silky blue
green waters.

Hesitant at first, he
scuttled toward the
thundering heartbeat
of the tide and as
the waves gathered
him into the salty
blossom of the sea,
maybe his emerald
heart flared and burned
and maybe he broke
into sobs as we did
when we heard
Nina was
cancer free

Barbara Paparazzo

Wisconsin Review

Michael White

INTERNATIONAL GAKYIL NEWS

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

THE PROJECT "COMPLETE WORKS OF CHÖGYAL NAMKHAÏ NORBU"

We are pleased to inform the practitioners of the International Dzogchen Community that during the second year since this project started we collected about \$23,500US.

In this year Adriano Clemente finished the translation of the original Yantra Yoga text written by Vairocana with Rinpoche's commentary, and worked on the translation of several texts related to the Santi Maha Sangha Training and the Vajra Dance. Now he is working on the precious Longsal Teachings transmitted by our Master in Margarita Island.

We would like to thank again wholeheartedly all the donors for their great generosity:

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Victor Matveev

International Gakyil Meeting at Merigar in August

The Merigar Gakyil and the International Gakyil would like to invite members of all the Gakyils around the world, from city Gakyils and the main Gars, to a meeting at Merigar which will probably take place after the August retreat held by Chogyal Namkhai Norbu. We will let you know the exact date as soon as possible. The members of the following institutions have also been invited: Shang-Shung Institute, A.S.I.A. and the various publishing houses of the Dzogchen Community.

We will be discussing various topics as well as proposals for workshops (for example "From Community to Community: activating Karma Yoga") which could be held on another day.

The main topics of the International Gakyil

Meeting will be the following:

- 1) Present and future: preserving the wealth of the Dzogchen Community as well as its institutions.
- 2) Using the database of the Gakyils.
- 3) Communication between the Gakyils and the institutions of the Community such as the Institute Shang Shung, A.S.I.A., the publishing houses.
- 4) Means of communication within the Community: The Mirror, the newsletters, the various "Net" works, the web sites - obstacles and financing.
- 5) Fundraising the presenting the budget.
- 6) Communication by e-mail - difficulties, advantages, alternatives.

We really hope that all those who are interested in the Community will participate in this meeting. If you are a member of a

Gakyil or one of the Institutions and you would like to make a short presentation on one of the above topics, please notify the International Gakyil (Fabio Andrico, Red Gakyil, or Karin Koppensteiner-Eisenegger, Blue Gakyil) as soon as possible so that they can organize the meeting accordingly.

The Merigar Gakyil

Fabio Andrico
Email: 76544.2307@compuserve.com
Karin Koppensteiner-Eisenegger
Email: garuda@bluewin.ch

A N N O U N C I N G

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