

THE MIRROR

Newspaper of the International Dzogchen Community

August/September 2003 • Issue No. 65

H. H. Sakya Trizin visits Merigar August 2003

by Liz Granger



Chögyal Namkhai Norbu and His Holiness Sakya Trizin at Merigar

N ZEITZ

This has been a historical summer in Tuscany and the rest of Italy. The media and the public have been talking of little else - the heat. Wave after wave of torrid African heat, without a cloud, without a break, without a sign of relief! For those of us fortunate to live on the lush green slopes of Mt. Amiata, home to Merigar, the summer has been remarkable not merely for its marathon heat wave. It has been a period that has seen two teachings retreats of our master, Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, in June and August each of which hosted close to 1000 participants.

It also gave us an ongoing series of Yantra Yoga and Vajra Dance courses, practice retreats and practices, enough to satisfy even the most eager and diligent yogi or yogini. And all this rising crescendo of spiritual activities has just concluded in a very special way with the visit of H. H. Sakya Trizin, the 41st holder of the Sakya throne and head of the Sakyapa lineage.

His Holiness's short stay at Merigar was on the invitation of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, who had requested him to impart the initiation of Guru Dragpo, the wrathful form of Guru Rinpoche, to himself and many eager students. Although his time with us was very short due to a tight teaching and traveling schedule as well as visa difficulties finally overcome - it was no less meaningful due its brevity, for in the course of an

afternoon, he gave initiation and instruction on Guru Dragpo from a terma of Nyang Ral Nyima Ozer, a 12th century king tertön, to more than five hundred people in Merigar's Gonpa. Behind his throne which was placed directly under the panel representing Sakya Pandita and other Sakyapa masters, His Holiness had hung a beautiful thanka of Wangdud Nyingpo, a direct disciple of Jigme Lingpa, a tertön and important master related to this practice. Directly in front of him sat Chögyal Namkhai Norbu and his wife, Rosa, surrounded by Rinpoche's many students in special areas that had been marked out in the Gonpa. His Holiness gave clear and patient explanations of the various stages

of the initiation in his clear and perfect English.

After the conclusion of the initiation, Sakya Trizin gave the 'lung' and a brief explanation of the "Great Song of Experience" by Sakyapa Jetsun Dragpa Gyaltzen, a very profound text with an important explanation of the view, meditation, behavior and result which is closely connected with the Dzogchen teachings. At the conclusion of teachings, the many people present lined the Gonpa on the invitation of His Holiness to receive a blessing from the empowered statue of Guru Padmasambhava, the 'torma' and the nectar which had been used for the initiation.

The following morning, after a brief meeting with the local authorities who in honor of the occasion presented 'khatag' to His Holiness, Sakya Trizin departed with his son, H. H. Ratna Vajra (Dungse Rinpoche), his son's wife, his uncle and two attendants to continue his tour of Italy.

This was his second visit to Merigar, a powerful experience for the many people who attended, and a fitting conclusion to the many weeks of retreat and practice that have taken place at the Gar. Our heartfelt thanks to His Holiness for his time and energy given so warmly and without reserve and to our master, Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, for his great kindness in creating this opportunity for all of us.

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CHÖGYAL NAMKHAIR NORBU

SCHEDULE

2003 - 2004



2003 MARGARITA ISLAND, VENEZUELA

October 13 Leave for Margarita.
October 31 - November 4 Longsal Tsalung Retreat

December 8 Margarita Long Life Practice (Rinpoche's birthday)

BRAZIL

December 10 Leave for San Paolo, Brazil.
December 12 -14 Brazil retreat

CHILE

December 16 Leave for Chile
December 18 Talk on Tibetan Medicine
December 19 -21 Santiago retreat

ARGENTINA

December 22 Leave for Cordoba

2003 - 2004

December 26 - January 2 Tashigar retreat

Santi Maha Sangha

January 6 - 8 SMS Base Exam
January 9 - 13 SMS 1st Level Training

January 15 - 16 SMS 1st Level Exam
January 17 - 21 SMS 2nd Level Training

January 23 SMS 2nd Level Exam
January 24 - 28 SMS 3rd Level Training

PERU

February 9 Leave for Peru
February 13 - 15 Peruvian retreat.

MARGARITA ISLAND, VENEZUELA

February 18 Leave for Margarita.

February 21 Tibetan Losar

March 15 - 21 Longsal program: Teaching and Practice of
Gomadevi.

April 16 - 20 Easter retreat

May 15 - 19 Longsal program

June 11 -20 SMS Teacher's Training

July 17 -August 1 Mandarava Chüdlen retreat

September 10 -19 Longsal program

October 14 -25
Kalachakra teaching & practice Anuyoga system primarily according to the Terma of Jangchub Dorje.

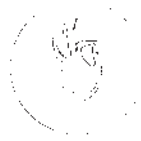
November 12 -21
Complete teachings & practices of Lhalung Sangdag, the Terma of Heka Lingpa.

December 5 -8 Birthday teaching and Practice of Long Life

TASHIGAR, ARGENTINA

December 20 Leave for Tashigar South

December 26 - January 2
Tashigar retreat: Teaching and Practice of Gomadevi



Characteristics of the Path of Renunciation

First of all, we have the Sutra teaching which is more characteristic of the physical level and was taught by Buddha Sakyamuni on a more physical level. First Buddha manifested as a prince, after that he renounced everything and became a kind of monk and then he started to teach. When he gave teachings, his students were Indians: they spoke an Indian language and lived like Indian people. Moreover, Buddha explained what we do [to receive teachings]: for example, the teacher explains and the students listen. This is something on the physical level, too. Buddha taught that way. In the Sutra teaching, our consideration of the teacher, of the Buddha, is of a physical Buddha.

When we speak of the three Kayas or dimensions, Nirmanakaya is connected with the physical level; we can see it and touch it. Nirmanakaya is mainly related to vows. For example, Buddha taught the famous Buddhist teaching of the Four Noble Truths. The Noble Truth of Suffering is valid for all sentient beings. We search for the origin of suffering because we need to modify it - we don't want to have suffering. It is not sufficient to fight with suffering, we need to discover the cause. For that reason, the Buddha taught about suffering first of all and then about the cause of suffering. When we discover the cause of suffering it is not enough to just know about it. We must stop that cause, otherwise we will continue to suffer. So that is the third Noble Truth of Cessation or stopping the suffering.

At this point Buddha explained Cause and Effect - the famous 'karma' and how to stop it by working more on the physical level, controlling our physical body, our energy, our mind. And for this, we take vows: I won't do this and that with my body, I won't speak in a certain way with my voice and I will not think negative thoughts with my mind. And then there are rules which are related to vows. When we take a vow, we must keep it and follow that rule. This is a characteristic principle of the Sutra teaching. Many vows which we take in the Sutra system are related with the physical body. We say, "I take this vow until I die", but we cannot go beyond death with that vow. Why? Because our physical body remains in the cemetery and then there is no more problem with that vow. It has finished.

So you can understand a little why Sutra teaching is related to the physical level. The teacher is on the physical level and the teaching is characteristic of the physical level. This path is called the Path of Renunciation. When you read many books of Buddhist teaching, you see the word 'renunciation' a lot. However, it is not a word used universally in Buddhism. It is characteristic of the Sutra system. For example, if someone becomes a monk, they renounce the condition of ordinary samsara. They become a monk or a nun and live in a monastery thinking that the monastery is not normal samsara. But even there is still samsara, sometimes worse than ordinary samsara. So this is called the Path of Renunciation.

We also talk about renunciation when you have emotions like attachment or anger and you think, "Oh, this is a poison which is very dangerous for falling into samsara. It doesn't have any value". Then you try to renounce that emotion, just like some old clothes when they are worn out. You throw them in the garbage and try to get something new. This is called renouncing.



Rinpoche in Russia

V. MAIKOV

Dzogchen Teaching Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

The Three Considerations, The Three Gates & Awareness Christmas Retreat at Namgyalgar

December 26, 2002

Part II

Characteristics of the Path of Transformation

When you follow a Vajrayana teaching like Tantrism or Dzogchen there are different considerations. In Vajrayana, emotions are not considered to be something poisonous and without value that should be renounced. There is nothing to renounce in Tantrism and Dzogchen. What we do is transform. Why? Because our energy level, our emotions and our consideration of wisdom has the same principle, the same nature, the same condition.

That is why Tantrism gives a lot of importance to two different kinds of visions: pure and impure vision. When you understand your real nature, then even when you have emotions, those emotions have the same nature as wisdom although they manifest in a different way. Wisdom manifests when you are in the [state of] knowledge. Samsara and emotions, ordinary emotions, manifest when you are ignorant of your real nature. It is not enough to only have that potentiality or nature. You need to have that knowledge.

In Tantric teaching everything is transformation. Transformation and renunciation are completely different. Transformation is related more to the energy level. In the Sutra teaching there is no explanation of energy because it has nothing to do with energy. People need a slightly higher capacity to understand the energy level. The physical level can be understood even if one does not have a high capacity. This is the difference.

Transformation means how that aspect manifests and changes. But not with our real nature - there is nothing to change with our real nature. Also the teacher, the origin of the teaching, does not teach on the physical level like Buddha Sakyamuni but through manifestation on the level of energy. You see, in general, people say Kalachakra was taught by Buddha Sakyamuni. It means that the manifestation of Kalachakra is the manifestation of Buddha Sakyamuni. That is the real sense. It does not mean Buddha Sakyamuni taught it like he gave Sutra teaching in India. It is not meant that way.

It is not so difficult to understand because on the physical level Buddha

Sakyamuni was a monk. The manifestation of the Kalachakra is called Sambhogakaya and is in the pure dimension. The manifestation of yab and yum, male and female in union, is a contradiction for a monk. A monk cannot be in union because he has a vow, but the Kalachakra has no vow - it is beyond vows.

The characteristic way of receiving teaching is different, too. Physically speaking the teacher uses his mouth and his tongue to teach, his students listen with their physical ears, and when they hear, they think about it and learn. Manifestations like Kalachakra or any kind of Sambhogakaya manifestation are not on the physical level but manifest through the essence of the elements which is their real potentiality. Teaching is communicated through that manifestation.

All manifestations arise and manifest with sound. Why? Because sound is the origin, the basis, of all manifestations. In Tantrism, there are also many different categories such as lower and higher Tantra. In the higher Tantra system there are the gradual, non-gradual paths, etc. In most Tantric teaching, there are no particular explanations saying that the origin of manifestation is sound. There is a more essential Tantric teaching tradition called Anuyoga and the teaching of Dzogchen in which there are explanations about how manifestations arise; manifestations arise from emptiness. What we refer to as emptiness in Mahayana, in the Sutra teaching, is considered to be the final goal. In Tantrism, emptiness is not considered to be the final goal but the knowledge, the experience, with which we start transformation. Emptiness is just like space, empty space. When you have empty space then everything can manifest, it only depends on secondary causes. Manifestations arise in the same way as Sambhogakaya manifestations arise, through sound from emptiness.

Working with Mantra

When we talk about sound there are also different ways that sound manifests, not only one way. In general, we have the idea that sounds are only that which we hear with our ears. That type of sound is related more to the physical level and is

called "outer" sound. For example, if I want to say something to you, then I move my mouth, use my breath and produce sound with my mouth. You can receive that communication with your ear. All [these factors] are related to the physical level and for that reason it is called "outer" sound. "Inner" sound does not depend on our mouths and physical sounds; it is more related to the energy level. We cannot hear inner sound with our ears, but we can hear it through our energy. This could be [in the form of] vibration. There are many ways of hearing that inner sound, particularly when you use special methods of practice such as prana energy, etc. We also have "secret" sounds which, even though we cannot hear them, we can discover them through the level of energy; we can only discover them when we really discover our real nature.

For this reason we have many different kinds of mantras in the Tantric practice - the mantra for Kalachakra, of Hevajra, etc. For realization, we need to chant these mantras and do visualization, particularly when we use methods like Anuyoga, which involve non-gradual transformation and are more essential. Transformation occurs mainly through the seed syllables. Seed syllables and their sounds are also used in Anuttarat Tantra and all Higher Tantras; even in Lower Tantra, Yoga Tantra. Why do we use sound? We use sound because transformation is related to sound. It is not necessary that Sambhogakaya sings or produces a HUM or something like that, but Sambhogakaya manifests in natural sound. Very powerful and important mantras are natural sound; but not all mantras are these kind of mantras. I am speaking about how only Anuttarat Tantra and Higher Tantra have these kinds of sounds.

There are many mantras [that do not function in] that way, because mantra is a very general name. Some mantras are secret formulas which means [they were transmitted by] realized beings who really had the capacity to integrate with that potentiality. The mantra was pronounced and then its potentiality was integrated in that sound. When that mantra is transmitted, people receive that transmission and repeat it in order to produce its function. So those mantras have a limited func-

tion and are not like the mantras of Higher Tantra. They are different. It is important to understand that because some people think that mantras are all the same. They are not. There are many kinds of mantras. This is how mantras are manifested and transmitted.

Only people who have a certain realization can receive this kind of teaching. Realization means that we have developed our clarity. If we have not developed our clarity, we cannot have contact with Sambhogakaya manifestations. We cannot see them. You should remember that we are dependent on our sense organs. We can visualize the third eye but we cannot see with the third eye. Why? Because we do not have that realization, that clarity. We can only look with our two eyes and what we see with them is our samsaric vision. That is all.

People who have that kind of realization can have contact with pure vision, with Sambhogakaya manifestation. Sambhogakaya means something like wealth, richness but not referring to money and objects. It refers to everything related to the elements, not only at the material level but the real essence of the elements; something like the five colors. That potentiality is perfected in a realized being. We have that potentiality, too. Through secondary causes, they then have that manifestation. It is called Sambhogakaya: "kya" means dimension "sambhoga" means that kind of wealth or richness. It is different from Nirmanakaya which is at the material level.

Then, later on, Mahasiddhas or realized beings received this kind of transmission but used a form of oral transmission to explain it to their students. Although you cannot have the capacity to really have that vision, through visualization, you can enter into that dimension - doing the visualization, using transformation and then empowering it with mantra using the potentiality of sound. Then clarity gradually develops. This is the method used in Tantrism - transformation. Dzogchen practice is not transformation, but we use when it is necessary.

For example, if you are a follower of Tantrism, you receive initiation or empowerment which is a kind of introduction to the path. It gives you the possibility [to follow that path]. You should do that practice, that transformation every day, otherwise you cannot have realization. For that reason, particularly in the lower Tantras, practice of transformation is often something obligatory that you have to do. This is not the case when you follow Dzogchen teaching; you follow mainly Dzogchen teaching and if it is necessary you can use Tantric methods. In order to use the Tantric system or the path of renunciation, you must learn about it and understand it. In Tantrism, in particular, you must receive transmission, otherwise you cannot follow it. That is why practitioners often try to receive many initiations and different kinds of teachings.

If you are a real Dzogchen practitioner you should ask yourself what the principle of the Dzogchen teaching is and then you can use everything if it is necessary. This is the Dzogchen way.

So it is extremely important to distinguish the characteristics of teachings, otherwise you can have many problems and be very confused. Some people when they start to follow Dzogchen teachings say, "Up to now I've been following the Gelugpa tradition, or the Kagyupa tradition or something like a Tantric system, or Sutra system. What's

continued on next page

going to happen if I do Dzogchen practice now? Are there going to be some problems?" A lot of people ask about that. You can understand why there may be problems if you do not know or do not discover the real sense of the teaching. It is not enough to say, "I am following Sutra or Tantra", etc. If you do not discover the real sense of the teaching, you will always be very far from realization. And that really is a problem.

The Path of Self-Liberation

In the Dzogchen teaching you can integrate everything, even if it doesn't belong to Buddhism, it doesn't matter. You can integrate it if necessary. Integration doesn't mean mixing, putting everything together and creating confusion. You must have precise knowledge of the principles of Dzogchen and then integrate in that dimension, not just put everything together saying, "This is the Dzogchen way, that is another way." It doesn't work like that.

The Dzogchen teaching is more at the mind level, while Tantrism is related more at the energy level. The Dzogchen teaching is also characteristic of the path of self-liberation. This path is completely different from the path of renunciation and the path of transformation. This is something important for you to understand. A lot of people have followed Dzogchen teaching for years and still do not understand the difference between the path of transformation and the path of self-liberation. And that's not very good because they are missing the most important point.

The Dzogchen teaching is also characteristic of the path of self-liberation. This path is completely different from the path of renunciation and the path of transformation.

For example, what do you do if you have some problems linked to your emotions? If you are a Sutra practitioner you renounce something, and then you try to find an antidote to control or eliminate that emotion. If you are a practitioner of Tantra, then you use transformation because the root is the same. The aspect is different so you can transform with methods of practice. You cannot transform only with an idea but must use your body, speech and mind combined with method so that it becomes something concrete.

If you are a Dzogchen practitioner, what do you do? You do not transform, you do not search for some antidote. You are in the [state of] knowledge and understand what the real state of Dzogchen is as introduced by your teacher. Being in that state you discover that you are beyond that problem. You see, that is the difference.

Pure & Impure Vision

I'll give you a more concrete example in order to understand the difference between self-liberation and transformation. For transformation we always need the idea of a pure dimension and an impure dimension; if the impure dimension is our ordinary samsaric dualistic vision, the pure dimension is beyond that, transformed. Everything there manifests as wisdom, through the manifestation of the pure dimension. For that reason then, one of the most important practices in Tantrism is for practitioners to be continually present in a pure vision. This is the conclusion of Tantrism. If a person asks, "I am a Tantric practitioner, what should I do, in general?" - you should try to become more and more familiar with your transformation. You should also remember that you are on the path of transformation and try always to have pure vision.

Let's suppose, for example, that someone makes you angry. What do you do when you feel angry? You try to remain in pure vision. If you feel

charged up and really angry, pure vision means that you can be like Vajrapani or Yamantaka. There are many wrathful manifestations; wrathful means that the energy is charged up. If you are not present in that transformation it means you are fighting with that person, you are angry with them and you are in dualistic vision, not pure vision. When you are in pure vision, you do not have that problem. That is an example of what training in the principle of Tantrism is: always maintaining pure vision. If you practice transformation sufficiently using this method, you may become more familiar with that, but it is not always easy.

In the Dzogchen teaching we have no principle of pure and impure vision like in Tantrism. We know very well that we have impure samsaric vision because we have a physical body; we don't imagine something like pure vision for purifying or eliminating this. For a Dzogchen practitioner there is no difference between pure and impure vision. They are the same. That is the reason why many traditions in Buddhism, like the Gelugpa etc., negate Dzogchen and call it a very dangerous system because in Dzogchen we say whether you see a Buddha or a pig, there is no difference. They feel very upset about that. It doesn't mean that we are in dualistic vision when we say it, [it is not a product of] ordinary mind. We are not saying that. But if we are in our real nature, in that state which the teacher has introduced us to, we discover that whatever we are seeing, be it pig or Buddha, there is no difference. Both are called vision. You can call it pure

vision, impure vision, but that doesn't change anything - vision is vision. Vision is relative; vision is not the main point. The main point is that you are in your real state.

Following Thoughts

If you open your eyes, you may see something lovely like a tree or a flower and immediately think, "Oh, what a lovely flower, I really like it." "This is characteristic of the way the mind functions. First you see something and then with the consciousness of your eyes, it is communicated to your mind which starts to judge, "I like it". That means you are accepting it. If you think, "I don't like it", you are rejecting it. We are continually accepting and rejecting, rejecting and accepting just like two legs walking along - right, left, right, left, accept, reject, accept, reject. This is samsara. But it is not like that in Dzogchen. If we see a flower and think, "Oh, how nice," we do not follow after the judgement of the mind. We are always in instant presence, in our real condition. So in this case, even though you have thoughts, there are no problems.

When they give teachings, many teachers say that as you do practice, then gradually your thoughts start to diminish until finally there are no thoughts. This is Sutra style, it is not Dzogchen. If you are really in your real nature, thoughts are continually arising, but you do not follow them. You know what you are thinking about and how thoughts are manifesting, but you are not a slave to that.

In general, when we follow after our thoughts, we have problems. When we have contact with objects, just that moment is liberating. We don't need any kind of antidote or effort. Just being in that state is called Dzogchen, is called self-liberation. Why is it called self-liberation? Because we don't need something like an antidote or a method for liberating because there is nothing to

liberate. Also in Dzogchen, Tantrism is not considered to be a method that is at a high level like Dzogchen. Why? Because the consideration of two visions is already a little close to dualistic vision. You have two visions in which you transform and that knowledge is a little less important than Dzogchen. So it is very important to distinguish the differences between these three principles.

The Mirror

In the Dzogchen teaching, we introduce very much the knowledge of self-liberation with the example of a mirror. You already know what the function of a mirror is: when you look in a mirror your figure appears. In general we know that reflections are unreal. This is more intellectual knowledge because even though we know that reflections are not real, we still consider whatever is reflected in the mirror to be real. This does not have total value because total value is not that you are looking in the mirror. In this case, what is being reflected and the reflection are interdependent. The mirror becomes an example of your condition; you become like a mirror and your thoughts, your contact with sense objects, all these functions and judgements of mind are like a reflection in a mirror. When you are in your real nature, just like in the condition of the mirror, then you are not dependent on reflections and there is no difference for the mirror between the manifestation of a pig or Buddha. That is why we say that if we are in our real nature there are no problems for every-

thing related with the mind level. So doing practice of Dzogchen means you are being in that state.

You try to be forever just like the real condition of the mirror. Of course that is not so easy, but it is not impossible. It is something you can learn. First of all, you will see what the main point is: discovering that your real nature is just like the nature of the mirror. The nature of the mirror is not that object, but it is not so easy to explain. The qualification of the mirror is clear and limpid. With that qualification then the mirror can manifest everything. In the same way, everybody has that kind of potentiality. In the Dzogchen teaching, this is related very much to knowledge of Guruyoga which is the main practice of being in the state of the teaching.

It is not sufficient that I simply explain, you listen and consider that this is OK and now you have received teaching. It doesn't work that way. We must work and connect with transmission so that you will know methods and have experience for discovering your real nature; then there will be a possibility for you to become more familiar with this knowledge so that it becomes something more concrete. So now we have spoken about these three characteristics of the teaching and how they are introduced in the Dzogchen way: the path of renunciation, the path of transformation and the path of self-liberation, related with the three existences or three gates of body speech and mind. When we know about that then there is no problem and we can integrate any kind of method when we need it. And so we go ahead with Guruyoga and try to discover our real nature.

Transcribed by Jenny Hutcheson

Edited by Liz Granger & Jim Valby



SMS Level 3 training, Merigar, Summer 2003

Interview with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu August, 2003 Merigar

The Future of Santi Maha Sangha

The Mirror: Rinpoche, this is a very busy time for you and The Mirror greatly appreciates you giving us time for an interview. We would like to ask you about the future of Santi Maha Sangha. In the past, the last year or so, it seems that you were slowing down a bit and not going on with level 4th exams because of some problems that were occurring with the students. Has anything changed?

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu: The origin of Santi Maha Sangha was for the protection of the Dzogchen teachings in the future. Why for the future? Santi Maha Sangha is for qualifying people who have knowledge of the Dzogchen teaching and also for communicating and maintaining that transmission in the correct way. It is for that reason that we started Santi Maha Sangha. I have great confidence that I am doing this in the correct way. I had confidence that the people interested in Santi Maha Sangha were also participating in the correct way and so we went ahead. After going ahead for many years I discovered that some people were continuing with Santi Maha Sangha for position, a name, or an idea that they were arriving somewhere more quickly or at a higher level.

If the principle of Dzogchen is that there is no higher or lower level, why do we have many levels of trainings? We have the trainings in order to become familiar with a teaching which has existed for centuries and centuries. Dzogchen is a very rich method and knowledge. If someone becomes a little responsible for the teaching, they must be familiar with all this and also with doing practice, explaining and theory; everything.

When I discovered that there were people who were really not going ahead seriously, and had already arrived at the 4th level - which means they did the 1st, 2nd and 3rd levels - even if they were not 100% perfect in the first level, by the 2nd level they should have discovered that something was not going in a perfect way. It is almost impossible that if they did three trainings in Santi Maha Sangha, including the Base, they did not notice anything and manifested in a contrary way to the principle of Santi Maha Sangha. For that reason I was surprised and thought that things were not concrete or going well and that my confidence was also an illusion; not correspondent to the real situation.

I thought maybe it was not useful to go ahead after the 3rd level. I had already taught the 3rd level and gave the transmission; many people already had experience. We tried to go deeper with this knowledge through application and then there was no more need to do the 4th and 5th levels, so I stopped. I continued examinations and the trainings of the 1st, 2nd and 3rd levels, but then I recently had many dreams, dreams of my teachers, like my uncle and Changchub Dorje, and another Uncle Dorje Ugyen Tendzin. In my dreams there were guardians like the Tenma collaborating with me; these guardians are very familiar with the teaching and my principle of teaching. Many times in a dream the guardian Tenma was with me and we received some teaching from Uncle Togden or Uncle Khyentse. The guardians informed me I should not stop and should go ahead with Santi Maha Sangha. If someone is doing something in a wrong way it doesn't mean everyone is; you must distinguish that. Otherwise it is not good for many people and not good for the continuation of the practice or teaching. Now I have decided to continue and go ahead. I want to recheck the people who did the 4th level training because I have a little doubt that everyone is qualified. My guardian Tenma informed me that I should distinguish, so in order to distinguish I must check, otherwise it is not possible.

M: From which level do these people have to repeat?

ChNN: From the 3rd level exam. This is my idea. You already know why Santi Maha Sangha exists and why it is important; that is normal knowledge in the Dzogchen Community. Most people know this already.

M: To continue the teachings and transmission in the pure form?

ChNN: Yes, particularly for keeping the transmission and teachings in the correct way. Today teachings in general are related very much to economy and business - we are already in Kaliyuga - so the teachings are influenced by Kaliyuga and that is a pity. Knowing this, we try and keep the transmission in a perfect way. I decided from the beginning that when I started to teach - this was my commitment - that I want to dedicate to have the continuation of pure teachings. I can't say this about all kinds of teachings of Buddhism, but at least the Dzogchen transmission.

M: This is very rare in this world. Rinpoche, can you tell us when the next Santi Maha Sangha Teacher Training in Margarita will be?

ChNN: We will have another Santi Maha Sangha, Yantra Yoga and Vajra Dance Teacher Training in Margarita but we don't have a specific date yet. We will not only do the Base the next time, but also the 1st level. We need this.

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T. OTANI

Japan Retreat Impressions Retreat with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu May 16-18, 2003

by Takatomo “Tomo” Sasaki
(translated by E.M. Cooke)

For three days, from May 16 to 18, 2003, Chögyal Namkhai Norbu conducted a retreat at Ikegami, Tokyo, Japan. Approximately one hundred twenty people attended. This is the largest attendance ever in Japan; probably because the members of the Gakyil put a lot of energy into advertising to make this a “better-than-ever” retreat. Day 1: Rinpoche entered the hall, looking robust and full of energy, beaming his charming smile at everyone in the room. All of us whose lucky eyes partook of this display of energy were immediately filled with delight and happiness.

On this first day of teachings (consisting of one session), Rinpoche clearly and plainly explained the characteristics of the three levels of paths; of Sutra (the path of renunciation), Tantra (the path of transformation), and Dzogchen (the path of self-liberation). Through the words of Rinpoche, we felt that we were directly contacting the wisdom of the essence of Lord Shakyamuni’s Dharma. The main theme of the present retreat was the Mandarava Long-life practice, but this introductory discussion provided the perfect foundation for Rinpoche’s teachings in the following sessions.

During the second session on the morning of day two of the retreat, Rinpoche blessed us with direct introduction to the profound state via the experience of emptiness, using the symbol of white A and sealing with the Song of Vajra. Rinpoche explained the point of remaining in this state achieved by direct introduction, namely the primordial state, and the means to do so, which is continual practice of guruyoga, the most important practice for the Dzogchen practitioner. We took this teaching to heart, and hope that we will never again be distracted from the essential practice.

In the third session, on the afternoon of day 2, Rinpoche entered the “official” topic of the retreat, which is the long-life practice of Mandarava. Due to the limited time of our retreat, Rinpoche did not demonstrate the practice, which is very well presented in the video tape sold by Shang-shung Institute, but rather gave us a reading transmission with explanation (khrid-lung) of his precious text describing many details of the practice, including use of the essential medicine (bcud len), and the goal of attainment of the rainbow body. This content was extremely profound and rare, once again impressing us with the power and depth of Rinpoche’s teachings.

During the presentation of the Mandarava long-life practice, Rinpoche explained that he often performed personal retreats for the sake of this practice, and that in fact, without the Mandarava practice, Rinpoche would have died of leukemia in 1994. While we were overcome with anxiety at the thought of the fragile nature of our impermanent world, Rinpoche encouraged us by stating that he couldn’t let himself die yet, as he has many tasks remaining to complete, including the levels of Santi Maha Sangha. It was a deeply emotional moment for us.

During Rinpoche’s talk on the morning of the third day, he presented us with more detail to clarify and explain yet more profound aspects of the Mandarava practice. Rinpoche also gave us practical guidance for conducting ourselves in daily life beyond the all-too-brief period of the retreat. In the final afternoon session of the teachings, Rinpoche generously blessed us with the transmission (lung) of many “secondary” practices and mantras, which was particularly helpful for the many newcomers and those whose only previous contact with Rinpoche’s teaching lineage was through the video transmission.

Following this, we had our Ganapuja with Rinpoche. Master and students mixing together in the spirit of the ganachakra, a rare experience of enjoyment of all the senses with non-distraction.

Three days was much too short of a visit, but the retreat was wonderful. Like a symbol for the rain of Dharma bestowed upon us in parched samsara, the period of the retreat felt like camping in a protected oasis. Thank you, Rinpoche! During the entire period of Rinpoche’s stay in Tokyo, we were visited by unseasonal rains every day. All of Rinpoche’s students in Japan hold the same wishóthat Rinpoche again grace us with his presence in the future. From the depth of our hearts, we pray for Rinpoche’s long life and excellent health!

Russia with Rinpoche

by Slava Potapenko

When Rinpoche arrived to Moscow I had a feeling as if something had changed inside me completely. We were so happy to welcome him again to Russia. On the way from Moscow to Kunsangar a small rain started; at that moment I remembered an interesting thing - usually Russian people say that it’s a good sign if somebody arrives and it starts to rain. After telling this to Rinpoche I found out that it’s considered to be a good sign in Tibet as well. Rinpoche said that it was connected with the local guardians and compared it with welcoming a guest. If we are happy to see a nice guest at our place we offer him a cup of tea, for example. The same was the rain which local guardians offered to Rinpoche.

After Rinpoche came to Kunsangar the rain stopped and we had nice warm weather almost the entire time. Rinpoche felt well and enjoyed walking around and swimming in the Kunsangar pool recently built for him. He was singing, reciting mantras, making jokes and when we saw him coming out of the pool, he was shining and radiating love.

Meanwhile, the Santi Maha Sangha exams started and several days after Rinpoche began the Santi Maha Sangha training. That’s what we managed to have in Kunsangar before moving to Moscow.

It was quite a “surprise” for us, to say the least, when one early morning we found out that we had no electricity in the Gar. Rinpoche teaches us to work with the circumstances and integrate everything, so we were trying to integrate... On the same day we had visits of fire brigade representatives, tax inspection, epidemiologists, etc., but we were working with the circumstances. The police came to check and see if people were registered in Russia or not and we were trying to work with these circumstances as well. So, we began to live quite a strange life in Kunsangar from time to time hiding people in the bushes during police visits. After all these events it became obvious that we couldn’t have the retreat in the Gar but also we couldn’t imagine that it might be cancelled.

We had one week to organize everything in Moscow and we did it! Rinpoche was happy. He looked full of energy and every day he presented his precious Teaching with joy and optimism in his eyes. I noticed that Kunsangar really corresponds to its name and whatever happens here always turns to be for the best. I’ll give just one example: It was definitely for the best to have the retreat in Moscow under the roof of a big cinema, because when it’s raining it’s always better to have a roof than stay outside in Kunsangar under the tents.

I’d like to thank our Rinpoche, his traveling students and all the foreign and Russian guests who believed in us and were not afraid to come to Russia after all the changes. It was great to see all of you again and I hope Russian “extreme” was not too much for you.

I’m absolutely sure that this retreat, besides the value in the sense of Teaching, showed us how important is to be aware of the situation and to collaborate!



N ZEITZ

Blue Pancakes and Lotus Flowers Chögyal Namkhai Norbu ‘s Pema Karpo Teachings in Merigar June 18-22, 2003

by Angelika Pottkaemper

The retreat started with wonderfully sunny weather on Wednesday at 5PM. Many had arrived; at least 760 participants were registered, according to the information of the ticket sellers. With effort, we found a little spot on the newly expanded terrace of the Gonpa. It took a little while to relax - after a hectic flight and arriving late - but slowly we glided into the inimitable presence of our Master who prepared us for the next day during which the actual teachings were supposed to begin. The teachings belong to the essential instructions of the Heart Essence, Padma Nyingtig, and they are the core teachings of the Upadesha instructions. *1 “Human beings with good karma will receive these teachings”, Rinpoche said the next morning. At once, after hearing this, I sat up super straight into a pose, a good karma pose so-to-speak, and then he continued: “Don’t use the teachings like wine that gets you drunk, don’t let yourself be conditioned by the teachings.” I sank down a little bit, surely my super straight back and my fixated stare at my Master were conveying a certain kind of greediness to suck in the following teachings and to get a little high on them. I have to confess that every time I go to a retreat I secretly hope to get enlightened as if struck by a lightning bolt. I yearn to receive something that will completely awaken me, as if finally something hitting my head could instantly demolish all concepts, dualism, samsara and

nirvana. Chögyam Trungpa used to talk about a giant blue pancake that would fall on your head when you travel the Dzogchen yana. Even if at the time I wasn’t exactly sure what this image meant I was impressed by it and since then it has been hovering in my mind’s eye. Then Rinpoche compared the Dzogchen teachings with water, water that helps the lotus flowers grow. The lotus flower is our understanding, our knowledge of the nature of our mind. This image of the lotus flower strongly relaxed my body because I immediately imagined being a lotus flower, which formed a wonderful esthetically pleasing balance to the giant blue pancake. There I was, sitting with two images in my head and opening up to the next sentences.

“Rigkyi Bu”, Rinpoche said, which means something like “boys and girls of noble family” *2; with Pema Karpo (1527-92) this phrase applies to both sexes; hence no war of the sexes like we had in the Middle Ages, no burning of witches, no, here we were and are beyond cultural barriers and language limitations. Man and woman, inseparable in essence.

So: “Rigkyi Bu, listen!” And now came the key sentence: “Not to search for something means finding everything!” As he said this the master was laughing to himself and he commented: “This is the famous teaching. This is why you traveled here. That’s all.” Pause. Rinpoche kept chuckling.

The core instruction had now been spoken. Whoever wanted to could have gotten up, expressed thanks and departed. Seeing that in this sentence laid the whole truth. Needless to say, we all stayed.

I was a little flabbergasted, but other than that, despite the key sen-

continued on the next pag



Rinpoche leaving his house in Kunsangar



Newly remodeled Gonpa Merigar

A SWART

The Bee Eaters' Song Merigar August Retreat 2003

by Simon Lofting

I've been asked as a newcomer to the Community to give my impressions of Merigar and the retreat this August. At a loss where to begin, I've started with basic, if a tad existential, questions first. "Why am I and all these people here?" It's exceptional to come half way around the world and meet complete strangers who share your views and aspirations, lifestyle and whatever. What has such a diverse group of people got in common? It seems to boil down to a dissatisfaction with their condition and a desire to be free. Or a wish not to be fooled by life and miss its deeper meaning.

How did we get like this? Although our mind streams have been lost in thought for a very long time, our increasingly global culture tends to emphasize the solidity and separation of ourselves from our world and experience. Today there are, more than ever, new and pressing distractions and objects to draw our attention away from the essential process of our being. That is how we got like this. We got distracted.

The Dzogchen teachings provide us with invaluable tools to cut through our layers of habitual distractions to our undivided, quintessential nature, our pure awareness. Simply remaining in that nature at all times, and in all situations, is the goal and the path. To demonstrate this, there is the principle of transmission and direct introduction. Chögyal Namkhai Norbu gave one of his regular global transmissions just four days before the retreat. We were perfectly prepared and refreshed to receive detailed instruction on the Dzogchen path.

For the first time, Chögyal Namkhai Norbu transmitted the rediscovered practice of purifying the six states of conditioned existence or 'Lokas' according to the Vidyadhara Nagadhara. With this, the practitioner can process the causes of their limitations and thereby promote the discovery and integration of pure awareness within their mind stream.

Wow, that's it! Given my condition what more could I want? I'm off to practice....Oh yes to write an article for The Mirror,... but can't it just stay perfect and empty ? ... guess not...mutter mutter.. complicated Buddhist stuff...perhaps it can be perfect (or at least amazing)

and complicated too? So how about the retreat... what was so perfectly amazing about it?... other than the teacher and the teaching he gave?

What is so special about this place? It's not so easy to pin down. The answer to that question has taken time to gently come forward from the back of my mind.

Even with the world shrinking, it's still surprisingly difficult to meet the teachings, let alone circumstances conducive to their understanding and application. At Merigar the teachings are steeped into the hillside by countless teachings, practices and blessings. It is the perfect place to practice, It ushers you into a timeless dimension where the practice has always been happening.

As the place seeped into me and I reflected on this article, the same recurring qualities became evident in whatever aspects I focused on; like a variegated garden carefully pruned by the same attentive gardener.

My first impressions were of the space, the views and the ephemeral nature of the site; just a few light structures spread out along a not particularly hospitable hillside. I like to think of architecture and landscape as a kind of collective memory. Civilizations and communities have left expressions of their beliefs in their buildings and how they sited them from time immemorial. So what does a cool modernist temple and its surroundings say about this Community?

One of the things that most struck me is how there is nothing extra. There is nothing extra which is not necessary to support the practice and the teachings; either in the physical structures or events. There's no frivolity and yet it's perfectly relaxed and playful. There's nothing ostentatious and yet it is majestic. It has an authentic presence which gives it all these qualities without fanfares or raising huge buildings.

The Temple of Great Liberation is quite a rugged and simple structure, directly supporting the refined paintings inside. It is a direct grounding of the most sublime teaching into useful form. That expresses more to me about the approach of Dzogchen as a way of life than hours of philosophical explanation. The practice can be directly grounded into our lives in a useful everyday way.

Not surprisingly, the whole approach to practice in the Community is correspondingly practical. The entire yogic emphasis of

Rinpoche's teaching and the practice is expressed to me through the details, design and execution of this building. It's a very functional building as well as being an expressive artifact. It is an aptly articulated record of intent, done with economy of means.

It is also an apt and fitting structure from the point of view of the landscape it's sitting on and in. The Gonpa is very open as is the site. When you see it from a distance it doesn't stick out like a sore thumb or attempt to dominate its surroundings. There is a very comfortable balance in the way it sits lightly yet securely on the volcanic knoll. It rests lightly and respectfully on the land.

What it communicates is the subtle, sensitive and ineffable qualities needed to successfully work with circumstance. It is an example of symbiosis. It is set like a jewel in the mountain. It does not subdue the environment. None of the structures subjugate the landscape to a grand scheme that is separate from it; they grow out of it. There is a feminine quality here of space, energy and co-operation as opposed to the gigantic, heroic edifices of 'male' design.

The overall scheme is understated, which seems a sign of integrity of purpose. The whole site benefits because nothing is lost at the expense of something else. It has evolved out of the Community's need and available resources.

The land retains its character, presence, and quality. It does not disappear beneath masonry. Merigar is comprised of many individual instances of effort and creativity, meshing together and contributing to a harmonious whole. It is inclusive. That is very special

I now have a sense of Merigar as something like a flower that blossoms for the teaching. It has an ephemeral life brought about by inspiration, devotion and collaboration. It seems to function as if by magic; but I know it is with the hard work and practice of all the Community members who have found out how to do things and make them happen at the right time, again and again.

It's not a dormitory for practitioners to go to sleep in. It's not a stronghold for a great number of people to escape to. There are not even places for many people to stay. Merigar is a place that is very specifically dedicated. It only really works for those who come to practice. It opens and holds them like a flower. I can equally see it closing. If you're not there to prac-

MARRIAGE CELEBRATION AT MERIGAR

On August 9th, 2003, around 250 people gathered at Serkang (the Golden House) where a short ceremony, complete with fireworks and balloons, was held to celebrate the marriage of Yuchen Namkhai and Luigi Ottaviani.

We extend all our best wishes for happiness and prosperity to the new family as well as our congratulations to our Master, his wife Rosa and all the Namkhai family.

The International Dzogchen Community



Yuchen and Luigi cut the wedding cake

N ZEITZ

Bee eaters con't

tice you don't somehow belong there, you are extraneous. It will not cater to you for long. If you're a practitioner, it's an open lotus which will support you. If you're not, it's a puzzling place with an odd, alluring but inscrutable air.

It evokes a timeless rightness in the way of things which I suspect has always been a sign of the Buddha's activities. It may be my own deluded perception, but I can't help feeling this merits the word 'auspicious' as does the full spectrum of age groups present. There was an abundance of both old and young people. I heard many comments about this also. I've never seen so many fit and limber senior citizens; something I blame Yantra Yoga for.

The Sangha is obviously maturing with Rinpoche, but is also growing with several vibrant generations of young independent people. They make their place in the Sangha with their own practice, commitment and culture. This has to be a healthy reflection on the Community that the younger members find it cool enough to stick around. It's not repressive, judgmental or prescriptive in the way that causes teenagers the world over to rebel against their parent's 'establishment'. I saw no hint of group pressure. Collectively not judging others brought home to me better than moralizing the basic fact of life that if you want to change your condition you have to do it yourself.

This culture may have been tirelessly fostered by the Master and hard-won by all, but is now well-established and seems capable of sustaining itself.

I like Merigar. I like what it has conveyed to me. I feel grateful to it and I continue to feel inspired by the awareness of it as an ongoing manifestation of the Master's activity.

The taste of Merigar will be Italian coffee and cous cous (or was it faro?), the feeling of the springy wooden decking of the Gonpa during teachings and as yogis landed heavily from a posture, the sight of the Temple thronging with colorful people and the smell of sang. It will be the heat wave which gave us all a gentle reminder of the suffering of suffering as we started to simply malfunction or fall asleep.

The sound I will forever associate with the place is the gentle flute-like warbling of the birds calling to each other from the cover of the bushes as Rinpoche taught and throughout the day. This new sound delighted me. I had never hear it before and was captivated by its gentle soulful quality, so much so I found out that they were bee-eaters and have found a recording on the net which you can find here at:

[http://mcasz-hungarnet.cserkesz.hu/%7Eszazs/madarhang/\(then choose "Merops.apaster.mp3"\)](http://mcasz-hungarnet.cserkesz.hu/%7Eszazs/madarhang/(then%20choose%20%22Merops.apaster.mp3%22)).

The essence of Merigar will however always be the space of the teachings where your ordinary mind just falls away and... that's it!

Blue Pancake continued from previous page

tence, nothing much happened for me thus far. Neither the lotus flower nor the blue pancake made a move, the only thing that changed was that I crossed my legs and noticed the breeze that kept us cool under the big tent. I felt a certain effortlessness and started to look around a little bit to see what I could read in my brothers' and sisters' faces - nothing special - here and there a little grin, some rose to go to the bathroom already even though it was only 10:30 am.

In the midst of my observations I heard Rinpoche again, this time in depth: "Don't search for something. To search for something means having a dualistic view!"

This time the words hit me. Like gravel falling on my head. I sat up straight, this time without making a pose. The infamous phrase, "She finally saw the light" rushed through my consciousness. However, I didn't have time to keep thinking about it, to start a reflection on it, no, I wouldn't let myself be distracted by thoughts any more. I paid careful attention to Rinpoche's words and I felt indescribably touched.

Certainly, here and there thoughts and images find their way through. Again and again I saw myself in front of huge piles of books. I saw all the spiritual

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International Dzogchen Community Contributes to the Preservation of Tibetan Culture

ASIA Onlus renews the invitation to the International Dzogchen Community to sustain the program presented by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu in 1999 aimed at safeguarding the Tibetan cultural heritage through the education of young monks and the development of local communities.

In 1999, Chögyal Namkhai Norbu presented a program to the International Dzogchen Community asking each individual Community to help sponsor the building of Study Colleges (bshad grwa), Practice Colleges (sGrub grwa), hospitals and schools in different parts of East and Central Tibet (see The Mirror, no.48, February/March 1999). Each place is linked to his transmission and the program was in reply to the many appeals he had received during his travels to Tibet in 1998.

The program was implemented by ASIA and information on the various projects was collected and submitted by ASIA while Chögyal Namkhai Norbu linked each monastery with its donor.

Thanks to the financial support received by some of the Dzogchen Communities around the world and by external donors, ASIA was able to start the implementation of most of these projects. Today, some of the projects have been almost completed, while others are still under construction or have not started yet due to the fact that some areas for the projects are not open to foreigners and the restrictive political situation has created delays.

In the following article you will find a little information on the activities ASIA has already realized for each project and plans of the activities still to be carried out. Your help is fundamental and more than welcome!

ASIA also hopes that this project will be a way to establish a good mutual and long-lasting relationship between the International Dzogchen Community and the Monasteries in Tibet.

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Support from the International Dzogchen Communities

The Dzogchen Community of Merigar supports Galendeng

The Dzogchen Community of Merigar supports the College of Traditional Studies (bshad grwa) and the Practice College (sGrub grwa) in Galendeng. Galendeng is currently situated in Sechuan Province in China, although it was previously part of Tibet and the Kingdom of Derge. Rinpoche spent a long time there with his uncle, Khyentse Choekyi Sangchuk and the famous master, Kunga Palden. It is a purely nomadic place and there is a very old monastery and several houses.

ASIA has managed to complete the bshad grwa, designed in traditional style using only local materials such as stone, wood and earth. The whole college has been painted in traditional style inside and outside. They have built a temple also used as a classroom, lodging for the teachers and twenty-three monks, a kitchen and lavatories. A small aqueduct has been built and the bshad grwa has been furnished with beds, tables and other equipment. A small road has been built to reach the college by car. The bshad grwa is now complete and ready to start its first three year Course of Traditional Studies for twenty-three monks! With the financial support of Merigar and some international donors, ASIA has also restored some historical buildings of the monastery, created a primary school and a clinic for the village in Galendeng. More money needs to be raised to enlarge the school to six classes and make it a boarding school with accommodation for the children and a kitchen. ASIA has pointed out that the situation in Tibet has changed a lot in recent years. In the past, students from the colleges used to make a little money to continue their studies by performing rituals for weddings, funerals, crops etc., in the village. Now, however, with the changes that Tibet is undergoing, it has become harder and harder for the students to support themselves. The economic situation of the families, particularly the nomads, has also got extremely difficult and families are unable to support their sons at the college. For these reasons, ASIA would like to request, if Chögyal Namkhai Norbu is in agreement, that each local Community supports the students in the area they have been assigned. In the case of Galendeng, ASIA asks the Dzogchen Community of Merigar to commit itself to support the three year Course of Traditional Studies at the bshad grwa, with twenty-three students, a teacher and a guardian. The requested financial amount per year is 4810 Euros. The commitment should be for a minimum of three years.

The Dzogchen Community of Tsegyalgar supports Khamdogar

Khamdogar is the residence of Rigdzin Changchub Dorje, Chögyal Namkhai Norbu's root master. There were difficulties for many years in creating a project there because ASIA was not allowed to go back there for a long time. The political situation, however, has now improved and this year the main priorities of the project will be evaluated. The project will include two colleges, a small hospital to keep the medical tradition coming from Changchub Dorje alive and restoration of many chortens and temples particularly linked to his teaching that are in need of urgent repair after being partially destroyed during the Cultural Revolution. The Dzogchen Community of Tsegyalgar has already collected funds to support this project; additional funds are necessary to start the activities.

The Dzogchen Community of Germany supports Wontod Monastery



College at Galendeng

Wontod Monastery is the place where Rinpoche's master Khanpo Khyenrab Choekyi Woezer gave him the entire teaching of Semde. It is a Sakyapa monastery in Derge, Sechuan Province where Rinpoche studied for six years. The monastery and college where Rinpoche studied were not destroyed during the Cultural Revolution because they were used as a grain deposit by the army. ASIA has suggested that instead of building a new shedra, they should restore the old one, building new rooms, a kitchen and toilets according to the number of students and provide furniture, equipment and books. ASIA has received several donations from the German Community part of which have been used for the education of the young reincarnation of the monastery. However, the situation within the local community is not clear at the moment since the head of the monastery retired in 2001. ASIA is waiting for the situation to be clarified before starting the project.

The Dzogchen Community of France supports Ralung Monastery

This summer at Merigar we received teaching from Chögyal Namkhai Norbu linked to the Padma Nyingtig from the tradition of Padma Karpo. Ralung monastery is the main place of the Drukpa Kakyu tradition from which this teaching comes. It was completely destroyed and there is currently a small community there with two very old practitioners and a group of young monks. The situation with the local authorities is extremely difficult and it is hard to describe the poverty and the difficulties the people there are facing. When the ASIA team was there collecting information and drawings, the people asked if the ASIA staff could stay there during work on the project because they cannot do it by themselves. It is a very difficult situation for ASIA because we are afraid that the local authorities will never allow this. At the moment the project proposal is being drawn up and given to ASIA FRANCE (a parallel organization based in France) to present to possible donors. Once ASIA has the money, the project can begin.

The Dzogchen Community of Singapore supports Dzamthok Monastery

Dzamthok Monastery is a Sakyapa monastery located near the river that is currently the border between the TAR and Sechuan Province. It is also in the area where Rinpoche was born so all these monasteries are strictly linked to him and his family. There is a huge rock at Dzamthok shaped like a phurba which is a holy place of Dorje Kilaya. The project is to reconstruct the temple at the base of the rock and build and support the College of Traditional Studies. Last year, the local people, both monks and villagers, gave considerable help with the rebuilding of the temple, building a road and aqueduct and preparing local building materials. This year a group of professional carpenters started the reconstruction

of the temple which is expected to be completed by the end of the year. The internal and external refinishing should be completed by next summer. The Singapore Community has done a lot of work to raise money but there is still much to be done.

The Dzogchen Community USA West Coast supports Sengchen Namdrak Monastery

Senge Namdrak Monastery is the place where Rinpoche's uncle, Togden Orgyan Tenzin, lived in retreat in the mountains. It is also the place where Chögyal Namkhai Norbu spent six months in retreat in a cave indicated by his uncle. It is also very near the place where Chögyal Namkhai Norbu was born. The mountain of Senge Namdrak is full of caves where many masters such as Padma Sambhava and Vairocana spent much time in retreat so it is considered to be a very holy place.

At present, at the top of the mountain where Togden Orgyan Tenzin lived in retreat, they have built a small retreat place and there is a place where students can stay and practice. Last year ASIA finished building the retreat place, a small temple with ten rooms and a place for the master, so once again there are students in four year retreat. Now work has started on rebuilding the main temple of the College of Buddhist Studies and, at the same time, on a reforestation program because the local people are using the wood for construction.

ASIA has received a very generous donation from the West Coast Community and probably by the end of 2003 most of the work will be completed. In future we will need money to buy equipment and bring the water from the mountain in order to have the two colleges completely functional. Then again, once the colleges are working, we are going to have the same problem as in Galenteng - how can the students survive in the colleges if there is no financial support for them? What we are strongly suggesting is to start this kind of sponsorship program to support the students at the colleges.

The Dzogchen Community of Holland supports Dzongtsargon Monastery

When Rinpoche was young, the Gonpa of Dzongtsa was given to him and he promised to help them in the future. Dzongtsargon monastery is situated in a very important valley: when you enter the valley, the first place you meet is that of Ayu Khandro, then the monastery of Dzongt-



Clinic at Galendeng

sa, then Tarze from where the family of Rinpoche’s mother comes and where some of the reincarnations of Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo were born, then the famous Zigar Gonpa of Wandor Rinpoche, then Khroru Gonpa, Sibda Gonpa, then on the border between this valley and Amdo there is Surmong Gonpa belonging to Trunga. The project for the College of Traditional Studies is being

carried out with the support of the Dutch Community and an international donor from Beijing. The main temple is completely finished, there are rooms for forty-eight students, a kitchen and toilets but since we could not go there often for political reasons, it has been very difficult for us to follow the work. Additional funds are needed for refinishing, doing the floors and buying equipment. By the end of the year we hope to have finished this, then there will be the problem of support for the students. ASIA asks the Dzogchen Community of Holland to commit itself to support the three year Course of Traditional Studies at the college for 24 students, a teacher and a guardian. The financial support requested per year is 4,950 Euros and requires a three year commitment.

The Dzogchen Community of the UK supports Khrorugon Gonpa

Khrorugon Gonpa is one of the root monasteries of the Khroru Kagyud lineage and the residence of Troru Tsenam, the famous Tibetan doctor. There are still several of his disciples here who are keeping the Tibetan medical tradition alive. There is a very old temple and college but up to now we have been unable to do any activities there because we were not allowed to return. The indications we received about the mission there were very confusing and at the moment we don’t have a very clear project proposal. We are also seriously worried because the Khenpo there is very old and now completely blind. He continually asks us to speed up the project in order to keep the tradition alive. We hope to go there this winter and come back with an effective project proposal that we can give to the UK Community. Day by day we are facing the gradual disappearance of knowledge of the old lineage and culture with the passing of the older generation so the work we are doing is really a fight against time.

The Dzogchen Community of Japan supports Gramagon Monastery

Gramagon is a Practice College belonging to the biggest monastery of Derge Gonche and is located in the mountains of Derge. Rinpoche spent some time studying there. At the moment many of the monasteries of the Sakya tradition are under the guidance of Lama Gala who is very

old but extremely active. Gramagon Gonpa is supported by the Japanese Community as well as an international donor from Beijing. Most of the work on the monastery has been completed including renovating a house for the teachers, student rooms, an aqueduct, a road, toilets and a kitchen. At the moment there are twenty-six monks there but that number will rise to forty-two later in the year who will be entering a four year retreat. The problem is how we can help them. The idea of this sponsorship program for monastic students came out of discussions with Lama Gala. ASIA asks the Dzogchen Community of Japan to commit itself to support the Practice College for a minimum of four years at a cost of 7,487 Euros per year.

The Dzogchen Community of Tashigar supports Sibdagon Monastery

Sibda Gonpa is a very important place for the Nyingmapa in East Tibet and one of the most important Dzogchen Monasteries of the area. In 1993 and 1997 when Rinpoche was in Lhasa, the tulku of Sibda Gonpa came to him requesting his support for building the College of Traditional Studies in order to keep the tradition alive. At that time Rinpoche asked the Tashigar Community to help with this project. However, at the moment, Argentina is facing a very hard economic situation and for this reason, ASIA presented the project to an international donor who accepted to sponsor it. It is now almost completely finished. When ASIA received the news that the sponsorship had been accepted, we went to give the main master, who was in Lhasa, the good news. He is very old and has spent more than twenty-five years in prison. When I told him the news, he was very happy but after a few days he was quite ill and became paralyzed. We tried to help him by covering his medical expenses and now he is at home although he still has difficulties. Hospital care in Tibet has become very expensive and many people cannot afford it.



College at Galendeng

tulku of Ayu Khandro staying there in whom the local people have great faith. He is very active and is helping the monastery rebuild both of the Colleges. We received a very small donation for this project to complete the College of Traditional Studies and build a Practice College and additional funds are needed to continue. ASIA plans to visit Dzolung this winter and bring back new information on the project.

Tara Mandala supports Dzolung Monastery

Dzolung is a small monastery of the Sakyapa tradition where one of Rinpoche’s main teachers, Ayu Khandro, lived in dark retreat. It was completely destroyed. Now there is a monk who is considered to be the

Interview w ChNN continued from page 3

M: Do you feel more confident now and do you see a change in your students’ behavior?

ChNN: Yes, I feel good enough that people are maturing. When people go into the essence of the teaching and find real integration in the teachings, this manifests through their attitude. I find many people are showing more and more maturation. I feel happy for that.

M: In the future people will continue to teach Vajra Dance, Yantra Yoga and Santi Maha Sangha; maybe some things change with movements or maybe you change something in how you would like the teachings presented, etc. Things are always changing. Will there be a process for reviewing people who have already been certified to teach through the Santi Maha Sangha Teacher Training programs?

ChNN: Yes there will be. We are growing. The Dzogchen Community is getting bigger and bigger; we must check very often otherwise a personal aspect develops. As we go ahead, checking is always useful.

M: Thank you so much for your precious time, Rinpoche.

Blue Pancake conit from page 5

books I had eaten up during the past years. I had always bought new ones and new ones and eaten them up, I never had enough, I never stopped, not even for one single day! I saw myself as a mega gluttonous bookworm with a bloated spiritual belly!

Then I saw how I give advice, spiritual advice, to all who wanted to hear it and all who didn’t want to hear it. I saw myself discussing, disputing, sticking to standpoints, letting go of standpoints, year in and year out, smart, well-read, quick-witted, I saw myself as a mega diligent spiritual Salvation Army woman. These images made me concerned and sad, why had I worked myself to the bone with this all these years; did it bring me any further?

With great effort I brought myself back into Rinpoche’s presence.

Grateful I am for the technology that records everything so that whatever was missed can be heard again.

Next I saw the places where I had searched: Italy, Germany, France, Holland, Switzerland, Austria, England, North America, South America, Canada, Nepal.

All the teachers of the various New Age directions marched by me from shamanism to Sufism, from African rituals to astrology, tarot, pendulums and psycho drama up to clairvoyants for past lives and the future. Then my Zen teachers, my teachers from the different Tibetan schools, from all of them I had received teachings - I had gone fishing with a gigantic net and I almost died from dragging all this wisdom around.

I felt a little overwhelmed from all my efforts there on the expanded terrace of the Gonpa on June 19, 2003. Here I was after all these years and heard my beloved teacher say that I should finally change my course, that is, by 180 degrees, directly into myself, since that is the only place where the source of wisdom can be found.

How many times had I already read in my books that one has to jump courageously into Being, into groundlessness where there are no more ego-handrails. Into non-conceptual no-man’s-land leaving behind all escape routes in order to awaken into the immeasurable vastness of the enlightened state in which one encounters big peace. Until now this kind of drama didn’t speak to me. “Did it really have to be life or death right away?” I asked myself.

In this very moment, in my imagination, a giant blue pancake came loose from the sky above me, came towards me and crashed on my head and down my eyes. It was an impressive strike and it froze me in my chain of arguments in which I found myself. It also blocked my view to the outside.

Wow!

For a long moment there was only dead air space in me. Then I noticed that nonetheless I was pretty awake. Slowly Rinpoche’s words got through to me again. He was now talking about the

completely relaxed state of tregchöd. I didn’t hear anything about spectacular jumps to your death into groundlessness, no, he spoke about the ever refining relaxation and ability to let go, about the split between me and the world that gets smaller and smaller. About our ability to reflect the world directly like a mirror. The mirror doesn’t pick and choose.

Until the end of the talk, I didn’t separate anymore from his words. After all, I had the blue pancake on my head and it somehow didn’t allow any distraction into discursiveness.

After the dedication of merit my pancake unfortunately flew away again but I “swear!” when I saw Chögyal Namkhai Norbu up close he was actually holding a lotus flower in his right hand. What good karma had led me to Merigar!

Since June 19th something has changed. Of course, I had already heard the key sentence “not to search in order to find” on my shopping trips around the world but it hadn’t caught onto me. This time it had struck to the core of my heart. I take a closer look now when my deeply ingrained addiction to be dualistic, to look outward seduces me once again and ties me to the world either in attraction or rejection. It doesn’t matter whether it is a precious book or a successful conversation with friends, the opera “La Boheme” or the kisses of my lover, the suicide attacks in Palestine or the hunger crises in Africa, the film festival in Cannes or the awarding of the Nobel Prize

Fortunately, Chögyal Namkhai Norbu gave us wonderful practices to liberate ourselves from this addiction. “You will have plenty to do for years with these practices!”

May our Master live long!

May a lot of giant blue pancakes drop!

May our lotus flowers grow!

Translated from German by Nina Maria Mudita



Shang-Shung Institute, Italy

Interview with Elisa Copello, a Board Member of Shang-Shung Institute, Italy

The Mirror: Shang-Shung Institute in Italy has been developing considerably in the last few years. Can you tell us at what point the SSI/Italy is now?

Elisa Copello: There has been an incredible growth and development in Shang-Shung Institute in the last three or four years thanks to a very good working team. We really appreciate their collaboration and because of their work and the joint efforts of all the people involved, the paid workers as well as the indispensable volunteers who have helped the Institute with karma yoga, etc., we have been growing at a rapid rate and now have several different departments.

M: Can you give us an overview of the various departments of the Institute?

EC: At this point the functioning branches of the Institute are the library and archives, exhibitions, archaeology, medicine and the new translation department (see article in next column).

We employ two people in the archive department: Maurizio Mingotti and Dan Zegunis. They have done a great deal of work to preserve the teachings of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu; they have archived in digital format over 50% of the material we have in three years time which is pretty amazing. The archive branch is also producing new audio and video recordings of the teachings and the Institute is trying to provide a service for all the Community members and improving the quality of the materials. There are a lot of new videos and CD's and hopefully in the future all these materials will be available in DVD format. There are actually two different formats; the teaching itself and the practices. Regarding the teachings, we have a whole list which has been saved in digital format. So far we have preserved until 1988 or 89. Up until that time all the teachings were magnetically preserved, so we have since converted them to digital format. We also have a database and indexing of all the materials which have been saved, and this is available to all practitioners around the world. For example, if you are interested in listening to a teaching given by Rinpoche in 1985, you can place an order with SSI for video, DVD or MP3, and the Institute will send that out to you immediately. We also have the practices themselves; video or audio and maybe sometimes both. We have prepared some practices, a sort of kit, so the teachings related to a certain practice and the practice itself are together. We always ask Rinpoche for authorization each time we produce this material and, for example, we now have an MP3 of the teachings he gave in Argentina in 1990; the explanations of the Song of the Vajra. It was a very long retreat of fifteen days, so now we have an MP3 containing all the teachings. We also we have a Green Tara Practice MP3 with all the teachings Rinpoche gave in Peru and an audio CD just with the practice. We will also have a new MP3 available very soon of the Longsal Teaching Rinpoche gave last year in Margarita including an explanation by Adriano Clemente. Also there will be a CD with just the practice so people can decide if they want both the teaching and the practice or just the practice. Since last November we have employed Grisha Mokhin from the Russian Dzogchen Community to prepare many things, but mainly to focus on creating a database for the teachings. This database is a very precious tool for consultation because all the data will be available on the internet and there will be a password system once it is determined what data will be available to whom.

As far as the Library, Jacobella Gaetano is the Librarian and the Institute has contributed funds for her to attend specialized courses of the ABI, an organization under the auspices by the Italian Library system. After attending these seminars Jacobella will be more prepared to begin cataloging the material in the Library according to international standards so all of our books will be available through internet and hopefully, as soon as this work is completed, we'll have an online service connected to the Grosseto province Library Network. This network means that if a person wants to have a look at a medical book we have in our library, then a courier will come and pick up the book and bring it to the person and then it is returned by the courier. In our library we also have some very rare Tibetan books and some are in precarious condition. Dan is scanning all these manuscripts so they will not get lost. Last year we received quite a substantial anonymous donation, which enabled us to renovate completely the previous carpentry workshop in Merigar behind the Mandala Hall and convert it into the brand new reading room of the Library. We are very proud of it because we prepared it in six months and we hope in the future it will be open to the general public and when it is open we will publish the opening hours and have a Librarian. We presume there will be scholars and Tibetologists coming from all over the world consulting the books. Donatella Rossi, a Tibetan scholar, has returned to Italy and will collaborate with Jacobella to determine which books to order and to continuously update and modernize our Library and make it complete.

As far as the exhibitions go, for the very first time we were able to invest some money and buy some materials from Tibet to use for future exhibitions so we will not have to hire objects from outside when we make exhibitions about Tibetan culture. We bought thankas, carpets and daily life objects of the Nomads. We have had exhibitions on our own and in collaboration with ASIA. We organized an exhibition in February, 2002, at the Children's Museum in the main square in Siena. The title of the exhibition was "Tibet, a Traveling Country". We wanted to focus the attention on the fact that Tibet is a country in transition; from nomadic to a less mobile one. The exhibition was aimed at children; it began with the various nomadic tents: home, school, social, and all the objects used. There was also someone guiding and explaining the exhibition. This was very successful. My idea for the future is to organize an exhibition and workshop on the making of the *pecha*. (Tibetan texts)

With the archaeology projects, some years ago there was an expedition to the ancient city of Shang Shung organized by Mauro Nascari (see Mirror 59, pgs. 10 & 11). This first expedition was a survey; a very initial attempt and overview. Then, depending on finances and sponsorships, we hope to continue and expand the excavation project utilizing a variety of archaeologists and Tibetologists from our Community.

The Tibetan Medicine program, together with the archives, has been very successful and has developed greatly in the last few years. Thanks to the collaboration of Shang-Shung Institute with Dr. Nida Chenagtsang, we were able to set up the school of Ku Nye and the first seventeen students graduated (see Mirror 64) and they are all working successfully. In 2003 we began a very new research project authorized by and co-sponsored with the Region of Tuscany (where Merigar is located) to determine the effectiveness of Ku Nye massage. We have selected six practitioners of Ku Nye, the first being Dr. Nyida Chenagtsang, and ten cases related to six different pathologies. In quite a few cases some doctors are collaborating with the research, providing the Western diagnosis and checking the final results after Ku Nye treatments. We would like to send this documentation to Tibet where many of these techniques have been lost.

M: How many Ku Nye students are there?

EC: The Ku Nye School has been growing very quickly and at this point world wide we have more than one hundred and twenty students. We have completed the first three years' courses in Rome and in Milan. There is one cycle (of three year training) almost completed in Merigar and one almost completed in Austria. There are some cycles in progress in Russia, Merigar and Australia. There are courses starting next year in Karmaling in France, Germany, Rome, Naples and another one in Merigar. Many materials have been prepared. We have the handbook of the first, second and third levels available in English as well as a video of the first and second level. There is also a new book by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu which is a summary of all Ku Nye teachings according to the Four Tantras. Presently it is only available in Italian but will be available in English soon. If people want to purchase these handbooks they can do so through SSI/Italy. We also have the actual Tibetan Medical Program which will start next year. It is a four year course where theory, practice, group and individual study are fully integrated in order to qualify and train medical doctors and whoever has an interest in Tibetan medicine.

M: Elisa, thank you for your time.



The Translators

O. LEICK

Translators' Training in Merigar

by Elio Guarisco

It was a very hot and dry summer in Merigar this year; definitely more conducive to swimming in the fresh water of the river than sitting all day struggling to understand an old foreign language.

From around the middle of July till the end of August, twelve people met for almost eight hours everyday except Sunday, in what was the first attempt in the Dzogchen Community to improve the knowledge of Tibetan language for a large group of practitioners/translators. This apparently was an old dream of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu that was realized when Shang-Shung Institute of Austria, in the person of Oliver Leick, generously took the responsibility of actually organizing and sponsoring the event.

To translate from Tibetan is a lengthy and painstaking affair, but so many priceless teachings, instructions, stories and history are buried in that language that it would be a pity if these were not "unearthed" and left to be studied only by a few privileged people.

If we consider that Dudjom Rinpoche's "History of the Nyingma School" took more than ten years to be translated into English, we can understand that one or two translators can do a limited amount of translations during their lifetime. For this reason we need more people to develop their skills for this work. Besides having the universal benefit of an in depth appraisal of the teaching as it is expressed in its "original" words, this development contributes to a precise understanding of the meaning of the teaching and to its personal application.

Whether this first attempt in Merigar will be up to all the expectations, firstly Rinpoche, is still to be seen and determined over time. In any case, as soon as the initiative was planned and information was sent out through Norbunet etc., a page (of Adriano Clemente's choice) from The Light of Kailash, Rinpoche's book on the ancient history of Tibet was sent to the interested people to be translated in English as a sort of "test". About thirty people responded and out of these, twelve actually came to Merigar for the training.

The purpose was not that of translating a book, but rather that of studying together under the coordinating effort of myself, Elio Guarisco, (selected by Rinpoche), to improve one's knowledge of Tibetan, and on that basis, to improve one's skill to render into

English or another language what is written in Tibetan.

As a textbook for the training, Rinpoche gave a couple of possibilities: his own *Nascere e Vivere* (Birth and Life) and an original Dzogchen text. It was decided that as a start, Rinpoche's book would have been easier to work on and more beneficial for the training. *Nascere e Vivere* originally was the text of a lecture Rinpoche prepared for the first international Conference on Tibetan Medicine that took place in Venice, Italy in 1983. The new version expands considerably on the part on Living (Vivere) and includes many subjects of Tibetan traditional medicine and adds an entirely new part on Death. The interesting and unique "key note" of this book is Rinpoche's establishing a link between healthy living and the principles underlying the view and practice of Dzogchen.

The training took place in the nice and newly arranged reading room of Merigar's library that is attached to the Mandala room of the Vajra Dance. The room was graciously provided by the Italian Shang-Shung Institute represented by Elisa Copello, who supported and collaborated with the initiative. The room, which has access to the Merigar net via cables, was sufficiently spacious to accommodate the twelve people mostly equipped with computers, dictionaries, etc. Cool in the morning, the room would become a hot hell in the afternoon making it harder to concentrate. But this is probably nothing compared to the difficulties the Tibetan translators of old suffered when traveling to India or Nepal in search of the "precious doctrine", being tormented by the scorching heat of the plains, being attacked and robbed by thieves, contracting and sometime succumbing to tropical diseases, etc.

For various reasons it was decided to work together on the same text rather than split the group into smaller cells. A choice that though it did not fit the needs of all participants, allowed us to verify the level of understanding of different people and share our knowledge. People would study the text by themselves from 9AM to 12 noon with the coordinator trying to help each person overcoming the difficulties in understanding, and trying to clarify words, sense and structure of sentences. From noon to 1PM (we ate lunch at 1PM in Merigar) in turn people read and translated the part of the text earlier prepared. Very much the same procedure was followed in the afternoon, when from 3PM. to 6PM people studied the text and from 6PM to 7PM, read and translated

continued on next page

Video News Project

Shang-Shung Institute, Italy

Shang-Shung Institute, Italy, has created a video magazine as a wonderful way to stay in touch with Rinpoche and the Dzogchen Community during his travels over the next 2 years. The video magazine will be edited footage taken by Fabio Andrico and will include excerpts from Rinpoche’s activities - casual and some teaching. The video news will come out 4 times per year and costs 100 Euro per year.

To subscribe:
Shang Shung Institute, Merigar office
Rita Renzi, Secretary
Tel.0564966941,
Email: ssinst@tiscali.it



Dr. Wangmo and Dr. Yangdron analyzing urine

N ZEITZ

Ku Nye Level 1 Course with Dr. Phuntsog Wangmo Shang-Shung Institute, USA Tsegyalgar, May, 2003

by Jonathan Schaeffer

I wasn’t planning to attend this course, but as the serendipitous events unfolded in the days following a personal retreat at Khandroling, the director of Shang-Shung USA, Malcolm Smith, enthusiastically and fervently insisted that I would benefit from this course. Needless to say, after having the opportunity to speak with Dr. Phuntsog Wangmo about the course curriculum, I succumbed to the invitation to join in. Dr. Wangmo opened the course speaking Tibetan, and Dr. Yangdron translated into English. Dr. Yangdron is also an accomplished physician who initially met Dr. Wangmo in Lhasa and is currently completing her Masters Degree in Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine in California. This proved to be quite fortunate for the 3 other acupuncturists (myself included) in the group during question and answer periods in satisfying our need to differentiate and correlate TCM (traditional Chinese medicine) with Tibetan Medicine. Also present were massage therapists, a Yantra Yoga teacher, and a number of interested Buddhist practitioners, all contributing to make it a focused and receptive group.

Dr. Wangmo explained Tibetan medical theory briefly and concisely for the next few days, giving us a general foundation for the basic rLung, Tripa and Padken signs/symptoms and diagnostic procedure overview. Obviously in a 36 hour course one would not become so adept with diagnosis, but Dr Wangmo supported us to be competent with the three basic humors. We then studied pulse diagnosis and urine analysis, theory in the morning and lab practice in the afternoon, so that daily we were checking our own and each other’s pulses as well as stirring and smelling our jars of yellow liquid. This was very instructive and revealing in the least!!

As it turns out the Doctor is quite an expert in urine analysis. Whilst in Eastern Tibet due to the lack of doctors and medical care, people would either travel long distances if they were not too ill or send urine jars if they couldn’t make it so each day she would have up to 30 jars waiting outside her clinic door. This experience and knowledge she readily shared with us. One can tell a great deal from a urine sample, one of the participants was diagnosed with Naga provocation according to the shape and form of the scum on the surface of the urine. The remedy for that is the practice of Garuda.

Finally we arrived at the day of practical treatment of Nu Nye, so I happily volunteered to be a test subject. All areas of my body were treated manually at least three times using various pressures with oil, and occasionally an acupressure type technique, but mostly with vigorous and energizing strokes. During the next one and a half hours, the treatment I received was not complete I was told, as traditionally a session could last 5, 6 or 7 hours! Apparently Ku Nye as a treatment within the traditional paradigm was roughly only prescribed 20 % of the time.

We had a few sessions practicing Ku Nye techniques on each other and finding specific points and discussing appropriate oils to apply. Not quite enough to learn thoroughly, but Dr. Wangmo assured us that if we could practice what we covered to that point, and then attended the level 2 class, that we would really be gaining proficiency. From my rlungtripa diagnosis, I can safely and assuredly eat ice cream to calm the fire and settle the rlung!

Shang Shung Institute in America

<http://www.shangshung.org/schedule.htm>

2003

November 1-2
Tibet House
Introduction to Kunye
New York City, NY

November 14-16
Self Healing in Tibetan Medicine
Conway, Massachusetts
\$150

November 14-20
Diet and Behavior
Conway, Massachusetts
\$350

2004

Feb 6-8
Introduction to Tibetan Medicine
(Pre-requisite for KN1, Metsa- Tibetan Moxibustion)
Conway, Massachusetts
\$150

Feb 20-21
Introduction to Tibetan Diagnostics
(Pre-requisite for KN1, Metsa)
Conway, Massachusetts
\$150

March 12-14
Healing Points on the Human Body
(Prerequisite for Metsa, recommended for KN, KN2, KN3)
Conway, Massachusetts
\$150

March 26-28
Kunye I (Tibetan Massage)
(Requires ITM and ITD or equivalent)
Conway, Massachusetts
\$150

April 2-4
Metsa (Tibetan Moxabustion)
Conway, Massachusetts
\$150

April 16-18
Introduction to Tibetan Medicine
Bristol, VT
\$150

April 30-May 2
Women’s Health
\$150

May 21-23
Mental Illness and Neurological Disorders
(Pre-requisites ITM, ITD)
Conway, Massachusetts
\$150

June 11-25
Foundation Course in Tibetan Medicine
Year 1, Part One
\$800
*National Certification Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine available

July 9-15
Kunye III (Tibetan Massage)
(Prereq KN2)
Bristol, VT
\$350

For more information contact:
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www.shangshung.org

Faculty:

Dr. Phuntsog Wangmo received her advanced degree from the Lhasa University School of Traditional Medicine in 1988 where she also served a two-year residency after completing her five year training program (1983-1990). During that time she studied with the Khenpos Troru Tsenam and Gyaltzen, two of Tibet’s foremost doctors who are credited with the revival of Tibetan Medicine within Tibet under the Chinese. Dr.Phuntsog Wangmo had the exceptional opportunity of extensive clinical training under Khenpo Troru Tsenam for four years. Thereafter, she dedicated many years of work as a doctor in Eastern Tibet where she collaborated and directed the implementation of A.S.I.A., the non-profit organization founded by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu.

Translators continued from previous page

one by one.

The reading was a lively and engaging task, to witness and to control as not to let it become a rather chaotic and random discussion. I would correct the readers and interpret for them, according to my own understanding, passages that presented difficulties related to terms, meaning or syntax. Needless to say the schedule proved to be rather rigorous for many people for whom that time was also their yearly and only holiday, and for those who were not used to spend so much time studying. So somehow the schedule became more relaxed, with some people preparing the reading at home or on Merigar’s meadows. Rinpoche’s very large retreat on the Liberation from the Six Lokas according to his Longsal terma teachings, provided some respite to the intensity of the training, but also somehow resulted in a slight disruption to the continuity of the training, with people distracted with their girlfriends, social relations, important meetings, excursion to rivers and beaches, etc., etc.

Despite the interruptions, we witnessed with appreciation and satisfaction, that many of the participants made a lot of effort in learning and rapidly improved their knowledge of Tibetan and particularly of Rinpoche’s own style of writing. The participants were Malcolm Smith, USA, Grisha Mokhin, Russia, Fabian Sanders, Italy, Monica Gentile, Nepal, Igor Berkhin, Ukraine, Jakob Winkler, Germany, Saadet Arslan, Germany, Sasha Poubants, Russia, Jacobella Gaetani, Italy, Cristiana De Falco, Italy, Ilke Tanner, Finland, Oriole Aguilar, Spain, Zeljka Jovanivic, France. Jacobella Gaetani and Cristiana de Falco, who in the old days had the luck to study Tibetan with Rinpoche at the University of Naples in the 70’s, also participated.

On one of the last days of the training the scholar Adriano Clemente graciously accepted to come and with his usual precision and careful attention to the detail and meaning, helped the people to understand and translate a section of the book dedicated to the explanation of the nature of the mind. Meetings with Oliver who kindly listened to the suggestions and complains of the people, also took place, in order to focus the project in relation to the needs of the participants, and shape its future course, etc.

The actual translation of Rinpoche’s book *Nascere, Vivere e Morire (Birth, Life and Death)*, will be prepared in Italian by myself, and will be edited by Fabian. This will serve as the sole basis for the translation of the book in other languages. But on future occasions, according to Adriano’s advice, the original translation will be in English.

To ensure that this particular vision of Rinpoche becomes a reality, in the near future we shall inject new and fresh energy into this project by opening the possibility for other people to join the translators’ training. To do this we will inform all those who are interested through Norbunet and the other means of communication of the Community and send a new test for those who want to join anew. Rinpoche has given specific directives for the next part of the training that we will certainly implement. The location and time of the next part of the training is still being considered and evaluated, and will be announced once it has become definite. But because most people like to be in a place where they have the opportunity to be near the Master, the training will probably take place next year in Margarita, in the earlier or latter part of the summer.

This is what we have been doing and what we want to do with the understanding and support of our Community. In this way, we want to make the “Translators’ Training” an ongoing process within the Dzogchen Community as a special initiative of the Shang-Shung Institute and, make it flourish so as to produce countless translators who with their work, in their own country and in their own language, will serve as the condition for the light of Dzogchen in general and the teaching of Rinpoche in particular, to rise everywhere in the world.

This year marks the twentieth anniversary of Shang Shung Edizioni which was founded by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu in 1983. Thanks to the untiring work of the Master, in these twenty years the catalogue of the publishing house of the Dzogchen Community has been perpetually enriched by new publications. Today almost two hundred titles have been published by Shang Shung Edizioni in Italian and English. And there are as many titles of translations in other languages that the various Shang Shung Editions of other countries have published. The heart of our editorial activities is the Dzogchen teachings transmitted by Rinpoche during these twenty years both in the form of translations of Tibetan texts written by him as well as transcriptions of his precious words freely given during the retreats he has held around the world. In order to celebrate this anniversary we asked the Master to publish one of his works to benefit all practitioners both old and new who follow him with devotion and joy. And so Rinpoche gave us this youthful poem which represents a wonderful jewel for us to cherish in the depths of our hearts. We give heart-felt thanks to our precious Master and all our best wishes for a long and happy life! Shang Shung Edizioni thanks all those who have supported and who continue to support their work in all forms: buying books, giving generous donations, offering their time for translations, transcriptions, graphics, printing, binding and selling their publications.

twenty years shang shung edizioni 1983-2003

Twenty Years with the Master and His Words

POEM by
CHOGYAL NAMKHAIR NORBU

AN AMAZING SCENE

*Translated from Tibetan by Elio Guarisco and Adriano Clemente
This version is a free English rendering by John Shane*

KYE HO!

Isn't it wonderful

to see these young people,
whose youthful freshness is so charming,
relaxing and enjoying themselves
in a delightful garden such as this,
on the side of a mountain covered
with particles of the whitest snow?!

And don't the white clouds that gather,
like bright galaxies of crystal dust
around the mountain,
seem just like a charming lady
in disguise, who wraps herself
around her lover?

And the sweet fragrance
that wafts so gently from afar
- almost like a wondrous gift sent to
delight the senses of these young people -
seems to me, in my imagination, to be coming
from some distant lotus garden

As I walk slowly towards a many-scented grove
where hardly anyone ever comes or goes,
the deer roam about freely, without fear,
as if among friends

And here, too, garlands of waves arise
from the clearest water, as the song of the Jolmo bird,
seeming just like the music for some dance,
lends grace to the step of the young people that gather here

Rays of sunlight, with no particular shape or form,
suffuse the grove, almost as if the stainless luminosity
of the sky had come down to earth,
making it seem almost like a meadow
encrusted with sapphires

Like swirling golden stars in the sky,
flocks of kingly swans move their wings in unison,
making a delightful sound, and from their flight
I sense the nearby presence of a pond
whose beautiful lotus stems
irresistibly attract the young people.

Do these lotuses lift themselves up
to keep watch over the pond,
or are they perhaps, in fact, water-lilies?

This pond at the side of an
immaculate turquoise meadow,
seems as if adorned with gems,
and, filled with bright lotuses,
it delights the senses

While its pure water,
- that has all the eight qualities of perfection -
can be compared to a limpid mirror,

so that the mountain, covered in fresh snow,
is, almost in spite of itself, clearly reflected in it

I wonder if this could, in fact, be the delightful lotus pond
where the heavenly youth always play, that is
said to be found in the garden of the higher realms,

Birds of every colour
swim and wander at their leisure everywhere,
while all kinds of golden-eyed fish frenziedly
dart here and there

And geese and ducks,
whose lustre seems as if stolen from gold,
give cry with their sweet-sounding voices,
while small birds, making coquettish movements to each
other,
seem to laugh even louder from the branches of the trees

Bees that come from all directions
to alight upon the blossoming lotuses
and on the anthers of the water-lilies
insatiably drink the nectar there

And, for a while, the open lotuses,
set a'tremble by the gentle breeze,
seem to smile and playfully give out their fragrance
to the bees that swarm around them

The flock of mighty geese, too,
is also attracted to this scene,
and the golden-eyed fish gather,
with their open eyes glancing here and there

As one new, still-closed water-lily,
set a'top a stalk with opened leaves,
is not only stirred by the gentle breeze
but also quivers and trembles this way and that

The bees - both those summoned from afar
by the fragrance of this lily, and those that dwell nearby -
buzz about it in swarms, and all gather, encircling it

And both the fresh and charming lotuses
and the blossoming, blue Utpala flowers
turn towards this water-lily for a while,
some in astonishment, some in doubt

While the birds, too, at the sight
of the shaking water-lily, seem surprised and begin
to chatter to each other, as if saying,
"What could be causing
this water-lily to tremble so?"

Some of them seem to reply,
"It's the movement of the wind",
while others seem to say,
"No, the water-lily's roots
are being shaken by the golden-eyed fish!",
and so they reason together,
arguing this way and that

The bees, meanwhile, are overjoyed
and reach out with their tongues,
greedily beginning to make themselves busy
with opening this water-lily
that is so laden-down with nectar

And some of them, drunk with desire,
fly up to the tip of the lily

and labour to open its closed petals
which immediately snap shut again,
as quickly as they were opened

At one point, while the weary bees
rest and relax on top of the branches that exude
a cool fragrance, they hear a humming melody

And they seem to be saying to themselves,
"Not only does this one water-lily have a wonderful fragrance,
contain marvelous nectar, and give off a wonderful freshness,
but it also sends out an extraordinary melody!",
and they listen to it attentively

This hummed melody, much more subtle
than the sound a river makes, emerges indistinctly

Is it coming from the closed-up water-lily,
or does it arise from some other source?

But then, faint rays of the sun finally
touch the stalk of that particular water-lily
and slowly its petals begin to unfold,
a little at a time

And then the bees,
swarming and humming,
gather around it with intense greed and desire,
to drink its sweet-tasting nectar

But when its petals finally open
the bees see that, inside it,
there is a single bee, just like themselves
who is on the verge of starving to death,
and is wailing in a slow lament

So now the greedy bees finally have a real experience
of the condition of existence, as they try to release
their fellow bee from the trap of this water-lily

But it's not only the bees that learn this lesson:
the fish, too, and the birds, both big and small,
and the other creatures that inhabit this valley
are all also brought to some understanding
of the nature of existence

They all agree with each other, seeming to say,
"This is a concrete example of how,
when one is attached to the sensation of pleasure,
its opposite will always inevitably manifest!"

In that pleasant grove, in that valley,
which inspires such joy and happiness,
I, too, have rested for while in the state of equanimity,
in the non-dual condition between the arising
of all appearances and the nature of the Mind Essence

You young people,
Enjoy (all this) and be happy!

How marvelous it is!
How wonderful!

This poem was written by me, Kunga Dawa, or Jigmed Chöying Namgyal, as a young man, in the Wood-Female-Sheep year (1955), at Khamsumdrag, the residence of Kangkar Chökyi Senge, in Menyag, Eastern Tibet!

May Virtues Prevail!

Interview with Adriano Clemente
About Translating

Some advice to translators

The Mirror: Adriano, how long have you been translating Rinpoche’s teachings and how did you begin? Do you remember the first thing you translated?

Adriano: I have been translating Rinpoche’s writings since 1983, the year I graduated from the Oriental University in Naples. Of course I remember the first book I translated, it was The Mirror, Some Advice on Presence and Awareness, on the occasion of the first International Medicine Conference organized by the Shang-Shung Institute. I had some knowledge of classical Tibetan since I had worked on a thirteenth century text for my thesis, but when I started to translate The Mirror and reached the halfway point, I really felt I didn’t understand well what was written. I called Rinpoche on the phone, and almost desperate I asked him for help. Rinpoche said, “Ok, come to my place”, so I went from Naples to his house in Formia and he translated the second part of the book-let orally. That’s how I started.

M: How did you continue and when did the translation work became your main activity?

AC: Of course, I continued to study Tibetan and translate small things, but the big change happened in 1985 when Rinpoche asked me to translate his famous book on the ancient Tibetan culture called “drung deu bon”. I could not even read the umed (cursive) calligraphy in which the manuscript was written. I had to learn how to read it before trying to understand it. It was an excellent training because this book deals with all aspects of Tibetan culture such as tales, rituals, myths, Bön, medicine, astrology, etc. Each time I had to translate a new chapter I would study the related subject in order to learn the right terminology. In the end I became a kind of expert on the ancient Bön ritual texts, even without wanting it. In that period I would check almost everything with Rinpoche and he would patiently listen to my many questions and doubts and solve them with infinite kindness until I was satisfied with the translation. For many years I could not get enough money from translating so I had to work also as a guitar teacher, a musician on ships (the famous hijacked Achille Lauro) , a school teacher and so forth. I continued to translate books as much as possible. Finally, at one point, Rinpoche decided that I should get a kind of salary from Merigar. This worked for a few years, but it was not a good idea to depend on the Gar, so Rinpoche decided to organize an international fund for my work. Many times Rinpoche himself collected the money at retreats and gave it to me personally. In the last few years, Igor Legati kindly took the responsibility for coordinating the international sponsorship for my translations. *

M: What are your primary translation works at the moment?

AC: Since the Santi Maha Sangha training started I have had the responsibility of translating each volume. So far I have translated five of them. Usually they are quite difficult to translate since they contain many quotations of original scriptures and authors from various centuries. In general I am committed to verify the translation, if not directing the translation, of all Rinpoche’s books.

M: One of your primary translation works is also the translation of the Longsal teachings. Recently volumes 3 and 4 have been published by Shang Shung Editions, Italy. Can you tell us about the work of translating the Longsal teachings?

AC: The translation of the Longsal teachings is one of my main responsibilities. I started working on them in 1999 and so far have translated 10 teachings with their related histories of discovery. Longsal is the general name for all Rinpoche’s

discoveries as a terton, and there a lot of them to be translated in the future. In general, I translate a specific teaching after Rinpoche has taught it once.

M: What are you specifically working on now?

AC: Now I am working on the new Tibetan edition of the first level book; there are many new additions and quotations. There is a lot of work because I am almost retranslating it



since I am not satisfied with my old translation in many parts. Originally my idea was to just revise a little, but I had to revise it more extensively. The way I translated the quotations the first time from the Samgten Migdron - a very ancient text by Nubchen Sangye Yeshe – even though the sense has not changed that much the sentences were structured dif-

ferently. At that time I felt I should translate in a more free way and give less importance to the fact of being hundred per cent faithful to the original text. Now my idea is that the Santi Maha Sangha books should be very literal, so if the text said something in a certain way, it should be said that way in English; then from that language it can be translated into other languages without losing the original flavor, as much as possible. In general, it is good to translate a book and put it into good English so that the text becomes “born of its own language”, but sometimes the translator may have not really understood what was said and tries to make up something thinking they have understood the general meaning. This is a mistake; if you are a translator you must understand both the words and the implied meaning.

M: So translations should be more literal?

AC: If its possible to say the same thing in the Western language you should say that especially if it is Tantras or original scriptures. If it is modern language it’s ok, you can use a different way of saying the thing; I think it’s best if the author says something a certain way, the translator should say it in the same way. You get the flavor of the author and an emphasis on certain points, so when you translate you should stress the same points and then the translation is perfect.

M: What are the difficulties you have encountered in general in translation work?

AC: As I said, my experience as a translator is that the best knowledge you can have is that when you don’t understand something, you recognize it. That’s why I always advise young translators to cultivate doubt. A good translator understands when they do not understand. If you think you understand something and create your own thing, that is dangerous for the dharma and very sad. In my case I am always trying to be sure, even if have to work on one sentence for a long time.

M: How do you work with Rinpoche when you find you need advice?

AC: Some years ago when Rinpoche was not traveling so much I always met with him and spent hours with him and every question I had, I asked and he explained. For three or four years now we work by email and I send a lot of questions and he answers me in a clear way. Even if I have slight doubts, I always try to ask. I tend to be doubtful and feel that translating the Dzogchen teachings is something very serious, so when I sense something is not so clear I must clarify it. Translating is not something that I think, “Oh, it’s ok, maybe if it’s like this or that”. If Rinpoche replies and it is still not so clear to me, I write again and ask the same thing in a different way

until I am satisfied.

M: Usually our Longsal books include photos related to the time Rinpoche received each teaching in a dream. How are you locating these photos?

AC: It is a serious problem that there is no photo archive for Shang Shung Editions. If I want to get a photo of Conway, 1983, for example, we have to email around, etc. I really hope more people take on this task and responsibility for creating a photo archive for the for Shang Shung Editions and the Community.

M: Three of the last five teachings transmitted in Margarita are now available from Shang Shung editions in two volumes. Can you talk about them a little?

AC: Yes, these latest two books contain three of the teachings that Rinpoche transmitted in Margarita; the view beyond conceptual mind, the Vajrasattva purification combined with the Six Lokas and the all-penetrating wisdom or yeshe zangthal. The tregchod and thodgal are not yet completed for publishing.

M: What are the next books to be translated aside from the Longsal?’

AC: I am working on the translation of the dorje sempa namkhache –a very important root Semde text, with extensive commentaries. Rinpoche has written two versions; one is smaller with only Vairocana’s commentary and one bigger with three commentaries by Vairocana, Garab Dorje and Shri Simha. This is an important work.

M: What are some of your future projects?

AC: I have to complete the translation of the Vajra Dance book, which is also a very big work. Then, of course, the next levels of Santi Maha Sangha and lastly, two big projects: Rinpoche’s book of dreams and his autobiography, which are yet to be completed in Tibetan in their final form. These latter two are very big volumes, so it will take me quite a few years to complete the translation.

M: Can you talk about the project called the Complete Works of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu?

AC: As I mentioned, this was created by Igor Legati to solicit support for the translations of all of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu’s works which either I do myself or supervise.

M: How are you supporting yourself while doing this important work?

AC: You mean financially? I completely depend on the generosity of our practitioners, and I take this occasion to thank all of them for their great kindness to allow me to dedicate my life to this sacred task. I hope they will continue to support me, since there is no big financial basis for my translation work. Each year we are collecting enough money for me to live.*

M: Do you like your work and do you think it has made you a better practitioner?

AC: I like it. Usually the first phase of translating is the most exciting and rewarding, although sometimes it takes all of your energy. When I have to review or check, then it becomes like any job. As to the latter question no, I am still a very bad practitioner. Knowledge does not depend on books. It has been a great blessing for me to be able to work directly with Rinpoche and he has kindly clarified many important points of the teaching for me concerning both the profound meaning and the terminology.

M: Do you feel satisfied in this life?

AC: I am happy to be a small candle translating the sun of Rinpoche’s writing.

M: Thank you very much for your work and your time.

*see article Project “Complete Works of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu” below

PROJECT “COMPLETE WORKS OF CHÖGYAL NAMKHAÏ NORBU”

During his life, the Master Chögyal Namkhai Norbu has written many works in Tibetan dealing with the Dzogchen teaching and the different fields of Tibetan culture such as history, medicine, astrology, etc. Some of these works have already been translated into different Western languages, but many are still waiting to be translated. For this reason, the Dzogchen Community through the International Gakyil, established the Project “Complete Works of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu” with the aim of raising funds to guarantee the translation of all the Master’s works from the Tibetan. The translation from Tibetan, and particularly the translation of his works on the Dzogchen teachings, entails considerable difficulties and therefore great skill and knowledge of a precise terminology is required. For this reason the implementation and coordination of this project was entrusted to Adriano Clemente who, for many years now, has been translating the Tibetan texts written by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu in close collaboration with the Author himself. Therefore, all those who are aware of the need and urgency of this translation work are kindly requested to give this project their financial support. Donations, either single or periodical ones, can be forwarded to the Merigar secretary or personally to Igor Legati who is the coordinator of this project.

Donations can also be sent by means of a bank transfer to:
account # 6840.82, Monte dei Paschi di Siena,

Arcidosso Branch,
58031 Arcidosso GR, Italy
swift code: IT 50 N 01030
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For further information please contact:

Merigar Secretary
Tel. 0564/966837
Fax: 0564/968110
Email: merigaroffice@tiscali.it

Igor Legati
Tel. 0564/967204
Email: edizss@tiscali.it

We would like to thank in advance all those who so generously take part in this project.

books available from shang shung edizioni



Chögyal Namkhai Norbu *LONGSAL TEACHINGS VOLUME 3*

Euro 15,00 US\$ 18,00

Translated from Tibetan by Adriano Clemente

The Longsal Cycle or The Innermost Essence of the Dakinis of the Luminous Clarity of the Universe (Klong chen 'od gsal mkha' 'gro'i snying thig) is the collection of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu's rediscovered teachings.

This third volume of teachings from the Longsal contains two upadeshas received through dreams, including the histories of their discoveries,: The Purification of the Six Lokas as Preliminaries of the Path of Ati (A ti'i lam sngon rigs drug gnas syong), containing unique instructions on how to practice the pPurification of the Six Lokas combined with the Vajrasattva purification, and The Upadesha on All-Penetrating Wisdom (Ye shes zang thal gyi man ngag), a special and essential instruction of Padmasambhava based on the principle of "Direct Introduction". The Tibetan text is included.



Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

Y NAMKHAI

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu *LONGSAL TEACHINGS VOLUME 4*

Translated from Tibetan by Adriano Clemente

Euro 15,00 US\$ 18,00

The Longsal Cycle or The Innermost Essence of the Dakinis of the Luminous Clarity of the Universe (Klong chen 'od gsal mkha' 'gro'i snying thig) is the collection of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu's rediscovered teachings.

This fourth volume of teachings from the Longsal contains one upadesha received through dreams, including the histories of its discovery,: The Main Points of the View Totally Beyond the Conceptual Mind (Lta ba blo 'das chen po'i gnad byang), a special teaching of Garab Dorje containing extraordinary and clear explanations on the main points of the Dzogchen view. The Tibetan text is included.

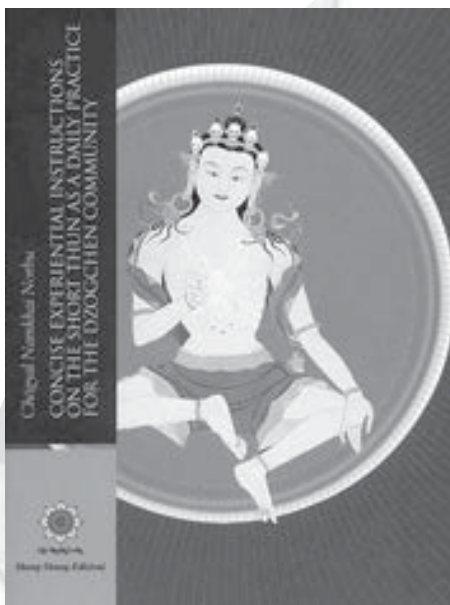


Chögyal Namkhai Norbu *THE CYCLE OF DAY AND NIGHT AND ITS RELATION TO THE ORIGINAL TEACHING THE UPADESHA OF VAJRASATTVA*

Translated from Tibetan by Adriano Clemente

Euro 13,00 US\$ 15,00

The Cycle of Day and Night or The Application of the Path of the Primordial Yoga called "The Cycle of Day and Night" (gDod ma'i rnal fbyor gyi lam khyer nyin mtshan fkhor lo ma zhes bya ba) is an extraordinary upadesha on how to achieve the capacity of total contemplation in one's life. Chögyal Namkhai Norbu spontaneously wrote it in 1983, and later he discovered that it was based on a teaching found in the Vai ro rgyud fbum called The Upadesha of Vajrasattva (rDo rje sems dpa'i man ngag), which had also been received in a dream by the Author. The history of its discovery and the two texts for comparison are presented here for the first time. The Tibetan text is included.



Chögyal Namkhai Norbu *CONCISE EXPERIENTIAL INSTRUCTIONS ON THE SHORT THUN*

Translated from Tibetan by Adriano Clemente

Euro 8,00 US\$ 10,00

A short but precise explanation of the Short Thun written by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu as an accessory to his terma cycle Khandro Longsal Nyingthig. With the Tibetan text on the opposite page.

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu *THE PRACTICE OF TIBETAN KUNYE MASSAGE*

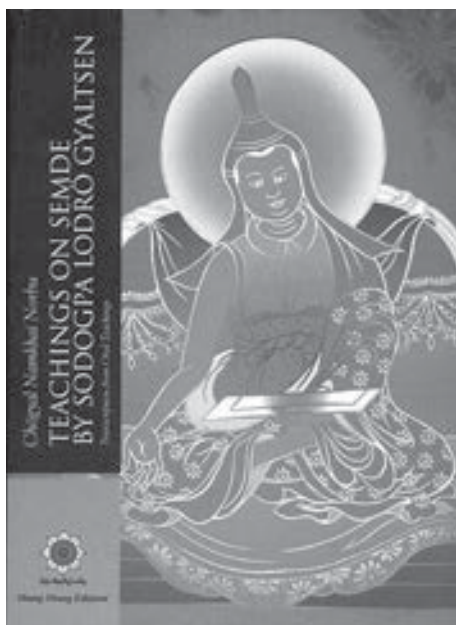
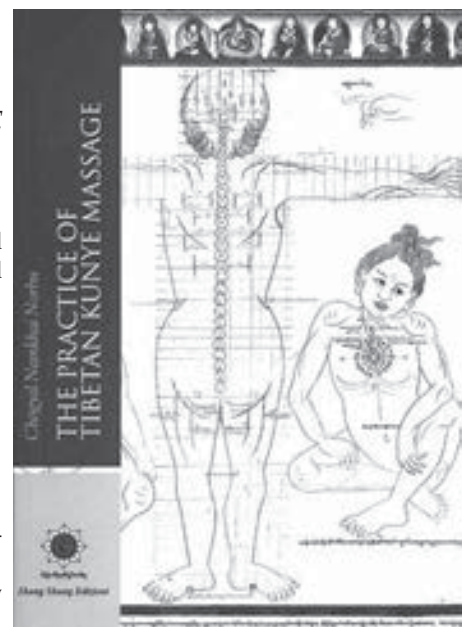
Translated from Tibetan by Elio Guarisco

Euro 13,00 US\$ 15,00

This short text on the Tibetan Kunye massage, witten in 1983, was reviewed and completed in 1987. As the Author says in his Introduction:

"There exist different kinds of therapies, but those wishing to maintain good health or to rid themselves of physical disturbances by healing themselves through their own energy, Kunye represents a marvellous massage and a marvellous therapy.

Massage has been known and widespread in traditional Tibetan medicine since the most ancient times. It is found in both the Bon and Buddhist traditions and in fact is described in numerous texts because it is deemed a particular type of therapy. Furthermore, the fact that practitioners and yogis of all schools and traditions practise it and have preserved and transmitted it confirms its particularity, also corroborated in the stories and hagiographies of many ancient masters."



Chögyal Namkhai Norbu *TEACHINGS ON SEMDE BY SOGDOGPA LODRÖ GYALTSEN*

Euro 13,00 US\$ 15,00

These teachings on Dzogchen Semde present a method that is complementary and parallel to the better known one of the Four Yogas or Four Contemplations. They are contained in the Instructions on Dzogchen Semde According to Nyangis System by the master Sodogpa Lodrö Gyaltsen (1552-1624), who wrote down an oral tradition going back to Vairochana the Translator and subsequently known as The System of Nyang, transmitted by the master Nyang Chograb Zhönnu. As well as furnishing methods for discovering the state of contemplation in a more or less direct way according to the practitioner's capacity, this text also contains interesting references to the meditative experiences of Mahamudra according to masters of the Drugpa Kagyudpa tradition.

The explanations are taken from an oral commentary given by the master Chögyal Namkhai Norbu during the Christmas retreat at Merigar in 1991.



TEACHINGS ON LOJONGS, RUSHENS, AND SEMDZINS

Euro 13,00 US\$ 15,00

The Seven Lojongs or Mind Trainings belong to the Dzogchen Upadesha tradition and have been included in the Base Level of the Santi Maha Sangha as preliminaries to the fundamental practices of Dzogchen. The first six trainings are a reflection on the principle of the Four Awarenesses and on the value of the Master and the Teachings. The seventh, which comprises three methods linked to visualization and breathing, aims at leading the practitioner to an understanding of the state of contemplation through three specific experiences.

In all traditions of Dzogchen Upadesha the practice of Khorde Rushen is considered to be fundamental as a base or starting point. In some traditions it is spoken of as Ng'ndro practice, that is as preparation. Nevertheless we need to understand very clearly its principle and function because it is not a preliminary practice as it is usually meant, but is a practice that introduces contemplation.

The Semdzins are highly effective both as a method for distinguishing the pure presence of rigpa from the dualistic mind and for removing the doubts that arise from our experience in practice. The explanation of the seven Semdzins contained here is essentially based on a text of instructions of the master Adzam Drugpa, The Essence of Wisdom (iOd gsal rdzogs pa chen po yang gsang bla na ned pa spyi'i khyad par gyi khrid yig lam bzang ye shes snying po).



Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

THE DZOGCHEN STATE AND THE SEMDZIN WITH THE SYLLABLE PHAT

Euro 13,00 US\$ 15,00

These teachings were given at Merigar in August 1994. During the retreat Ch'gyal Namkhai Norbu said:

Those who do not know what the state of contemplation or of Dzogchen, that is our real condition, means, need to use a Semdzin, for example the Semdzin with the PHAT. The teaching I am transmitting to you goes back through the lineage to Samantabhadra and the Twelve Primordial Teachers of Dzogchen. With the power of the lineage and the transmission you develop knowledge. PHAT by itself is not

enough, you need to connect with the transmission. The PHAT serves to discover our state and the transmission serves to develop and realise it."

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

TEACHINGS ON SHITRO AND YANGTI

Euro 15,00 US\$ 18,00

This book is a compilation of oral teachings given at Merigar from 1985 to 1998. It contains exhaustive explanations on the Shitro teachings and the Shitro practice transmitted by the famous tert'n Namch' Mingyur Dorje, and on the Yangti methods based on a text by Tungso Repa and on an oral teaching by Guru Padmasambhava. Precise instructions on the preliminary practices for the dark retreat are given, including the Guruyoga of the White A with the invocation of Garab Dorje.

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

THE PRACTICE OF LONG LIFE AND CHUDLEN OF MANDARAVA

An Oral Commentary

Euro 13,00 US\$ 15,00

The practice of Mandarava is a teaching that Ch'gyal Namkhai Norbu received personally when he was in Maratika. The title of this teaching is Chimed Khandro Sogthig (The Heart Thigle of the Dakini of Immortality). There are seven supreme methods of nectar connected with this practice, that is to say, seven main methods for preparing Ch'dlen. These nectars are also a condition for realizing the Body of Light.

In these teachings, given at Merigar in 1986, Rinpoche said, iThis Ch'dlen is connected to a Long Life Practice. In general Long Life Practice is useful for strengthening one's protective energy.

This is important in all senses. To be able to have some realization through certain practices, first of all one needs to be healthy and free from physical problems. Even if you are not dedicating yourself only to the practice you need to live well in daily life, and you only live well when you do not have problems, that is, when your energy is perfect and especially when your protective energy is healthy. If your energy has some weak points it needs to be reinforced, so we have to know how to do that. This is one of the principles of the Long Life Practice. Many people think that the Long Life Practice is a kind of prayer, just to receive a kind of blessing, but it's not like that. This practice means working with oneself, using visualization, mantras and Ch'dlen pills.



TWO DZOGCHEN TEXTS

Translated from Tibetan and Commented by Jim Valby

Euro 13,00 US\$ 15,00

This book contains two Dzogchen texts translated from Tibetan by Jim Valby. The first text is the Semde lung named The Primordial State of the King of Space (Byang chub sems nam mkhafi rgyal po). The second text is the ninth chapter about The Mandala from the principal Longde tantra named The King of the Infinite Primordial Dimension (Klong chen rab i'byams rgyal po).

Since the meaning of these original Dzogchen texts is very condensed, the two word commentaries written by Jim Valby are a very useful key for getting a thorough knowledge and interpretation of them. The Tibetan text is included.



Igor Berkhin

PAGCHEN - RULES AND BASIC STRATEGIES

Euro 6,00 US\$ 8,00

Pagchen is an ancient Tibetan game that counts several thousands years and traces back to the powerful non-human tribe called Masang. This book contains all the many rules of the game, illustrated through drawings, pictures and an enclosed chart in colour that is very useful for learning the game. It contains also a very clear introduction to the basic strategies of Pagchen written on the base of the indications given by Ch'gyal Namkhai Norbu in many years while playing this game with his students.

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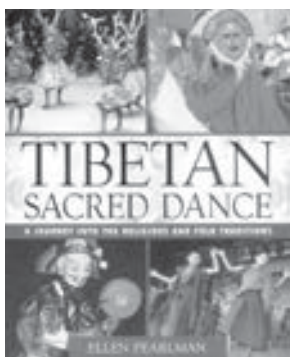
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book reviews

Tibetan Sacred Dance
A Journey into the Religious and Folk Traditions
Published 2002 by Inner Traditions
by Ellen Pearlman



As students of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, we have had the great privilege of being introduced to a very compelling means of practice, which assists us in the process of integration; that is, the Vajra Dance, the Dance of the Liberation of the Six Lokas and Dance of the Three Vajras. Due to the fact that these dances have arisen from the Tibetan tradition, we, as Western students have personally experienced the power and potency of this sacred art form. Therefore, it is a pleasure to discover this rich and sumptuous gem of a book. Author Ellen Pearlman, a long-time practitioner herself, spent many years delving into the mythic and symbolic meaning of the movements, mudras, mantras, costuming, instruments, music, make-up and masks, which form the magical display that is known as Cham or the sacred monastic dance of Tibet, as well as Achi Lhamo, the folk and operatic dance of the Tibetan people.

In this sumptuous book, filled with vivid photographs, she provides readers with insight into the power, majesty and import of these dances, whether it be the deep meditative disciplines, offerings, invocations and transformative activities intrinsic to Cham, or the legends, cultural history, political commentaries and humor associated with Achi Lhamo. Weaving together a history of the origins, impact and significance of the spiritual teachings which form the ground of these dances with commentary on their lineage, deities to be embodied or invoked, and much more, she brings us into the very heart of this powerful form of symbolic expression and energetic transmission. This book is highly recommended for deeper insight into the magic and mystery underlying Tibet's ancient yogic disciplines, secret teachings and luminous visions.

by Sharron Rose

The Path of the Priestess

by Sharron Rose
Published by Inner Traditions
January 15, 2003

Sharron Rose, a Fulbright scholar, dancer, teacher and writer has led an exceptional life, training under the tutelage of 60-year old Sitara Devi, the foremost Kathak dancer in India. From her she learned to embody the manifestation of the panoply of India's gods and goddesses like Shiva, lord of death, and Saraswati, the goddess of learning, music, poetry, the arts, purification and poetry. To those in the West this may sound just picturesque, but in India it is highly monumental and means training as the embodiment of a deity, a cultural legacy, a literary and art repository, and becoming an everyday object of worship.

When the sacred entered her life, along with it came the awakening and responsibility of an understanding of the hidden dimension of dreams, visions and feelings and recognizing that they were not just part of an overactive mythic imagination. As a true temple dancer her responsibility was to depict the "play of energies and forces". She had to become the embodiment of the seductive milkmaid Radha and her beloved lord Krishna, Mirabai the 16th century princess of Rajasthan who became a visionary poet and saint and Durga's wild and protective energies. Sharron managed to do this while raising a young son (who accompanied her during this time) and flitting back and forth in her role as wife to a increasingly successful American entertainment lawyer.



With her marriage in shambles, she returned to the United States and became a student of Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche, immersing herself in Tibetan Tantra. Norbu Rinpoche taught her to face her obstacles and she became more sensitized to the forces that "lay at the root of both my own actions and those of others". She also became a Chöd practitioner and embarked upon a 10 day dark retreat.

But Sharron didn't stop there, and the book chronicles how she also became the student of Dr. Robert E. Lee Master and his wife, Dr. Jean Houston, authors of "The Varieties of Psychedelic Experience". She journeyed with Dr. Masters to the "inner landscape of vision", ancient Egypt to meet the Goddess Sekhmet and experience her elemental forces, similar to what Tantra would refer to as kundalini unfolding. She learnt how to heal, belly dance, and cojoin with her tantric consort, the hermetic scholar Jay Weidner, who furthered her investigation into alchemy and its connection to mystic Christianity.

The Path of the Priestess discusses a history of the feminine mysteries and offers insights on how to break away from the "cult of consumerism", with a call to create a sacred society with "a real desire for spiritual transformation". Sharron includes illuminating stories of the myths of the goddesses. The final third of the book is a step-by-step "how-to" primer of visualizations and meditations. The first, on the Strong and Fiery Goddess uses breath and imagery to evoke chakra energy. Another exercise evokes the goddesses of strength and power through guided meditation.

continued on page 24

Dharma Work in American Prisons
An Interview with Anna Cox, author of Dharma Friends: No One Abandoned, No One Forgotten, No One Discarded
Published Dec. 2002 by Xlibris Publishing House
(under the auspices of the Dharma Friends Prison Outreach Project)

by Paul Bail for The Mirror

In the United States, spiritual outreach to prisoners has been primarily the province of Christian chaplains, with the exception of African-American prisoners who are also proselytized by the Nation of Islam. Bo Lozoff, a student of yoga and a friend of Ram Dass, was probably the first to bring Eastern spiritual practice to those in prison. The title of his book, *We're All Doing Time*, says a lot about his approach. Recently some Buddhists have become interested in prison work. Robina Courtin, a Buddhist nun from Australia, comes to mind, and Joan Halifax of the Upaya Prison Project. Also the late Chagdud Tulku's Padma Ling Prison Project described by Jarvis Jay Masters in *Finding Freedom: Writings from Death Row*. In India, female superintendent of prisons, Dr. Kiran Bedi supported a program of Vipassana meditation for prisoners and staff, which was credited with improving conditions in the prison. Now, add to this collection the book, *Dharma Friends: No One Abandoned, No One Forgotten, No One Discarded*, which describes the work of social worker Anna Cox and the Ecumenical Buddhist Society. For the past five years Anna has been volunteering as a religious counselor in the Arkansas prisons. She and her supporters have published monthly newsletter titled "Dharma Friends."



Paul Bail for The Mirror: What first inspired you to do the kind of work you do, bringing the dharma to prisons?

Anna Cox: I didn't consciously plan any of this, but remember a seed that was planted when I attended a small gathering with His Holiness the Dalai Lama in Madison, Wisconsin. One statement His Holiness made that stuck with me, was that he wished that there was a way, perhaps with a newsletter, to merge Western psychology with Buddhist dharma teachings for those who could not receive direct teachings. I was a student of dharma and also a psychotherapist, so I considered that it might be something that I could do. The karmic ball got rolling when I received a letter from an Arkansas death row inmate, Frankie Parker, who had some dharma questions. I began to write to him and through that friendship I began to connect to Frankie's friends on the row as well. I soon knew about 5-6 of our Arkansas death row inmates. When Frankie was executed, I wrote and visited his friends primarily to offer them support during such a difficult time. Meanwhile, there had been a lot of publicity about the execution because Frankie was a Buddhist. The Ecumenical Buddhist Society was mentioned along with my name in world-wide press releases, so I received many letters from those in prisons around the country. The Dharma Friends newsletter began as a futile attempt to keep the flood of letters under control. I thought I could write one group response to everyone, but that led to even more letters, and eventually to what is now our monthly newsletter today. While the newsletter was taking birth, there were so many in the Tucker Max prison that I wished to continue to see that I decided that my trips would be of greater value if I became certified as a volunteer religious assistant. In that role I could go into the prison and go cell to cell, lead group meditations, and I could offer healing group sessions. Now, I look up after a few years and I seem to be neck deep in trying to offer dharma in all of its many disguises to those in prison.

PB: What has been the best (most successful) experience you have had working with a prisoner? Why do you think it was so successful?

AC: Well, it is hard to know what can be defined as success. I know that I have been able to touch many lives and know that when my friends in prison say that they love me, it is true. There are many stories of growth and healing that fill the Dharma Friends book that are very moving. Mostly though, the "successful experience" was more that I was inspired by those who I met rather than anything that I accomplished with others. The men that I worked with in person and by mail transformed my views of who a person in prison is. I see individuals in each cell who have a tragic story to tell. Often it is a story that our society has contributed to from the time that they were conceived. Not that each person is not individually responsible for their choices, because they are. Not that they should be excused for the horror that they have caused, because they should not. And this is not to say that there are many who survive traumatic lives to find great success on their own without any help, because amazingly, some do. Karma ultimately plays a role, it is true. But the life circumstances of those that I have met were very often more challenging than I could ever have imagined. So the "most successful experience" has been that all of these prisoners are my teachers and they have opened my eyes to a realm of life that I never saw so clearly before. As a dharma practitioner, my practice must be to hold a pure wisdom view as much as I can, while I must be willing to see suffering at the relative level and to do all that I can to alleviate it. Perhaps my dharma lessons are in beating a drum for compassionate change so that these children and adults have a chance, while trying to know the perfection of all that is.

The last part of your question was, "Why was it (the successful experience) so successful?". It took locking me behind sliding penitentiary doors, then surrounding me with 600 inmates, introducing the cacophony of loudly clanging and yelling in prison cellblocks, and a heavy dose of leering, jeering, and crying men. Then I went through many too many executions and I have met with too many deaf ears among those that I tried to tell of these most horrific conditions. Only with this barrage of attention-getters have I begun to take responsibility for my part in all of this. My answer has to be that "it was successful" because I had no escape other than to learn my lessons. My meditation clearly became one of constantly remembering and remembering again to open as a vast wisdom container as much as possible so that I might let these arisings stir fully and uninhibitedly into awareness and be able to allow compassion to move me in ways that might bring change and healing.

PB: What has been the least successful? Why?

AC: The least successful experiences have all occurred when I became aware of standing before someone unable to fully open my heart to them. Of course, tragically, this did happen and each of those times was an unsuccessful moment in which I forgot my pure Buddha nature and theirs as well. This was painful for me and I regret the pain that may have caused in those "unsuccessful" times with others.

PB: What is the greatest benefit that you get from working with prisoners?

AC: I had the remarkable opportunity to enter a world that could be imagined by many as a hell realm and yet I found myself in a pure realm. Now, that sounds like "dharma-speak", but it was very true. It was effortless. It was not because I was a practitioner or because I did anything special to create that space. All I did was open to what was there. This world of a prison is not what the media and the popular dramas make it out to be. This world is as full of a variety of human beings as any small community that one enters. I was primarily in a maximum-security prison that housed "the worst criminals", including those on death row. Of course, in a relative way, on entering this world one should be mindful and not lose track of where one is. When one speaks to another's humanness, it is a human who speaks back, and often a surprised human who is relieved to be found. To participate in a community that transcends our mistaken and ignorant ideas and to find how easily it is to relate to the loving beings that are there is to enter that pure realm.

PB: What is it that attracts some prisoners to Buddhist Dharma, do you think?

AC: Almost every day I get at least one letter from a prisoner somewhere asking to be put on our Dharma Friends newsletter mailing list. Some say that they are new to Buddhism. Some say that they are not Buddhist but read a

As a three year old child Yuthok Yonten Gonpo the younger used to behave as a doctor in the midst of other children; he would feel the pulse and examine the urine, and recognize herbs and minerals used in pharmacology. At the age of eight he began to study Tibetan medicine with his father, and Buddhism, arts and language, etc., with other teachers, becoming exceptionally learned in everything he studied.

One night, when he was fourteen, he dreamt of a deity called Drupa'i Lhamo who came to him dressed in blue and holding a vase filled with nectar. "The Medicine Buddha", she said, "told me to bring you this vase filled with nectar. Please drink the nectar it contains." When the boy drank the nectar, his body became pure and limpid like crystal. Then she made the following prophecy, "In two years from now, you will encounter the Four Tantras of Medicine. These tantras will enable you to accomplish the benefit of many beings." Awakening from that dream, he felt extremely happy.

This boy was to become one of the most famous Tibetan doctors and masters, Yuthok Yonten Gonpo. He was born in the village of Goshi Rethang in Western Tibet, on the eighth lunar day of the last summer month of the year 1126. His father was Khyungpo Dorje and his mother Pema Oden.

The day after, Yuthok had the dream of the goddess Drupa'i Lhamo, a Geshe called Roton came to him and asked to be treated for a severe case of rheumatism in the legs. Yuthok treated him successfully. Later, Roton went to Central Tibet where he stayed for two years. There he contracted a malignant disease which he tried to cure unsuccessfully with different treatments, and it was only with the help of Upa Dardrak, a renowned doctor from Central Tibet, that he resolved the problem. Roton came to know that Upa had the transmission of the Four Tantras of Medicine and studied all the Four Tantras and their commentaries with him. From Upa he also received the three traditions of the practice of the Medicine Goddess and the permission for the practice of Nochin Shanglon, the special guardian of Tibetan Medicine and doctors. When Roton returned to Western Tibet, he thought that if he transmitted the Four Tantras to Yuthok, Yuthok would be able to preserve and propagate them. Roton and Yuthok discussed the content of the Four Tantras and the medical knowledge not found in them. Roton showed a remarkable knowledge that convinced Yuthok to study the Four Tantras with him. For a while Yuthok kept the knowledge of the Four Tantras to himself and did not teach them to others.

At the age of eighteen he traveled to India for the first time. There, in a place called Kuda'i Ling he met the Dakini Mandarava and received the Cahnglo Nakpo Tantra from her. Then he proceeded to Varanasi where he studied the Eight Branches of Healing, the Somaradza, and other treatises on Medicine. In Ceylon, on the Vulture Peak and in other places of the Indian subcontinent he studied in depth traditional medicine as well as Buddhist philosophy.

He returned to Tibet when he was twenty-one and dedicated himself to clinic work and to teaching medicine to his students. But at the age of thirty-one he had a dream in which, in a state of clarity, the goddess Dutsima advised him to make another trip to India which would be of great importance for his future work for others. He followed the advice he received in his dream. In India, he was tutored by the wisdom Dakini Mandarava, who transmitted to him the Seventy Five Tantras connected to the Eight Branches of Healing. In particular he received an exceptionally profound teaching on the tantric way to realization which was like the heart blood of the dakinis and a prophetic indication concerning the propagation of that teaching. This special teaching later came to be known as Yuthok Nyingthig, The Innermost Essence of Yuthok.

Having returned to Tibet, he became a matchless doctor and master and became renowned as Yuthok Yonten Gonpo or Yuthok "Lord of All Qualities". He composed The Essence of the Extended and Brief Eight Branches of Healing, the treatise on the Examination of the Pulse, the Three Manu-



Lives of the Masters Yuthok Yonten Gonpo the Younger, A Great Tibetan Physician

scripts on Medicine, the Small Tantra, the Medical Experience for Students, and two commentaries on the Four Medical Tantras, the Eighteen Supplements to the Four Tantras. He transmitted all his teachings and writings in their entirety to Sumton Yeshe Zung, but his accomplished disciples were very numerous, almost three hundred.

One day he was invited by the governor of Western Tibet to teach medicine for four months as well as the Centrist View of Buddhist Philosophy and the Dzogchen or Self-Perfection system. Then he gave a series of empowerments, including the Medicine Buddha, the Peaceful and Wrathful Deities, Hevajra, Vajra Kilaya, the guardian of Medicine, the Sages of Medicine. Those who participated in these teachings and empowerments saw Yuthok in different forms, some as a yogi, some as a sage, some as a great scholar etc., in the midst of rainbows, fragrant perfumes and music. Fresh Arura fruits, golden in color, fell for an hour within the walls of the Governor's residence. The people rushed to gather the Arura arguing among themselves. Yuthok remarked that if the people had not disturbed the Goddess of Medicine with their greedy attitude, the rain would have brought other special medicines.

When his main disciple, Sumton Yeshe Zung asked Yuthok the meaning of such special signs, Yuthok explained to him that the signs had three meanings: outer, inner and secret. In an external sense they indicated that there was no-one in Tibet and India who could match his knowledge; in an inner sense they showed that he had attained the eight great powers (fast walking etc.,) and in a secret sense they meant that he was one and the same with the infinite mandalas of all Buddhas. In particular these were signs that he was an emanation of the doctor of the Buddha, of Padmasambhava, Ashvagosha, Padampa Sangye, Virupa, the famous doctor Kyebu Mela, and in Tibet of Srongsens Gam-po, Yuthok the elder, and Gampopa.

Throughout all his life he selflessly dedicated himself to others, not only by teaching but also donating the medicines that he prepared to the sick and clothes to the needy.

Once when Yuthok went to pay homage to a self-originated statue of Buddha, from

the heart of the statue light resounding with the mantra of the medicine Buddha spread everywhere. At the end the light dissolved in the head of Yuthok. He remained a while absorbed with his gaze lost in contemplation and then called upon his student, Sumton Yeshe Zung and told him, "You have been together with me for twelve years. Now if you have any doubt that has not been resolved please tell me now, I may soon depart for another land." Sumton was shocked and cried at the thought of his master passing away. "You don't need to cry, I will live for sometime more. I told you this just for making you aware of the transitory nature of life." Sumton paid homage to the master and made a symbolic offering of the universe, then asked him the ultimate teaching that would enable him to become a Buddha. In answer, Yuthok taught the Guruyoga contained in the Yuthok Nyingthig.

When he reached the age of seventy-six, he summoned all his disciples and gave them teaching and presented them with many gifts. On that occasion he recounted in brief his life story in the following song:

Hey! Listen fortunate ones!
Listen well, people of the world,
In particular, you who are gathered here.
Even though you have listened much before
All these were meaningless illusory words,
Today you will listen to what is really meaningful.
Even though you have seen much before
These were just designs of false and deceptive visions,
Today, that which you see will purify the two obscurations.
If you do not know who I am,
I am the emissary of all Buddhas,
I am the refuge of all beings.
All the animate and inanimate world
Is pervaded by my body, voice and mind.

The illusory form of this body
Is of the nature of a host of sacred deities;
Its materiality is intrinsically pure.
And like a rainbow, it cannot be grasped, yet
Like the moon's reflection on the water, it
appears everywhere.

The empty sound of my voice is the song of the echo
Reverberating with the sound of the eighty-four thousand Dharmas,
It manifests as a rain of teaching for those who need to be guided,
And sets all beings on the path that ripens and liberates.

In the clarity and emptiness of my mind, the ineffable authentic state,
Bliss is omnipervasive, arising unceasingly and,
Emptiness and compassion are undifferentiated
Hence, the phenomena created by mind are naturally liberated.

Through the shortest instant of time
In an instant I am a fully awakened Buddha.
In an instant I travel to hundreds of Buddha

fields,
In an instant I encounter hundreds of Buddhas,
In an instant I manifest hundreds of emanations
In an instant I guide hundreds of beings
And I accomplish the totalities and masteries.

With a faith that does not know uncertainties
Pray without having any doubt!
Even though the cataract of impure vision
Prevents you from seeing all these qualities of mine,
In the ordinary perception shared by everyone
I am the doctor who, with the medicine of skillful compassion
Cures the inner mental illness of the three emotions,
The outer illness of the three humors, Wind, Bile and Phlegm:
The title 'doctor' applies to me.

I explain the Buddhist canon and its commentaries by heart,
With logic I overcome the challenges of fundamentalists,
I issue the banner of victory of the Buddhist doctrine:
The title 'scholar' applies to me.

I went to Sri Parvata and
Robbers created obstacles on my way
But with a gaze I paralyzed them all,
The title 'siddha' applies to me.

On my way to Oddiyana, flesh eating dakinis
Sent meteorites and lightning to strike me,
I made the threatening gesture and all the dakinis collapsed:
The title 'siddha' applies to me.

On my way to Ceylon
The boat fell apart in the midst of the waves,
I flew like a bird and also saved my companions:
The title 'siddha' applies to me.

When I went to the Kali forest
The vapor of venomous snakes spread like dark fog,
I meditated on compassion and the fog quickly vanished,
The title 'siddha' applies to me.

When I went to Persia
I encountered the army of the Mongols;
So I penetrated the rocky mountains back and forth,
The title 'siddha' applies to me.

When I visited Swayambhu
I competed with the Bonpos in magic;
For half a day I remained sitting in space:
The title 'siddha' applies to me.

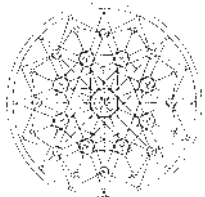
I went from Bodh Gaya to Tibet
Taking only a single day
Carrying a fresh flower as gift:
The title 'siddha' applies to me.

At the place of Tshongdu Kormoru in Western Tibet
I prevented the sun from setting and
Caused a rain of Aruras, golden in color, to fall:
The title 'siddha' applies to me.

It would be endless to recount all the events of my life.
For one who has gained mind freedom
There are no disturbances caused by earth, Water, fire and wind, gods and demons etc.,
And by animate and inanimate enemies.
He flies in the sky swifter than birds,
He dives in the waters with nothing to stop him,
He penetrates mountains like a meteorite or lightning.
In the midst of fire he is the fire god.

The beings of the degenerate age are of little merit
And few are those who meet and listen to me.
Those who see, listen, think, touch me and have faith in me
Create the sprout of the spirit of enlightenment,
Purify negativities accumulated throughout

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I N T E R N A T I O N A L

C O M M U N I T Y N E W S

merigar



New Gakyil and Gekös of Merigar

N. ZEITZ

ANNUAL ASSEMBLY OF MEMBERS AT MERIGAR August 2003 Merigar, Italy

At 10AM on August 17, 2003, the Gonpa at Merigar was filled with people who had come for the annual assembly of Dzogchen Community members. In the presence of Rinpoche, the Director of the Gakyil, Alison Duguid, summed up the activities that had been carried out during the year. It had been a busy year but full of stimulating projects. Some of them had been started last year and continued this year such as the work on restructuring Serkhang, partially paving the internal roads, enlarging the Gonpa. Others will be developed in future years such as completing the works and the painting of the Gonpa, the restructuring of the buildings of Merigar 2, work on the hydraulic system at Merigar which each summer is stretched to its limits. Further work on organizing Serkhang and Gadeling etc., are only in the planning stages at the moment. Alison thanked the members of the outgoing Gakyil and all the many people who have collaborated in bringing to fruition the activities at Merigar, acknowledging their commitment and dedication as well as the Master for the opportunity that he has given us to develop something which becomes of more and more benefit to everyone. Sicilia D'Arista, the director of the preceding Gakyil, gave a brief outline of the main points of the balance for 2002 which showed a credit balance already committed to the projects of the coming years. The income for membership fees remained substantially the same as the previous year. This confirmed the information already pointed out in past years that the retreats with the Master are the major source of income of Merigar on which it depends for its economic survival. The awareness of the need to modify this situation has led the Community to the decision to give priority to the project of economic restructuring of the Dzogchen Community, which, developed and overseen by Rinpoche's son Yeshe Namkhai, was presented at the end of the assembly.

Alison went on to present the candidates for the new Gakyil, the Gekös and the secretary of Merigar who, thanks to the appeals of the preceding days, were quite numerous. Alison expressed the need for the Gakyil members to be more 'on hand' and to acquire technical skills related to Merigar's current needs.

Before moving on to the election, Rinpoche reminded those present of the situation of Merigar at the beginning in the 80's when the Community was small and things went ahead a bit like in a family. Conditions were very different then: the fax was something new and computers were still something rare. Today, however, although we are in the age of the internet and the Community has many members throughout the world, Rinpoche still continues to be the father who provides for everyone. While this is correct at the spiritual level, it is not in terms of the economic aspect. The economic survival of the Community cannot depend on the Master's retreats as it does now in large part. What will happen to the Community when Rinpoche is no longer here? It is something that we must think about now. Yeshe Namkhai, who has worked for years in the field of business restructuring, is concretely confronting this problem trying to make the Community autonomous from the economic point of view in order to relieve Rinpoche of the burden of providing for it financially. The project that he has created fundamentally has this aim and therefore should be supported. In particular, some members of the Gakyil should be expert and able to collaborate with Yeshe, but even other members and in general all those who help, should know at least a little about the instruments that the modern world requires. For this, the Community can also count on the support of Yuchen Namkhai (Rinpoche's daughter) and Luigi Ottaviani (Yuchen's husband) with their expertise in the field of information.

After this explanatory talk, the assembly passed on to examining the candidates. All the candidates found a place on the Gakyil and between members and assistants it seemed to be the biggest Gakyil in the history of Merigar. The members elected were the following:

Yellow Gakyil: Emmanuel Jouan, Silva Masini and Marinella Atzeni.

Assistant: Silvana Pisani.

Red Gakyil: Mateusz Kocylowski, Maurizio Galli and Claudia Harkan.

Assistants: Stefano Battistella, Gloria Pera and Dimitri Fieri.

Blue Gakyil: Anna Lopez, Sergio Quaranta and Pia Barilli. Assistants:

Sicilia d'Arista and Alison Duguid.

Gekös: Marco Almici. Assistant: Martin Pansky.

Secretary: Liane Graf.

The positions of Director and Vice-Director will be decided at the first Gakyil meeting. Three of the Gakyil members, one of each color, are committed for a longer period than usual to live in the area and be involved in the restructuring project. They are: Emmanuel Jouan for the Yellow, Mateusz Kocylowski for the Red and Anna Lopez for the Blue.

There was a round of applause for the new and the outgoing members of the Gakyil and Anna and Alfredo (previous Gekös) who were mentioned by the Master as well, were particularly appreciated for their delicate role.

The final part of the assembly was dedicated to presenting the restructuring project. Giovanni Boni briefly introduced the topic citing an effective example to make us understand the importance of having control of the functions and the activities of the Community.

Since the Community is a structure which lives and works in society and in time, it is the means that carries the Teaching and practitioners towards their goal. In order to reach it, it is necessary that everything works well and securely.

Part of a video made by Maurizio Mingotti for the occasion was shown. It contained the salient phases of the kick-off meeting held at the Hotel Luce Sorgente on June 22, 2003 in the presence of Rinpoche, Rosa, Yuchen and Luigi for the "Ambient Web", the Gakyil of Merigar and various collaborators and it was led by Yeshe Namkhai in his role as Project Manager.

MERIGAR AUTUMN PROGRAM 2003

OCTOBER

October 18-19
Chod practice retreat

October 25-26
Practice retreat Dance of the Six Lokas

NOVEMBER

November 1-2
Seminar with Costantino Albini
Introduction to the practice of contemplation
Cost: 60 Euro with discounts for members

November 8-9
Karma Yoga practice retreat

November 15-16
Garab Dorje Guru Yoga practice retreat

November 19
World Direct Transmission day
Anniversary of Adzom Drugpa

November 22-23
Shitro practice retreat

November 29-30
Yantra Yoga Course for Beginners
with Laura Evangelisti
Cost: 70 Euro with discounts for members

DECEMBER

December 6-7
Explanations about the base of Santi Maha Sangha
with Costantino Albini
Cost: 70 Euro with discounts for members

December 8
Special day of practice
7 am Tara practice
3PM Sangha meeting

December 27 2003 - January 2 2004
Intensive practice retreat Santi Maha Sangha
(Reserved for those already studying SMS)
It is necessary to have already completed a basic Yantra Yoga course
Cost: 150 Euro with discounts for members

Associazione Culturale Comunita Dzogchen
Merigar 58031 Arcidosso (GR) Italy
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The video specified the need to undergo some changes in the Community which do not refer to the aspect of the Teaching or to the legal authority, but rather to the economic and financial aspect with the aim of rationalizing the processes and turning towards fund raising. Luigi Ottaviani then spoke and presented himself to the assembly as the representative of Ambient Web which will be a partner in the project. He offered to answer questions anyone had about the project.

Questions, of course, were not lacking. Some people were concerned about the risk of changing in some way the spirit of the Community. Luigi replied that the changes only concerned the mundane aspects and that major efficiency of the Community would give space to new and better services for its members besides rationalizing costs and reducing waste.

Other questions concerned the possibility of collaborating with this change. This possibility exists and can take on various dimensions according to the specific skills and times that they are available. Others asked for clarification on the economic commitment. Luigi said that the work of the Project Manager, Yeshe Namkhai, was free and that even the Ambient Web would offer the best possible conditions. The highest costs would be those of the software, particularly high for this type of complex project, given that it would be dealing with managing data and processes for about 7000 members, in Europe alone.

Representatives of the other Gars and Gakyils asked what type of relationship would exist between the project and other parts of the Dzogchen Community. The reply was that the project would start at Merigar but concerned the international Dzogchen Community and thus would be gradually extended throughout the world.

The questions would have probably been a lot more but Luigi asked all the representatives of the institutions to read the material that was distributed (a CD and guide to the project) which would certainly clarify a part of people's doubts and announced a first working meeting in September extended to a list of 70-80 members of the Community with specific responsibilities.

continued on next page



His Holiness Sakya Trizin with a local official

N ZEITZ



Santi Maha Sangha for children with Rinpoche

D SURRICCHIO



N ZEITZ

RAI TV July, 2003 Merigar

RAI TV, one of the major television stations in Italy, visited Merigar to do a story on Rinpoche and Merigar for the local Tuscan news. The photo is of Rinpoche being interviewed in front of Serkhang. The RAI people also took a tour of Merigar and shot footage of the Vajra Dance, Yantra Yoga, the Library and the Gonpa.



Advanced Yantra Yoga and Teacher Training at Merigar, Summer, 2003

N ZEITZ

Assembly continued from previous page

At this point the assembly was concluded. In the coming months and years we will be taking part in an interesting and stimulating process which will see changes that were, perhaps, unthinkable a little time ago for most of us, but we have no doubts that the guidance of the Master and the qualities of his family and the commitment of everyone will take us exactly where we have to go.

Good luck to everyone and thank you to the Master!

The Blue Gakyil of Merigar



Rinpoche meets with local Officials and Elisa Copello presents Shang Shung Institute

N ZEITZ

Rinpoche Meets Local Authorities

by Elisa Copello

On Thursday, August 21, 2003 around 10AM, there was a strange flurry in the courtyard in front of Serkang - chairs and benches were moved, big umbrellas were set up in a vain attempt to escape from the heat of the morning. Bunches of flowers, glasses, drinks and plates were quickly placed on the tables and a group of practitioners in jackets and ties challenged the insupportable mugginess in an atmosphere of waiting. Actually, they were waiting for the various local authorities who arrived one at a time, invited by of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, to meet His Holiness Sakya Trizin who was leaving for Pomaia, a Gelugpa center in Northern Italy.

The master of ceremonies, Costantino Albini, explained to those gathered the meaning of offering the “katag” which, with the passage of time, had taken the place of the garland of flowers presented as a sign of homage. Katags were distributed to all those invited, including the Head of Police from Grosseto, the vice prefect, and many mayors from the Amiata villages. They were shown how to offer them, an unknown ritual in which all of them seemed very interested and curious.

Our Master arrived and warmly greeted the authorities, many of whom have been his friends for some time. Together they waited for the arrival of Sakya Trizin who took his place at the table along with his son and his son’s young consort. The ceremony of offering the katag began, followed by a short greeting and then Sakya Trizin departed.

At this point the authorities began their “tour” of Merigar: the library, the new reading room, the Gonpa. At each stop there was someone to meet the group and give explanations and answer questions. It was an important moment for establishing contact, however, the most significant moment was when they got to the area at the side of the Gonpa under the large tents and Chögyal Namkhai Norbu started to speak. He underlined the value of the integration of the Community in the territory and recalled the old days when the local population referred to the practitioners living on the hills as “the Tibetans”. In a light-hearted way Rinpoche said that in reality even he could not really define himself as one since he is an Italian citizen in every respect!

Then the heads of the different groups of the Community, such as ASIA, Shang Shung Editions and the Institute spoke illustrating their activities, programs and future projects. Luigi Ottaviani summed up the project for restructuring of the Community, but the “piece de resistance” was Chögyal Namkhai Norbu’s announcement about the project for building a permanent museum in the meadow under the library. The authorities listed attentively as the Master explained how his idea had developed and certainly considered this initiative in a positive light since it will enrich the area with another cultural asset of considerable value. The project, explained the Master, arose partly due to the need to find a place to keep all the material displayed at the various exhibitions organized by ASIA and the Institute: various objects, tents, the medicine thankas, furniture, etc., even if the most prestigious pieces are without doubt those that belong to the personal collection of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu which he has decided to offer to the Museum in order to enrich it and make it even more attractive to the public.

The most tangible result of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu’s announcement was that the local authorities said they would be happy to agree to the permission necessary for the construction of the Museum in a very short time. After rich and appreciated refreshments, the guests left and the Master remained for some time, visibly satisfied with the meeting which, once again, thanks to his clarity and untiring energy, will bear its fruit in the future.

The Big Mandala in Merigar A Fundraising Project

In Merigar we have the “Mandala Hall” in Zikhang where we practice the Vajra Dance on a “small” Mandala. The small Mandala corresponds to the world, where as the “big one” to the universe. In between there is a middle one corresponding with our solar system. All three are united in the “big” Mandala.

In order to raise money for the construction of this “big” Mandala in Merigar, we are offering reproductions of a painted Mandala made by Ans Swart from Holland. The Dutch Community supported this initiative. Ans used a computer and a special high quality printing process which uses real pigments instead of inks. The profit of these sales is offered as karma yoga and all profit goes directly to the project.

The Mandala print is available in 30 x 30 cm. for 25 Euro/USA\$ and 70 x 70 cm. for 75 Euro/USA\$ not including postage. Individuals can order the posters from Shang-Shung Institute /USA through Malcolm Smith at <mfe.smith@verizon.net>, the German community by Svetlana Riecke, the French Community by Stoffelina Verdonk. Only Gars and Lings can order them in a certain amount directly from Ans Swart. Ask for information and conditions by: ansswart@dds.nl



Advanced Vajra Dance and Teacher Training Merigar summer 2003



Complete Retreat on the Base of the Santi Maha Sangha led by Jim Valby Merigar, July and August 2004

Great interest has been aroused among Dzogchen practitioners by the news that a retreat is planned in Merigar in July and August, 2004, to be led by Jim Valby, which will cover the complete text of the Precious Vase by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu on the Base Level of the study and practice of the Santi Maha Sangha. We have already received several requests for bookings and for clarification and it seems to be a good moment to give a few more details on the program of this retreat.

The retreat will begin on Friday, July 16, 2004, at 18:00. From the next day Jim will give each day two sessions of explanation and practice (at 09:00 and 16:00) for all the twenty-four practitioners (the retreat is limited to twenty-four people) following the retreat. In these sessions Jim will give explanations of the Precious Vase, explanations of the practices contained in the text and on the main practices of the Dzogchen Community transmitted by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu. All the basic practices will be applied and concrete experience gained of all the practices explained; clarifying doubts and establishing a firm base for all to be able to go on to work individually.

Also in the program each day will be two sessions of Vajra Dance and two sessions of Yantra Yoga at 11:00 and 18:00. Twelve practitioners at a time will take part in these sessions which will be held by Prima Mai and Laura Evangelisti, with the support of other qualified instructors. One group of twelve will follow the Yantra Yoga course in the morning and the Dance in the evening and the other group vice versa. Yantra Yoga is an integral part of the Base of Santi Maha Sangha, specified in the first chapter of the Precious Vase by Rinpoche. Having a concrete knowledge of Yantra Yoga is indispensable for the application of many of the essential practices of the Base itself. The Vajra Dance, or Dances, a very particular teaching, provides an extraordinary means of integrating in the State of movement and therefore represents an important method for whoever needs to understand the real necessity of integrating presence into daily life.

On July 27 at 05:00 there will be the Direct Transmission of Guru Yoga given by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu from Isola Margarita in a world-wide simultaneous transmission on the Anniversary of the Master Padmasambhava. At Merigar this practice will be held in the Gonpa and thus practitioners who have not yet received the transmission from the Master will receive it on this occasion and will be in the best condition to follow the instructions and practice the teachings.

One day each week will be a day of rest.

In order to facilitate the concentration necessary for such study and practice the course will be a residential one with all board and lodging organized in Merigar itself. Three meals a day will be provided and dormitory accommodation in Merigar 2; people with particular needs may ask for different accommodation though this might mean a surcharge if they wish for larger premises or a reduction if they have their own house.

The cost of the retreat has been confirmed as 1500€ per person for the four weeks; the retreat will end on Thursday August 12th at 19:00 with a Ganapuja. Bookings can be made specifying name, surname and other necessary information by email to the Merigar at the Secretary: merigaroffice@tiscalinet.it.

Bookings will be confirmed on receipt of a deposit of 20% of the amount (300E) to be sent by international postal order made out to Comunita' Dzogchen – Merigar, Podere Nuovo, 58031 Arcidosso (GR)", and specifying the reason as "Ritiro SMS con Jim Valby - Luglio 2004".

Since the number of places is limited we advise those interested to book as soon as possible. If there are a large number of requests we will program another such retreat at a later date.

We hope this initiative will be a help to all those who are seriously interested in the study and practice of the teachings transmitted by Rinpoche and we remind you that he has often underlined how the study and practice of the Base of Santi Maha Sangha are indispensable for all those interested in the Dzogchen teachings and not merely for those interested in going on to higher levels. We thank the Master for his immeasurable generosity and Jim for his kindness.

The Merigar Gakyil

U P D A T E

SMS Base retreat with Jim Valby at Merigar July/August 2004.

Hello everybody! We are happy to inform you that a remarkable number of practitioners have already signed up for the retreat of the complete Base of the Santi Maha Sangha to be led by Jim Valby in Merigar during summer 2004.

To organize things in the best way we need to know the current level of knowledge of Yantra Yoga and Vajra Dance of each of the participants, so please send this information to Merigar office as soon as possible.

It has also been decided that the amount of 300 Euro should be sent to Merigar by January 31st, 2004 as a definitive confirmation of the booking. People who have already put down some money can of course send only the difference to match the requirement. After January 31st we will communicate to each of the participants the list of the 24 people confirmed and, to a certain number of people exceeding the 24, their position on a waiting list.

In case any of the confirmed participants should withdraw close to the event, they will be reimbursed only if they can be replaced.

As previously said, if there is wide interest, another retreat with the same structure can be organized either in November 2004 or March 2005.

Thank you.

The Gakyil of Merigar.

Estonian Dzogchen Group Elected New Gakyil

BLUE

Andres Zelmin Email: zelmin@hotmail.ee

RED

Pille Viires Email: pilleviires@hotmail.ee

YELLOW

Svetlana Kolljakova Email: skol@eet.ee

New Azamling Web Site
<http://www.dzogchen.it/adzamling>

New Gakyil UK

Blue: Thomas Beaver, Barry Patterson

Yellow: Ita Coronas (new), Dominic Kennedy (new), Dodo von Greiff

Red: Catriona Mundle, Rowan Wylie

e u r o p e

New Land in Lithuania Welcome to Dorjeling!

by Algis Lukosevicius

The idea of getting land in Lithuania started in 1993 when we first visited Merigar and saw how fantastic it was. However, during those years, our Community lacked money and the courage to find any. (Here we would like to mention special thanks to Grisha Mokhin from Russia, who encouraged us to start looking for land over again during Christmas retreat in Lithuania.)

We started without any idea where to get money and initially it was disappointing - none of the land investigated in January/February were suitable. On the third day of Tibetan New Year there was an almost miraculous occurrence; we performed sang ritual and immediately after, the phone rang and suitable land was offered. We believed this land must be ours, so we started karma yoga there from early spring. However, it took six months for us to find the 7300 Euros needed, but recently we purchased the land.

Although there are still some legal difficulties - I have heard that many Community lands had obstacles in the beginning, like Merigar, Margarita and maybe others - at this moment we have prepared a temporary field for Yantra Yoga and Vajra Dance in the old garden (there was nice rain shower and rainbow after first Vajra Dance) and after our task is to fix the house to prepare it for a Winter retreat. There is good place for small Gonpa on a hill and we hope this will be next year's project to complete.

The land is located 60 km from the capital of Vilnius, a one hour drive, what makes it suitable for weekend retreats. Also it is in between Vilnius and Kaunas - the two largest cities of Lithuania. The land is 6.5 Ha, 3.5 of them agricultural, so it is possible to grow some herbs or maybe something else for business opportunity. Once again, thanks a lot to everyone who supported us in many ways and welcome to Dorjeling!

Vajra Dance Mandalas are Available to Purchase!

The Lithuanian Community has a small business making Tyvek Vajra Dance Mandalas. We will be able to make the next one after December 2003/January 2004.

We have already sold three Mandalas, references available from those communities:

1. Tsegylgar south - Baja
2. Torino community in Italy
3. Imola community in Italy

A big thanks for their input to our land purchase!

How the Mandala is made:

- 1) On special Tyvek material - no need to fix edges when dancing (i.e. no wrinkling)
- 2) Mandala would be lightweight and foldable - portable for one person
- 3) Covered with a protection film. This means the colors never wear out and remain always "fresh" (our Mandala is like new and is 3 years old). It is also easy to do the Vajra Dance movements as it is a little more slippery than just the Tyvek itself.

Cost: 1300 Euros.

Please contact:

<Lituania@takas.lt> or <lundazz@centras.lt>

Best wishes from Lithuania, Dorjeling!

VAJRADANCE COURSE IN AMSTERDAM WITH STOFFELINA VERDONK

The SECOND Part of the Dance of the Vajra will be taught.

Date: Friday December 12th up to and including Wednesday December 17th, 2003 (6 days)

Starting: Friday December 12th at 10:00AM

Please arrive near or in Amsterdam at Thursday December 11th.

Ending: Wednesday December 17th at 5:30PM

Location: Gein Zuid 56, 1397 JH Abcoude, The Netherlands.

Tel. +31 (0) 294 41 22 35

Schedule:

Every day 10.00 - 13.00 with coffee break. Repeating and exercising at 15.00.

Admittance:

Those who have received the transmission of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu.

Fee:

150 Euro for members and 160 Euro for non-members.

How to get there:

With the metro of Amsterdam: Station Gaasperplas. If you let Ina know well before meeting time, you will be picked up. Otherwise you will have to call a taxi (ten minutes drive and sometimes the driver does not know how to find the address). Tel. # Ina see above.

Where to stay:

Best is that you find an address in Amsterdam. We can help you to find one.

Payment:

Please pay 100 Euro in advance. Post bank account 00.00269 on name of W.R. Schlingemann in Abcoude, NL, before November 25th. Remember the post is busy in those days, so please pay in time.



Vajra Dance Holland con't from previous page

Registration:
By payment. If it is only possible to try to make a last minute booking:
please do it by telephone.

Contact address:
Ina Schlingemann (telephone # see above (no email)).

Cancellation:
With full repayment until December 5th. From December 5th onwards only
40 % will be repaid.

kunsangar

KUNSANGAR UPDATES

New Kunsangar email address: kunsang@dzogchen.ru

New Kunsangar Gakyil

During the Moscow Dzogchen Retreat 2003, Rinpoche approved new Kunsangar Gakyil members:

YELLOW

Vladimir Vorobjev ratmir7@rambler.ru
Anatoly Bylbas anatol@dzogchen.ru
Yelena Fedorova lena@ttc-net.ru

RED

Natalya Maksimova son@mail.transit.ru
Alexey Morozov rv@nm.ru
Victoria Matsiburskaya vita2025@mail.ru

BLUE

Tatyana Pronicheva (she has no private email address yet but it's possible
to write her on Kunsangar email)
Yana Sokolova ouliana@land.ru

Secretary - Nina Rusanovich

Sponsorships are needed for Thödgal and Dakini Cabins at Khandroling

Dear Practitioners,

Rinpoche told us to build retreats cabins at Khandroling more than ten years ago. The building permits were denied by the Town of Buckland. After the long legal battle, the result recently came out in our favor. Khandroling is a special place where Vajra Dance originated. Rinpoche said that 6 months worth of practice elsewhere can be realized in six days at Khandroling.

Now we are preparing to build 5 cabins (2 Togyal and 3 Dakini) (and a bath house), according to Rinpoche's specifications. The first to be built will be the bath house, in order to meet the town's building code requirements.

Each cabin costs about \$10,000 US.

We need your support for these exciting projects.

The Sponsor's names will be acknowledged on each cabin.
All donations are welcome. Thank you!

Send a check to:

Dzogchen Community in America (DCA)
PO Box 277
Conway MA 01341
USA
Or contact Andrea Nasca at 413-359-4153 / secretary@tsegyalgar.org

Thank you,
Tsegyalgar Gakyil

tsegyalgar, east & west

Big News in Baja!!! *Tsegyalgar West*

UPCOMING ESTABLISHMENT OF NEW NORTH AMERICAN WINTER GAR



Fig Tree on the Land

ing numbers of members of the Dzogchen Community in North America and from all over the world, will participate in and create a durable Community at this site.

Our Master, Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, has been unflagging in his encouragement of us during the four-year search for the Winter Gar. He has expressed only utmost enthusiasm for this extraordinary gift of land. He and his wife Rosa will be coming to Baja in early October, when Rinpoche will be giving a retreat at the Buena Vista Hotel on the coast of the Sea of Cortez, near the Winter Gar land. This will be an occasion for him to consecrate the property and impart his vision for its development.

We invite you to look at pictures of the land posted on the Dzogchen Community West Coast web site at www.dzogchencommunitywest.org We also invite you to attend the October retreat in Baja Sur and discover the beauty of Baja and explore this new Community site.

Not only have we had sufficient good karma to receive this spectacular gift, but another donor has offered a challenge pledge of \$20,000 in which they will match gifts toward the establishment of the Winter Gar on a dollar-for-dollar basis up to that amount. This means that each contribution up to that amount is doubled. Our costs just for transfer of the land, including legal inspection and approval, land appraisal, agent fees, and travel expenses, will run to approximately \$60,000. The land itself has been appraised by a firm based both in Mexico and the U.S. at \$1.375 million.

We encourage you to make a gift, large or small, and/or join us in person, so that we can manifest our vision—a place with complete privacy for individual retreat; a place for a health and rejuvenation center; a place where Rinpoche can enjoy a dry, warm climate; a place for group retreats, Yantra Yoga, the Vajra Dance, and dark retreat; a site for ongoing ecological living, restoration and education; a place to be with other practitioners and live a healthy, outdoor life everyday; a place where organic vegetables and fruits are copious. We expect that the Community in Baja will be very permeable to the outside, offering a wide variety of programs for guests; and it will also be enriched by the many talents of Community members—from gardening, to art, to leading practices, to speaking Spanish and hanging out with the neighbors.

For gifts and contributions, which are entirely tax-deductible, please make them out to Dzogchen Community West Coast- Winter Gar Fund, and send to Dzogchen Community West Coast, 2748 Adeline St., Suite D, Berkeley, CA 94703

Please contact us at: aha@dzogchencommunity.org or 510-644-2260

When you come to Baja (may it be soon): bring, sunscreen, a hat, good walking sandals, bathing suit, loose cotton clothes, cushion, books, binoculars—and plan to RELAX.

W I N N E R S

Goma Devi Thanka

Rita Renzi of Merigar won the Goma Devi Thanka from the Universal Dance Mandala lottery at Tsegyalgar.

Baja Raffle

1st PRIZE - Jim Smith, Tsegyalgar, \$500 US, hotel accommodations for two at the Hotel Buena Vista, 3-5 October, and retreat for two.

2nd PRIZE - Claudia Harkin, Merigar, \$500 US, 3-5 October, and retreat for one.

3rd PRIZE- Denise Coady, New Mexico, USA, \$300 US plus retreat for one.

4th PRIZE - Roberta Russu, Sassari, Italia, EU \$250 US.

5th PRIZE- Catherine de Neergaard, Dondrubling, California, USA, \$108 US.

Thank you Rinpoche for making the drawing and selling so many tickets at the last minute.

Congratulations to all winners and thank you everyone for participating.

The winners who were not present please contact us so we can arrange for you to collect your prizes at:
AHA@dzogchencommunitywest.org



New Tsegyalgar Gakyil & Geköes

- BLUE**

Dominik Niceva

Christie Svane - Director

Jowee Solorio
- RED**

Santo Santoriello

Walter Paulus

Jeff Krouk
- YELLOW**

Damien Schwartz - Treasurer

Steve Ezequelle

John Herr
- Cindy Thibeuau, Geköes

Tsegyalgar Email and Web site

Andrea, Secretary - use secretary@tsegyalgar.org

Jowee, Bookstore – for questions use bookstore@tsegyalgar.org for purchases use orders@tsegyalgar.org

Cindy, Geko - use geko@tsegyalgar.org

New Gakyil, New Mexico USA

Red: Denise Coady, dcoady@salud.unm.edu

Blue: Julia Deisler, jmdeisler@aol.com

Yellow: Susie Marlowe, guysue@earthlink.net

Dzogchen Community Message Board in California, USA

We have a Dzogchen Community message board on our web site:

www.dzogchencommunitywest.org

We encourage you to use this board for personal messages regarding transportation to retreats, sharing rooms at re-treats, requests for information, discussion, etc.

The email post is for Community schedules and announcements.

Thank you.

Song of the Vajra Dance Course (Part 1) in Santa Fe, NM

The Dzogchen Community of New Mexico is very pleased to announce that we will be hosting a beginning course in the First Part of the Dance of the Song of the Vajra, taught by Anastasia McGhee under the supervision of Prima Mai, in late October.

WHEN: October 25-30 2003 (Saturday through Thursday)

WHERE: Santa Fe, New Mexico (precise location to be announced)

COST: \$225 US

EARLY BIRD SPECIAL: Register and send deposit by September 30, 2003 (postmarked or hand-delivered), and pay only \$180 (a 20% discount)

CONTACT: Julia Deisler at email: jmdeisler@aol.com

TO REGISTER: Send check or money order for \$100 US (deposit) or for the entire amount to:

The Dzogchen Community of New Mexico

c/o Julia Deisler

PO Box 1838

Santa Fe, NM 87504-1838

USA

(Checks should be made payable to The Dzogchen Community of New Mexico.)

Note: Registration is limited to 20 people.

Vajra Dance Course
The Dance of The Liberation of the Six Lokas
NOVEMBER 14-16 2003

The Dzogchen Community West Coast is pleased to announce we will be having a Vajra Dance Course at Dondrub Ling in November 2003

The Course will be taught by our local instructor Anastasia McGhee.

DATES: 14-16 November 2003. Friday-Sunday

LOCATION: Dondrub Ling, address below.

See our web site for directions and other information.

www.dzogchencommunitywest.org

SCHEDULE: we will start on Friday evening at 6:30 p.m.

And have three sessions on Saturday and two on Sunday. Each session will last 2 to 2.5 hours. In order to accommodate people’s busy schedules we have concentrated this course with three sessions on Saturday so that people will be able to attend it in its entirety.

The recent changes will be incorporated so that the course will be beneficial for beginners and those who have learned the dance before.

REGISTRATION:

EARLY BIRD up to Friday October 10th 2003. \$88

AFTER October 10th - \$108.

Registration will be for a maximum of 20 participants, ten learning the male part and ten learning the female part.

TO REGISTER: Contact Carisa at cariokey@monkeybrains.net and cariokey@hotmail.com

Make checks payable to Dzogchen Community West Coast and mail to Dzogchen Community West Coast, Dondrub Ling, Attn: Vajra Dance Course, 2748 Adeline Street, Suite D, Berkeley, CA 94703.

tashigar north & south & south america

RETREAT IN TASHIGAR DEL NORTE,
ISOLA MARGARITA VENEZUELA

October 31st - November 4th,2003 Longsal Tsalung Retreat

Cost of the retreat: \$100 with discounts according to the different categories of membership.

Included in the Retreat fees are simultaneous courses of Yantra Yoga, (The Eight Movements) and Vajra Dance (the Dance of the Three Vajras).

CAMPING

There is a camping on the land of the Gar only during the retreats. It costs Bs 3.000 per person. Please bring your own tent. There are bathrooms and showers but no facilities for cooking. You must organize your food. To book please send an email to: tashinor@mail.dzogchen.ru

ACCOMMODATION

For reservations, organization, payment of accommodation etc., you should contact the hotel directly yourself.

The information below is subject to constant change depending on the information we receive.

People who want apartments/houses for a longer period will have to organize this personally on their arrival. Take any of the short term options according to Your budget first and then You chose for yourself . Mainly it is important to know what your needs are: price, type of accommodation (furnished or not), long / short term, please contact: tashinor@mail.dzogchen.ru

Note: Some prices are given in US\$ others in Bolivares. The official exchange rate is \$1=Bs. 1.600 Bs. Once you are here, you can get a better rate : 2.000 - 2.300 Bs =1 US\$ (subject to change) Some renters or hotels give You \$ prices. Ask about the exchange rate they will give you if you pay in Bolivares. It is always better to bring American dollars which have a much better exchange rate than the Euro.

ACCOMMODATION NEAR THE GAR (PADRO GONZALES VILLAGE)

House of the Gakyil

The Gakyil has a house, in the center of Pedrogonzález, Calle Bolivar 32, next to the “prefectura”, with three rooms, that are rented at Bs 10,000 per day or 160,000 per month. There is one bathroom and kitchen and common area, please check availability in advance: tashinor@mail.dzogchen.ru

La Casa Roja (The Red House)

This is the closest option. It is just in front of the Gar. The landlady offers three double rooms with shared bathroom and use of the kitchen. The cost is \$15 per room and \$18 with breakfast. Contact : varaujo7@yahoo.com or tashinor@mail.dzogchen.ru

Posada Arimáćoa

Located in front of the church of Pedrogonzález. They offer rooms for US\$ 10 per person. All rooms have bath, AC, TV, refrigerator and some cooking facilities which vary from a little oven to a full kitchen. There is also a BBQ facility, washing machine and dryer and a little pool. Double rooms are recommended. The biggest room which sleeps up to 5 is only \$ 50 though three people have to sleep on sofa beds! See : www.fmnoticias.com . Call: +58 295 258 0149 or the owner Luis Aguilere + 58 416 6817671 (he does not speak English).

Hotels:

There are two main hotels in Pedro Gonzalez: Barcelo Dunes and Hesperia/Isla Margarita (5 star), both are Luxury hotels and have their own beaches. The distance to the Gar is about the same by Taxi or car, but the Barcelo Dunes is near the beach “ Zaragoza”, where all the community goes for a swim.(You can walk there.) Hesperia is a bit far.

Barcelo Dunes

Tel : +58 295 2631333 (English spoken) www.dunesmargarita.com

There is a special price for us :\$ 45 all inclusive per person in a double room. Tell them that you are from the “ Buddhists “ when you reserve. If there are more than 50 people in the course of one month, the price can come to \$ 30 per person. Those prices are for low season from Sep. 15

continued on next page



continued from previous page

to Dec. 1. Children below 12 get a 50% discount. The hotel is also a member of the RCI.

Hesperia Isla Margarita

Tel : +58 295 400 7111 (English spoken)

Or write to : reservas@hesperia-islamargarita.com

Prices from September 15 to December 22 are: \$ 70 all inclusive per person in a double room and \$ 50 with breakfast per person in a double room.

The famous “Playa el Agua” beach is about 15 minutes by car. There you can find many hotels and “posadas” to suit all price ranges. A very good deal is :

Hotel Las Palmeras

Address: Calle Miragua , Playa El Agua Tel :+58 295 2491635; Fax : +58 295 2490377

Email : hpalmeras@cantv.net www.laspalmerashotel.hypermart.net

Prices per person, with breakfast

In a single room :Bs 48.000

In a double room: Bs 31.000

In a room for 3: Bs 27.000

In a room for 4 : Bs 24.000

Children :Bs 11.000

Tell them that you are from the Dzogchen community to obtain this price.

Hotel Miragua

This is a nice, simple garden hotel next to the beach. We had our first retreat on Margarita here. They offer double rooms with air conditioning and bathroom for Bs 30.000 with breakfast. Tell them you are from the “ Buddhists “ otherwise you won’t get breakfast for that price. Tel/fax + 58 295 249 0884 (English spoken)

Hotel Costa Linda

Calle Miragua, close to the beach. A.C, TV sat, safety box, pool, restaurant, chairs and umbrellas on the beach. Tel. :+58 295 2491303 (English spoken) Fax : + 58 295 2491229 e-mail : hotelcostalinda@cantv.net or see webpage: www.hotelcostalinda.com

Single room: \$25

Double room: \$30

Room for 3: \$40

Room for 4: \$ 50

With American breakfast buffet.

You can find further information about other hotels on the following pages : <http://www.island-of-margarita.com/english/hotels.htm> [http://www.margaritaonline.com/ http://www.islamargarita.com/](http://www.margaritaonline.com/http://www.islamargarita.com/)

Baia de plata (“silver bay”),

This is a kind of condo with bigger houses, a hotel (which is closed) and some vacation houses. It has a beach and is 2km from Tashigar. It seems a bit deserted and abandoned, but offers long term rentals as well as short term and during the retreat transport can be arranged.

Vacation houses :

Conjuntos los Pinos

There are 18 little houses with two bedrooms each, 1 bath and a kitchen. Max. occupancy 5 people (probably uncomfortable). There is also a swimming pool. With AC: BS 35.000 per day per house. With fan : BS 25.000 per day per house.

Contact: tashinor@mail.dzogchen.ru

Conjuntos Ceiba

There are houses with 3 bedrooms and 2 bathrooms up to 8 people. Bs 300.000 per week. Contact: tashinor@mail.dzogchen.ru

For long term rentals see “houses and apartments”

Rooms on Zaragoza Beach

2 studios in the beach:

Madame Marie Noelle offers one for two people, fully equipped (bathroom and kitchen) and air conditioning and one for 4 people also fully equipped but with fan. Both cost \$ 30 per day, tlf/fax: +58 295 2580536

Bodegon Zaragoza offers one apartment with two bedrooms for 4 people. It has air conditioning, kitchen, washing machine and view of the beach. The price is \$ 45 per day, \$ 40 per day if you stay one week and \$ 35 p/d for one month. PH.:+58 295 253 5020/+58 295 253 2135 or +58 416 6956630 (he does not speak English) but you can write an e-mail to: aduateca@cantv.net Note: these options are inside 500m of the beach and about 2,5km from the gar.

Houses and apartments

If you are interested in renting a house or apartment for a longer time the best idea is for you to come and see for yourself before you sign a contract. We can help but we do not know everyone’s specific taste!!

Puerto Real

The top of the list: Very nice condo with private beaches and swimming pools. There are houses and apartments with 2 or 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, central air conditioning and fully equipped kitchen. Note: It is near Playa el Agua and about 15 minutes drive from the Gar, so you will need to rent a car or motorbike. The price depends on the owners of the apartments. Approximately it is between Bs 75.000 - 90.000 per day, but comes down to about Bs 500.000 a month for long term rentals.

Bahia de Plata

2 km from Pedrogonzález, small houses, old, simple style, in general furnished, the price varies but is about \$ 250, 3 bedrooms, 2 baths. By foot it will take you 45 minutes to 1 hour to Tashigar. We recommend to rent or buy at least a bicycle. Important note: these houses are rented on a formal base (contract of 6 months/deposit of 3 months/commission and necessity to know the exact date of rent). You can share a house among several people to lower the cost, but one person has to be responsible and sign the contract etc. We can help you to get in contact with the owners or agencies.

Cheap Houses in Pedrogonzález

We have seen several houses at a very low price (100\$ - 200\$ monthly) with 3 rooms. They are poor houses and often empty (refrigerator costs minimum 300\$), 6-10 people can be easily accommodated when there is a patio. NECESSITY to sign a contract of 6 months with deposit of 2 or 3 months of guarantee. You MUST take responsibility personally.



Rebuilding the Tashigar Norte Gonpa

G PARELLA

Margarita Update

by Dick Drury

It is now fifteen months since the marvelous retreat of Longsal Teachings by our Master at Tashigar North, Margarita Island, Venezuela. Rinpoche stated his vision for this summer Gar, contributed his own money as investment for the five main Gars, the last of the 35 housing lots were sold, and a Board of Directors was appointed to oversee the progress of the project.

Soon after, a structure of companies to hold and cultivate the land and an association to govern the housing village was formulated, and the first field of aloe vera was planted. Separately, a Gakyil was formed to oversee the regular Gar projects and activities.

Our land is classified as agricultural, which means that it must be used for that purpose in order to obtain permission to build houses on it. The local climate is hot, dry and windy, so aloe vera was chosen as an easy and suitable crop to grow. It turns out to have been a good choice - an agricultural expert from the main aloe processing plant in Venezuela during a recent visit, and other Aloe farmers and consultants, all say that our plantation is the most impressive in the whole country.

Although aloe vera normally requires three to four years to grow to maturity, our plants in that original field planted last May are already large enough to begin harvesting. Rinpoche has said in the past that Community land projects are for the purpose of our realization, not for growing potatoes, etc., but he is now encouraging Gars to find concrete means of sustaining themselves, rather than rely only on the income from retreats that he gives. In Margarita, we have an example for all the Dzogchen Communities worldwide to develop some resource or way to continue our collective lives and practice without solely relying on Rinpoche.

Tashigar North Santi Maha Sangha Base Practice Retreat with Jim Valby

November 7th to 19th, 2003.

The Gakyil of Tashigar Norte (Margarita Island) is pleased to announce that Jim Valby will lead a Santi Maha Sangha Base practice retreat here from 7th to 19th November, 2003.

Anyone seriously interested in following the teachings of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu can participate in the retreat, without previous transmission, on condition they also participate in the November 19, 2003 video transmission. During our retreat we will also prepare for the video transmission.

The cost will be Bs.112.000 (\$70) per person.

We hope to see you on the Island.

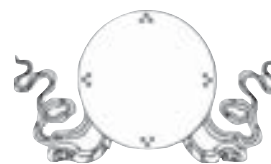
**Tashigar Norte (Margarita Island, Venezuela) has
a new e-mail : tashinor@mail.dzogchen.ru**

New Gakyil Buenos Aires, Argentina

Yellow: Griselda Galmez

Red: Elena Gastaldi

Blue: Ana Lia Falcon, Nelida Saporiti



The Mirror
Newspaper of the
International
Dzogchen Community of
Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

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Printer:
Turley Publications
Palmer, MA
USA

Distribution:
Tsegyalgar at
Conway,
MA, USA

Subscription Rate/
6 Issues:
\$35US available
through
Tsegyalgar
35 Euro
through Merigar
Visa and Master card
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Chilean Retreat with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu December 19th to 21st, 2003

The Dzogchen Community of Chile is happy to announce the information about the Dzogchen retreat with Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche to be held in Viña del Mar, Chile, December 19th to 21st, 2003.
More information follows:
Chögyal Namkhai Norbu - Dzogchen Teachings
December 19th to 21st, 2003
Tourist Center Mantagua
Quintero Road, 3 km from Con Con, V region, Chile.
Price CHF 80.000 or USD 120

On Thursday, December 18th at 19:00 a public conference on Tibetan Medicine in the Casa Italia, Alvares street 398, Viña del Mar, Chile. Price CHF 2.500 or USD 4

For further information please contact <lorhume@hotmail.com>

TASHIGAR SOUTH Gakyil & Geköes

Yellow: Paula De Raedemaeker, Griselda Galmez, Rosa Altamirano.
Blue: Daniel Simonelli, Cristian Cabral, Adriana Battisti, Daniel Lange.
Red: Sergio Oliva, Gustavo Horully.

President: Sergio Oliva.
Treasurer: Paula De Raedemaeker

Geköes: Glen Eddy

REQUEST OF FINANCIAL HELP TO THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY FROM TASHIGAR SOUTH

This year we have started in Tashigar an intense schedule of activities that we want to accomplish before the retreat that is going to be held with Rinpoche at the end of the year. These projects are divided as follows:

Renovation of the electric system and lighting
- Renewal of the whole wiring system of the main house, the lighting of the small Gonpa and of the secretary's office (already done)
- Underground installation of the whole electric wiring system external to the Gar (ongoing)
- Renovation and extension of the whole external lighting of the Gar, including the park of Rinpoche's house (ongoing)

Closing and Heating of the Gonpa
- Installation of an industrial heater with a system of hot air and its corresponding tube to distribute the heat all over the Gonpa (already done)
- Installation of a super tank of gas to provide the fuel for the heater (ongoing)
- Sealing of all openings and cracks, for a better conservation of the heat (to be done)

Reconstruction of the Outside Mandala
- Construction of a new foundation made in concrete, on which to lay the floor of the Mandala, isolated from the moisture of the ground (to be done)
- Construction of a new floor of the Mandala, made with wooden boards in carob tree or similar, very resistant to the water and to outside conditions (to be done)
- Painting of the new Mandala on the wooden floor (to be done) This is a very special project as it is the Mandala that Rinpoche himself helped building with his own hands.

The three projects mentioned above are being developed with funds from Tashigar, but the heating of the Gonpa is being made possible thanks to the donation from members of Tashigar of an industrial heating and of the money for its installation. As we have no sufficient funds to accomplish these projects on time, we request the International Community an aid to face the expenses needed to complete them.
For more information please contact
Tashigar's Secretary at<tashigar@dcc.com.ar>.

SPECIAL FUND FOR ADVANCED COURSES FOR YANTRA YOGA AND DANCE OF VAJRA INSTRUCTORS OF TASHIGAR SOUTH

Provided the unquestionable importance for the Community that our instructors could be able to take advanced courses of Yantra Yoga and Dance of the Vajra to improve and perfect their skills in knowledge and practice that will benefit all their students in the present as well as in the future, a Special Fund is being created in Tashigar, in order to receive donations and contributions to help our instructors to cover their expenses needed for them to participate in the courses that are being given in different parts of the world.

With our outmost gratitude,

Gakyil of Tashigar South

TASHIGAR SOUTH SUMMER PROGRAM December 2003 to January 2004

Retreat with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu LONGSAL GYULUS KYI MAN NGAG

(Illusory Body)
December 26th to January 2nd
Cost: US\$ 75 / \$ 200 with discounts for members
During the main retreat there will be instructions on Yantra Yoga and Vajra Dance, leaded by local Instructors Marisa Alonso and Nélida Saporiti

Advanced Yantra Yoga Course with Fabio Andrico
Specifically in the deepening of the breathing and on the holding (breathing retentions)
January 3rd to 7th

Vajra Dance Course with Adriana Dal Borgo
in February (to be confirmed)

SANTI MAHA SANGHA

Base exams	1st Level exams	2nd Level exams
January 6-8	January 15-16	January 23

1st Level Training	2nd Level Training	3rd Level training
January 9-13	January 17-21	January 24-28

More information at: tashigar@dcc.com.ar

Namgyalgar Community Announcements

Local Instructors of Namgyalgar
(approved by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu)

SMS Base Teachers
Elise Stutchbury
Angie Gilbert

Yantra Yoga Instructors
Jeannie Alamkara
Amare Pearl
Emily Coleing
Mathew Long

Vajra Dance Instructors
Jean Mackintosh
Lynne Geary

namgyalgar & pacific rim

THE THREE MONKS OF NAMGYALGAR

by Jean Mackintosh

Namgyalgar is lighter and brighter these days with the presence of the three Monks from Tibet at Gawaling, Rinpoched's house in Namgyalgar. They arrived a few weeks before Rinpoche left and were guided and taught by Rinpoche as soon as they arrived.

Their introductio to the West has been very gradual as they are living in quite an isolated place on the mountain-side that even looks like Tibet. However they make trips by car to Narooma and Bega and shop for their food and other things they need.

They are also having English lessons by a local English teacher who comes to Namgyalgar. These lessons are very important to them and they study their English books constantly. They are practicing with the local Community around Namgyalgar and been to birthday parties by the sea and luncheon invitations in people's homes, evening musical concerts, etc. They also look forward to their driving lessons with the black cockatoo. One by one they are learning the intricacies of the motor car with Ngawang Lama almost ready to take his driving test for his first learner's permit to drive on the road.

One of the Lamas unfortunately has had some health problems which necessitated a short stay in the Bega hospital and many trips to doctors in Bega, kindly assisted by the white cockatoo. So he has to stay indoors most of the time and has been very restricted in his activities. As the three Lamas support each other very much it has meant some of their interaction with the wider Australian society has been connected to hospitals and doctors' surgeries. The local health nurses visit the house and really help very willingly with these difficulties we have experienced.

For the practitioners of Namgyalgar it always makes us happy to see the maroon robes and yellow vests appearing through the forest as they walk from Gawaling to the Gonpa. They bring with them a lightness of being and calm acceptance of difficulties. Their laughter brings joy to Namgyalgar.

Welcome Ngawabg Phuntsok Lama, Rabten Lama and Rabje Lama to Namgyalgar and Tilba Tilba. They were all born in Tibet, in Amdo. They each made their way to Nepal and all attended the teaching in the monastery Rigzin Drubpe Ghatsal at Parping. Their teacher there is Chatral Rinpoche. They have received many teachings and initiations from different masters and have studied different teachings. They have all completed a three year intensive retreat. They are now in the Mandala of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu.

We really hope and pray their time with us in Namgyalgar will be fruitful and beneficial.
Many thanks to our Master Chögyal Namkhai Norbu for making this possible.

visit
The Mirror
on line

@
www.
melong.com

Mystery bay Dreaming

Walking
On the sand
In the mid-morning shining sun
Light beings dance on waves
Flashing, sparkling,
Dancing joyously
Increasing
Until the whole ocean as far as the eye can see
Has light beings shining on the surface
A huge crowd, melting together,
uniting, becoming
Like a huge shining sun in the water
In the small gentle waves by the shore
Individual lights dance separately
Then join the huge water waves as they swell and lift around the rocks
Sliding out to the wide open sea
I swim with them all and I become one with the light and the water
The light is in the water
And the water is light
An ocean of light
At Mystery Bay

by Jean Mackintosh



Tibetan Medicine Tour 2003 Australia

with Dr. Nida Chenagtsang

Brisbane
October 29 – November 2
Public Lecture
Diet and Behavior - Therapeutic Approaches in Tibetan Medicine

Wednesday, October 29, 7PM
The Theosophical Society, 355 Wickham Terrace

Public Lecture
Birth and Death According to Tibetan Medicine
Thursday, October 30, 7PM
The Theosophical Society, 355 Wickham Terrace

Mantra Healing weekend intensive
Friday, October 31 to Sunday, November 2
November (commencing 7PM Friday), Ewen Maddock Dam Recreational
Centre, Landsborough (Caloundra)

Contacts:
Jenny Allison
Tel: 07 3217 2658
Email: jenallison@optusnet.com.au

Carol Albert
Tel: 07 5445 0325
Email: calbert@acenet.net.au

Prices:
Weekend intensive \$200 including food and accommodation
Public lectures \$15/\$10 conc.
Bookings essential for the weekend intensive. Full weekend only, no
single day attendance.

Melbourne
November 5 - 9
Public Lecture
Diet and Behavior - Therapeutic Approaches in Tibetan Medicine
Wednesday November 5 6:30PM
Monash Convention Center, 7th floor, 30 Collins Street, City

Public Lecture
Birth and Death According to Tibetan Medicine
Thursday November 6 6:30PM
Monash Convention Center, 7th floor
30 Collins Street, City

Public Lecture
Mantra Healing
Friday November 7 6:30PM
Monash C. Center, 7th floor, 30 Collins Street, City

Weekend Seminar
Mantra Healing, Saturday, November 8 to Sunday, November 9
Monkey Studios, Level 1, 378 Smith Street, Collingwood

Contacts:
Julia Tilley
Tel: 0417 477050 / 03 9443 9447
Email: julia1@optushome.com.au

Jennifer Peters
Tel: 0415 619 807
Email: jenempea@hotmail.com

Prices:
Seminar: \$200/\$180 conc.(includes Friday night public lecture),
Individual public lectures \$15/\$10
Bookings essential for the seminar.
Public lectures are sponsored by Monash Asia Institute.

Sydney
November 12 - 16
Guest lecture
Birth and Death According to Tibetan Medicine
Wednesday, November 12, 7PM
Theosophical Society, 484 Kent Street, Sydney

Public Lecture
Diet and Behavior - Therapeutic Approaches in Tibetan Medicine
Thursday, November 13 7PM
Rigpa Fellowship, 3/822, George Street, Sydney

Public Lecture
Mantra Healing, Friday, November 14, 7PM
Buddhist Library, 90 Church Street, Camperdown

Weekend Seminar
Mantra Healing
Saturday November 15 to Sunday November 16, (9 - 5pm)
Buddhist Library, 90 Church Street, Camperdown
Contacts:

Jan Cornall
Tel: 02 95577491

Helen Trehy
Tel: 0409 835 052
Email: varena@idx.com.au

Prices:
Seminar \$200/\$180 conc. (includes
Friday night public lecture)
Public lectures \$15/\$10
Bookings essential for the seminar.

Mantra Healing Intensive Course
November 19 - 23

Dreams and Tibetan Medicine
Intensive Course
November 26 - 30
Namgyalgar, Tilba Tilba, Southern
Coast NSW

Contact:
The Secretary
PO Box 14
Central Tilba NSW 2546
Australia
Tel/fax: 02 4473 7668
Email: namgyalg@acr.net.au

Prices \$400 / \$320 (conc. and Nam-
gyalgar members) each seminar
(incl. food).
Bookings essential.
Program may be subject to change.

Dr. Nida Chenagtsang
Dr. Nida Chenagtsang was born in
Ando, Tibet in 1971. He entered
theLhasa Tibetan Medical College
where he studied traditional
Tibetan Medicine. He established
the first International School of
Tibetan Massage in the Medical
Department of the Shang-Shung
International Institute for Tibetan
Studies in Italy, under the direction
of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu. To
date Dr Nida has given courses on
Dreamsand Medicine, Mantra
Healing, Diet and Behavior and Ku
Nye in Italy, Austria, France, Rus-
sia and Australia.
Dr. Nida Chenagtsang has recently
established the first International
School of Tibetan Massage. The
complete course is comprised of
three levels, with at least six months
between levels in order to allow the
student to integrate teachings into
their healing practice. In the First
Level Course, the students will
learn Ku and Nye, and the thera-
peutic use of different points on the
body.

Statue with Mirror

The Lady with the mirror - study-
ing illusion - asks
Can this illusion be improved? I
don't think so
The Lady in the mirror repeats her
words precisely

And adds: please tell me first
Where – on which side - am I and
where are you?
Who is who and who is whose
illusion?

They smile together knowingly:

We see through this magician's
trick
Pretending to divide the undivid-
ed
We are both the mirror and the
mirrored and

In saying so they step down from
their
Pedestal and dive into the greater
mirror
Of the quiet pond nearby

by Doro Franck

p a s s a g e s

Births

Matteo Dominic Namkhai Colajacomo was born to Dani and Chiara Cola-
jacommo of Los Angeles, California, on August 29 2003, at 2:47PM and
weighed in at 11.15 lbs.!!!

Steph and Eli of Melbourne, Australia begat Asher Rae Loudon Kerr.



Married

Graeme Horner and Catharine Thomson of Melbourne, Australia.

ERRATA

Omission:

In the last Mirror issue #64, there was an omission for the death of Nicole
Grimmond on page 16, Nicole Grimmond lived in New Zealand.

Prison interview, continued from page 14

friend's copy of the newsletter and want to learn more. An amazingly high
number say that they began practicing, usually in prison, many years ago all
on their own and are glad to find a supportive community like Dharma
Friends. So I wonder too, where are all of these people coming from? It is
not like there has been a pipe-line of dharma books into the prisons to open
the doors for them. Again, I must say karma always wins in the end. There
are those magical little moments when dharma runs the show, like when a
Dhammapada is thrown into the lock-down cell by an angry guard instead
of a requested Bible. Unlikely as it sounds, that was the case with Frankie
Parker back in the 80's, in an Arkansas prison! His life was changed by that
book. Those of us who knew him have wondered again and again, where in
the world did that Dhammapada come from? Perhaps under very trying cir-
cumstances that one moment may arise where dharma can get one's atten-
tion, and then that entire garden of planted karmic seeds begins to blossom.

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DREAM YOGA

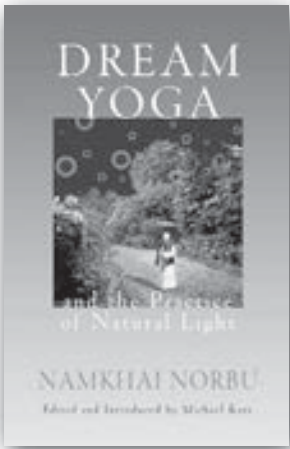
and the Practice of Natural Light

by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu


This new edition includes material that expands and deepens the first edition's emphasis on **specific exercises to develop awareness within the dream and sleep states.**

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tions centered on self-confidence, divine pride, the glance of penetration, amusement, majesty, deliberation, fierceness, pacification, intoxication, determination, playfulness and wildness and passion.

Using the Tibetan princess Mandarava as an archetype, the book offers an entire chapter in exploring sensuality by focusing on receptivity, dreaminess, passion, demureness, mysteriousness, flirtatiousness, bliss, joy, enchantment, contentment, ecstasy, and finally love.

The final chapter is on love and compassion, discussing female deities like Isis, Mary, Kuan Yin and Tara with explanations of each ones mythology. Sharron then instructs on how to create an energy field of the Peaceful Goddess to evoke humility, inspiration, gratitude, devotion, divine love, empathy, nobility, compassion, meditative bliss, soothingness, radiance, and rapture.

And what would the world possibly be without rapture? Or this book.

by Ellen Pearlman

Lives of the Masters continued from page 15

eons,
Overcome obstacles and adverse condition of this life,
Liberate themselves, liberate others and liberate both;
And liberate all their followers.

I will connect to happiness even
Those who, harboring negative views, harm me,
Hence, I will lead them from happiness to happiness.
There is no doubt about this.

If you give up your heart and mind to me
Beseech me in a sincere way
Overcome your lack of faith and
Hope in me as a refuge throughout your life
Immediately your two obscurations will diminish.
Upon meeting me in reality, in vision or in dream,
I will reveal the path to the temporal and ultimate goal.

All of you present now and the students to come
My sons, and disciples Remember this!
For the time being my work of training beings in this world is complete;
I will now go to the pure land of the Medicine Buddha.

Then Yuthok gave much advice to his student doctors. Thereafter, much light came from the sky intertwined with a net of rainbows, filling the entire sky. That radiance touched his body and, floating in the sky, he departed to the pure land of the Medicine Buddha, without leaving any mortal remains.

Freely rendered in a concise form from the Tibetan by Nida Chenagtsang and Elio Guarisco from: gYu thog gsar rnying gi rnam thar by Dar mo sman rams pa, published by mi rigs dpe skrung khang, 1982, Beijing, China..



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Working Life and the Teachings from *The Mirror*

by Naomi Zeitz for *The Mirror*

In the beginning, ‘work’ and ‘spiritual life’ were inextricably linked. There was no separation. All of life was spiritual - everything was related to the inner and outer nature, the elements, and the daily activities were those of survival in nature and with the elements. There was a direct relationship to the ‘spirit’, to the powerful unseen manifestations within and without that impacted life: the hunt, the gathering, production, birth, death, weather, fire, water, the moon, the sun, day, night, protection, danger, the seen and unseen dimensions. Everything was immediate. Homage to the spirit world could keep you alive. Reliance was on sensitivity to the subtleties of weather patterns, cosmology, the sea, the rivers, the movements of animals, etc. There were rituals, chanting and movement; prayers that beseeched the great unknown to be compassionate to the small being all related to daily survival.

And then life began to change. People began to collect into communities, share work and collaborate to make life more comfortable. As humans developed, their social conventions became more ‘sophisticated’ and therefore less directly linked to the ‘spiritual’ as cultivation and farming, group production, artisans, trade and bartering began. As daily life became somewhat more comfortable and easier in the immediate sense of survival, the spiritual became something less essential in the daily scheme of things and more of a peripheral need and/or experience. The spiritual dimension became, for a large part in most Western cultures, a collective social experience that helped establish and provide laws and social structures that concurred with or even created the predominant views of the times. People allied themselves on the basis of common belief systems and fought wars to establish dominance.

As modern life became even more technologically advanced and societies more complex, the spiritual dimension was more and more removed. Religious life and the unknown were often at odds with science and rational thought. Religion itself in its organized form often became a tool for power brokers and political control. Spirituality and relation to the unseen was far from necessary in daily life, and many people broke away from association with the spiritual and viewed it as a hindrance to the development and evolution of

humankind- a superstitious and childlike way to view a concrete, rational and scientifically explainable dimension. Our lives became more compartmentalized, and our spiritual lives were just another compartment. And so here we are today, in a world filled with all possible comforts and ease for a good deal of the world population. We know how to feed and shelter ourselves and cure ourselves of many diseases, we have moment to moment advancements in technology, we have top level methods to kill ourselves and each other...but we are lacking the relationship to our own spiritual nature...and since striving for a satiated material existence often includes many, many hours at the workplace, it seems appropriate for *The Mirror* to examine how we practitioners find the great gift of the Dzogchen teachings integrated or not, useful or not, in our daily working lives and how or if they help to decompartmentalize our existence. We have a wide variety of working life situations in our vast international Community and here are just a few examples of how some people choose to share their experiences as working people and practitioners in our Community. The *Mirror* invites all readers and Community members to share their experiences. Please consult the list of the next four topics in which to participate.



topic next issue:
death, loss and grief
deadline october 20, 2003

Work and the Teachings

by Michael Hass

Orange, California
7/30/03

My introduction to the teachings had been in a tradition that seemed to value being a monk or nun and withdrawing from ordinary life above all other things. If this wasn’t your karma, well, you could make do until another, more meritorious, life. Frankly, this wasn’t too inspiring because either through fate, karma, or simply bad luck I was completely entangled in ordinary life. As the Greek author Kazantzákis said through his character Zorba the Greek, I had the “whole disaster.”

One of the first stories I remember Chögyal Namkhai Norbu telling was the story of the temple janitor or handyman who one day, after many years of cleaning up around the temple, announced that it was time to close him up in a room so he could finish the work of manifesting the rainbow body. Everyone was surprised because this old man had been nobody special and had simply done his job day after day and year after year without bringing any special attention upon himself. Of course, the important thing was that he had integrated his practice completely with the actions of his daily life. There was something about this story that was almost mischievous and also gave me a sense of hope. I thought, “Well, maybe I can work with my circumstances and make something of this after all.” Twenty years later, I can say that the work, the work of integrating the teaching into daily life, is harder than I ever thought. The truth of the third of the Seven Special Mind Trainings and how we are “beguiled by diverse secondary causes” is painfully apparent.

Yet, the inspiration of the story of the enlightened handyman, as I like to call him, remains. Rigpa is not found on a mountain top or in the future somewhere but is always accessible, even, in a way, inescapable. If not this moment then the next or the next or the next. The opportunities to connect never exhaust themselves and are always fresh.

Fortunately for us, Rinpoche offers the full spectrum of teachings, from Hinayana to Ati Yoga. I appreciate the wisdom of this on those days when the best I can muster up is “For the next hour I will really try not to harm anyone!” Not exactly Dzogchen, but at least it is not making things worse! On other, better, days, I can move beyond Hinayana to actually try to benefit others. Here I am fortunate because, as a psychologist and professor, it is my work to help others. Thus, the opportunities to develop compassion are always present, even when I wish they weren’t there.

Working with other people is always challenging and often humbling. I am constantly discovering my limitations. When I feel frustrated or discouraged I try to remember my intentions. In the “The Art of Happiness” the writer, an American psychiatrist, asks His Holiness the Dalai Lama if he ever felt nervous in front of large groups. His Holiness thought for a moment and responded “yes.” The psychiatrist was taken back and asked him how he dealt with this. His Holiness said that he simply remembered his intention – to help others. Inspired by the simplicity of this story, I sometimes find myself in front of a class at the university praying “May my students move beyond my limitations and be able to help others where I cannot.” Something about this moves nervousness or stress or anger from the foreground to the background of my awareness. It helps me “get over myself” and focus on the needs of my clients and students.

Other times, only sometimes, I forget all this and find myself simply relaxed and present. A moment later I am distracted and think that being a monk would be easier than dealing with the complexity of ordinary life. If I share this, my wife laughs and reminds me that this is not in the karmic cards this time around. I sigh deeply and go back to work.

advice from Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

Work and Practice Integrating the Teaching into our Daily Lives *An excerpt from a teaching at Merigar, August 16, 2003*

Our lives are very short. For example, in the history books, we can read about many different teachers of different religions and civilization. There are infinite histories of different people, but none of them are alive today. Today we are alive, but soon we, too, will be part of history. So time is very precious - you should not lose even one day.

What should we do in order not to lose time? We integrate the teaching into the day-time. But integrating doesn’t mean that we become like Milarepa, renounce everything and go and live on a mountain. Maybe some people have that possibility, but it is very rare. In today’s society we have to work. Everybody has something to do. In particular we do not live like monks or nuns - they have already renounced and they can go where they like. But we are not like that: we have our families, our children and our children’s children, and we have to help, we have to work and earn money.

I remember when I was very young we lived in the countryside. Life was not so easy but we also had less problems. I remember we never received any bills to pay! We only ate what we produced like barley, grain, potatoes, etc. We also exchanged some of our produce for meat and butter and other things and we lived in that way.

Today, nobody lives like that, not even in Tibet. Everyone goes to the shop. They make money and do their shopping at the shop; they buy everything. Then after a day or two they go back to the shop to buy some more things. Even though they have a little money, it finishes quickly. But not only that, at the end of the month we receive a lot of bills.

This is our condition and if we don’t make money, we can’t live. For making money, we have to spend our time working. Some people say that they have no job and that they have problems. The problem is not only that of a single person, but if they are parents they have to maintain their children, too. Today, it costs a lot of money to have children. We have to buy a lot of different products just to clean them and then when they go to school you have to pay a lot of money. This is concrete life. We must understand that we cannot renounce all these things. But then if we cannot renounce them, how can we do practice? By going into the essence of the teaching. There is not much time, there is not much possibility [to practice]. And we must not live in a fantasy. So you should think about what you do from the early morning to the evening. What are your possibilities? When you know that, then you can work that way.

Everybody goes to work; it may be in an office or a shop, etc. And what do we do tomorrow? We do the same thing. What do we do the day after tomorrow? We repeat it once again. This is called samsara. We always repeat the same thing because we continue to eat, we consume and we repeat. We go ahead that way. Some people say that they are waiting for the weekend in order to do practice. But then often you find that the weekend is not free: you have to visit your parents, or maybe a relative has a birthday party or someone is getting married and you have to go buy a present. So when are you going to do this practice? This is concrete life. In this case you have to consider your practice in relationship to time.

How do we pass our time? In the teaching of Buddha, he said that we have four moments in our life: the moment of walking, the moment of sitting, the moment of eating and the moment of sleeping. These are the four moments into which we have to integrate our practice. So when you are walking, what do you do? When you are walking, you cannot do the Thun practice, you cannot sing the Song of the Vajra and do contemplation. Then when you are sitting, if you are not doing practice, you are talking, dealing with people, doing so many different things. In this case, you should remember what the main point is. The main point is being in the state of Guruyoga. Being in the state of Guruyoga means, first of all, not being distracted. You try to be present, and that is something that you can always apply. It is also much better for your life if you are present. When we are not present, we create a lot of problems. For example, if you have a car accident, why do you have it? Because you are distracted otherwise you wouldn’t have that problem. So you see, if you are present, it is much better, even if you are only living an ordinary life.

Sometimes, when we have something to do, we give too much importance to it. For example, we say, “Oh, today is my birthday and I want to invite my friends round.” You ask them to come at 7 then when you look at the clock it is already 5 or 6. So you rush to the shop to get the shopping. Perhaps the first shop is closed so you dash to the next shop and then rush back home to prepare something quickly. You cut up meat and bread but you are very charged up and instead of cutting the meat, you end up cutting your finger. Now, you have more problems. You are more charged up and nervous and accumulating more and more tension. In the end, your friends finally arrive at the door and you are very angry. That is not so nice. So in this case, if you are mindful, you relax and do everything slowly. It is not so very important. Even if you don’t manage to prepare everything, your friends will help you because they are called “friends”. That means that they collaborate and respect you. But if you don’t think like that and get charged up this way, it is not good.

It is very, very important to relax in our daily life. If you are present, then it is easy to relax because if you are present, you discover when you are charged up, you know that it is not good and you relax. Some people cannot relax because they always consider things to be important. In this case, remember the famous words of the Buddha, “Nothing exists that is real. Everything is unreal, just like a dream.” We can have a good or a bad dream. If we are not aware of our dreams, then we get charged up and think that what happens in our dreams is important. We have problems just as if it was something real. Then when we wake up, we discover that it was only a dream and as soon as we discover that it was only a dream, we relax. Buddha said, “Life is a big dream”, so if you know that, you don’t give too much importance to things because it doesn’t make much sense. That is really something concrete, but in reality, it doesn’t exist. We think that something is important, and get charged up, but if we are relaxed, even though something is relatively important, we can apply it easily. So you can do the practice of being present at any moment. When you go to the office, when you walk, try to remember that and relax.

Transcribed and edited by Liz Granger

Working on the Fifth Point*
by Carisa O' Kelly

Recently, I made a discovery that stopped me in my tracks. I made a religion of work - everything I did was “work”. It was a way to distance myself from relaxation. That is a whole other story. The path to my current livelihood wended it’s way from the Department of Labour in Dublin to the phone company and public library in New York with an educational interlude of study and practice in Boulder, Colorado and then on to more library work on the West Coast of the U.S..... paragraphs go by as the seasons change. The result of three years of the prayer for “right livelihood” took on the shape and the form of the Fire Department, a place where for 24 hours at a time we go between states of readiness and states of complete activity. My work as an urban Firefighter and EMT (Emergency Medical Technician) in the U.S. brings me into contact with many situations and opportunities to make work my practice and bring practice to my work.

I. Looking in the face of life and death, it looks like the face of a stranger. But I know it is really my own face, the face of my mother, my brother, in any moment, in every moment. Tuesday 0327 There is a woman in her nightdress on the street, rocking on the edge of the curb, her house a hollow shell cradling her dead children. Friday 2207 Here is my son who is dead in an early-late-night-race through the streets in a car he will never pay for - only with his life this night beneath the heavy metal of the street car, which, staying steady on its track cannot swerve, and you know and I know it takes a block or so to stop. Sunday Lunchtime There is my brother hanged by the neck until dead in the clean and tidy, shiny garage of the church, in neat robes and serene face - was it foul play? What difference does it make? What difference do we make? II. Sleep is interrupted at any moment and the heart beat jumps and the automatic lights and the voice of the dispatcher and the tone that sounds, echoed on a day off in the “attention shoppers” tone in the supermarket and the sound of the tone on the airplane, tells us that now we are going somewhere to do something. I now no longer jump to those day-off lights and sounds. III. The medical emergencies - whether “sick” or” trauma” - are something not many people know about my job or at least they are always surprised when I tell them. Yes, we do do fires. Structural fires - houses generally - are the bread and butter of urban firefighting. However, the basic water supply is the ABC - airway, breathing and circulation. Most of our calls these days and nights are medical in nature. IV. Wednesday 0600 Methadone baby on the floor. 1600 One shoe in the street far from the foot and body. 1900 Warm chest of the dead mother lying on the floor as I do chest compressions, my colleagues manage the airway and the defibrillator. Here is a complete scene, a cameo of life and, of course, that which follows. What do I do? Maybe help a little bit, maybe not increase the suffering of that moment and even sometimes alleviate it in some way. But really all I am doing is pretending to be a practitioner who is pretending to be a firefighter/emt in this illusion of a place called 21st cen-

tury u.s.a.
V. In my work sometimes I (like to think that I) am a little bit present when I kneel by someone’s head, someone I have only met here and now in the last few moments of their life in their home or on the street or someplace where neither of us have ever been before. Sometimes I remember as they are leaving their body, despite all our best efforts to make it possible for them to remain a little while longer, sometimes, in my mind I will mutter mantras as they go.
VI. I have developed a tic in my left eye now, it is not yet visible from the outside - as far as I can tell.
VII. When I first started the job I had a great time with the accoutrements and how “Dharmic” they were. Hooks and belts. and chains and bells - you know all that stuff. I had forgotten that.
VIII. Fire, air, water. These three are the main elements that we firefighters engage with. Fire and heat, fire that burns bright calling to us, fire found through pitch darkness, met by water, complete darkness reemerges. Inner air, outer air, pure clear air, air filled with smoke and particulate matter, wind and air. Water, heavy water, wet water, rainbow water, foaming water, water to take the air from the fire. These very elements of the so-called external world, all three part of who we are, what we are made of. Ram, Yam, Kham. (X%,Y%,70%)
IX. Ah, yes! Practice and work are inextricably linked. The opportunities in every situation are there for me even as they are for everyone in what-



ever
job they
do. To remember
the kindness of the Guru in one moment or the next. As for me, I sometimes say, it is because of my very profound denseness that this job is suitable, for the first ten years I will begin to recognize this precious human condition - difficult to gain - and as this work points out, day and night, moment to moment - easy to lose. And then in the next ten years maybe impermanence will begin to register and even give an inkling of the manner in which these factors are the fabric of my condition. We will see. It will be ten years next May. Thank you Rinpoche for your example and all your kindness and all you Dear Vajra Siblings for all your mirror like words and actions along the path together.

* The Fifth Point refers to the Five Points of Merigar. See Principles and Guidelines of the Dzogchen Community, pg. 60

Work and the Teachings
by Rosemary Friend

Lunes. I can sleep in a little as I don’t start until 11.30am – a tiny remnant of that time when I was so charged that I couldn’t work more than 4 days a week. Disturbing neurological symptoms were frighteningly similar to an emerging picture of multiple sclerosis. The neurologist agreed with my diagnosis of vicarious traumatisaion. I hadn’t been careful enough with the psychotherapeutic work I was engaged in. The energetic boundaries required more mastery than I had achieved.

Mates. I travel to Namgyalgar for a two week solo retreat at Gawaling. As I open my retreat notes from a few years back I am immediately confronted by Rinpoche’s words, “if you are doing psychotherapy and energy work, you must protect yourself with Garuda practice”. Disappointed at my belated awakening, I spend the following precious days, initially relaxing and coordinating my energy with Yantra, Vajrasattva and then doing Garuda and Longde practice.

Miercoles. Back at work I maintain my energy more effectively. I still have some neurological symptoms but I am more aware and more active and potent in my sense of presence and awareness of my limitations. I want to really integrate my experience of presence – so blissfully enhanced when in the presence of Master and Vajra kin – into my ongoing life. I want, I want I WANT to keep it going, not lose it.

Juevas. What to do. I feel so limited. I struggle to maintain the presence with all that appears to my eyes, ears, mind. I so quickly slip into dualistic judgement and look out and don’t “see” anymore. I accept my limitation. Jixinwa. As it is. Well this is how I am. This life of mine is short. Time is moving on. If I don’t take it seriously I will waste it, flaunt the preciousness.

Viernes. I return from Margarita. Jerri has already sold our house and we are moving to live and work from our newly leased apartment. We will work towards living in Margarita next year. That will mean coming and going - from Margarita, to Dunedin or Brisbane. I’d like to spend some time with Mum and my sisters again. I’ll start working in medicine again!! And just when I was completely convinced I was beyond working as a doc again. The last ten years have been full on – developing my capacity in the areas of psychotherapy, mentoring, supervision and lecturing at the medical school. Another change? Vajra breathing. Relax Rose, don’t panic. Actually it could be quite fun. I always enjoyed medicine.

Sabado / Saturday. My first day in the emergency department. Oh Man, it’s been twenty years since I’ve done this stuff. I feel like a duck out of water. Oh well, I guess that’s better than a fish out of water. New kid on the block. I feel like I have to ask about almost everything. AOM. Such intense suffering. I guess it’s a bit like a war zone. Guru Yoga.

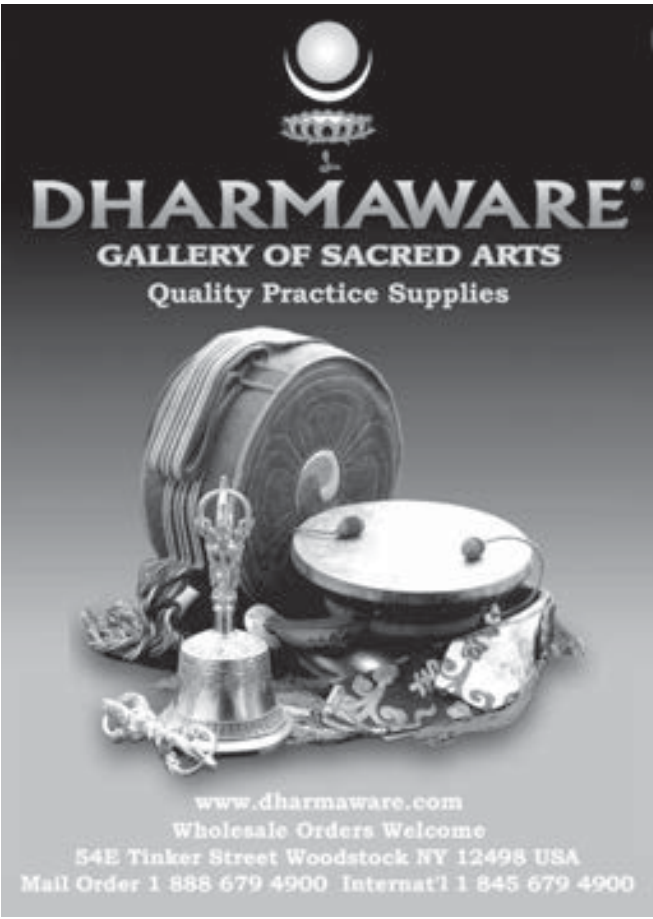
Domingo / Sunday. It’s been a big decision. It feels right. Maybe I’ll be able to develop some work in Margarita. We’re starting to build our house soon. Relaxing, breathing, visioning, continuing, presence, awareness. I am writing this because Naomi asked me to and I know I’m not very good at this kind of thing. But I have some time tonight and I like Naomi. Like, don’t like. Xirxen. Relaxing into my natural state. OAH. Into bed. AH. Continue that presence, relaxing, coming and going, continuing, relaxing, diving into that pool of clear blue water with dappled sun shining through, whales swimming around me, their sounds in and around me.

OM-A-HUM

I am a new Dzogchen practitioner and have found some of the basic practices very useful in the work place. I was working for the State of Alaska as a Health Program Manager and spent most of my time at my desk or in meetings. I found that OM-A-HUM breathing was particularly useful during meetings. If I was bored I could do O-A-H breathing and it would keep me awake. If someone or something happening in the meeting made me agitated or upset, I could do O-A-H breathing to center

myself and keep calm, which probably helped me also to respond more appropriately. I could also do O-A-H breathing while at my desk and also had the opportunity to other practices silently. The great thing about O-A-H breathing is that no one has to know that you are doing it, so you can basically do it anywhere and in any situation. It certainly helped me through a sometimes boring and sometimes stressful job situation.

Laura Pratt
Juneau, Alaska



Reflections

A Reflection from an “Old” Practitioner

by Mario Cumbat

I’d like to reflect on my experience as a Dzogchen Practitioner, to sum it all up after almost thirty years from when I first received the message. How much time I’ve lost ...

At the beginning, when I understood the depth and the value of the Teaching, I practically thought of nothing else. I dedicated a good part of my time to organizing my notes and transcriptions, to the practice and to organization within the Community - in that order of importance. It would have been unthinkable to miss a retreat; retreats which I approached in the most literal sense of the word - staying in a tent, eating little food and dedicating my time the whole of my time to the Teaching and attempts at practice. The first intense years were spent like this. In spite of changing times and great difficulties in organization and finances, the Community in Rome managed to find a place where Yantra Yoga (at that time I even received a teaching certificate from the Master) could be taught and where we could practice together sometimes. Teaching Yantra Yoga helped me a great deal and is, in itself, a profound practice. Trying to maintain presence, breathe, get in tune with and check the “students”, is an extremely useful exercise even for oneself.

I felt a great inner transformation, became more aware of myself and experienced some “nyams” (I don’t know if this is what you still call the experiences arising from the practice) that were very interesting. According to the Teaching, one should neither look for these experiences or become attached to them, but they are still a great satisfaction! I understood many things, maybe something within me matured and I even drastically reduced my attachment to my notes, something that if you had known me then, you would have never thought possible.

Then gradually, without me even realizing it, something started to change. I don’t know how or why. Many people felt that my leaving for Nigeria for a year for another dimension of life and work was a contributing factor. It isn’t an excuse but a fact - however, the fault is always our own.

Back in Italy, my commitments continued on various fronts, but between family and work I found less and less time to dedicate to the practice. Today I smile when I remember the Master speaking about “old” practitioners who, although they know what to do, lose time being distracted by a thousand other things. I am lucky to still be alive and to have a little more time available so that writing these few lines may stimulate me.

I remember a time that I went to see Rinpoche at his home in Formia for some clarification and for the pleasure of seeing him; each time you see him he fills you from your depths. For a joke we decided to play cards to see our future in the Teaching. Rinpoche had invented the rules on the spot as he often does and it was fun, except for one small flaw - there was nothing to do about it - the more we asked, the more the cards confirmed that my situation was smothered by dualism. I’ve forgotten the anecdote but maybe it was a premonition and I should be on guard and practice more presence. I hope that my experience may be useful for all practitioners on the Path. Life is complex and we are perhaps even more so ourselves. When you have rationally understood the principles and the aims of the Teaching, you feel like you are halfway there, but then ... a lot of things happen and here we are! My greatest enemies have been my laziness and the events of life which continually impose choices and often take you away from the practice. If I can give some advice it would be not to do as I have done; not to lose time. Keeping your presence is only an act of will.

Translated from the Merigar Letter, August 2003 by Liz Granger

The Dance of the Vajra An Experiential Journey

by Sharron Rose

As I stepped onto the Mandala, I immediately felt as though I were immersed in a higher, more lucid degree of reality. All of my senses were suddenly enhanced. The Mandala, the air around me, as well as the other dancers, seemed to glow with light. As the sweet sound of the mantra resonated from our throats, with one pointed concentration I began to perform the sacred gestures and movements. At once, clear sensations of pleasure began to flow through my body and mindstream. Continuing on, the blissful sensations became stronger, filling me with tremendous energy. Sometimes they were so delightful and sensuously arousing that I almost lost my step.

Relaxing, centering myself once again, my vision expanded. The Mandala, the dancers and the space itself all appeared as glowing ornaments of the clear, pure primal state of awareness itself. Refreshed, as I continued to dance through this visionary dimension, it felt as though drops of nectar in the form of rainbow light began to magically emanate from my hands, along with streaming waves of light. As the dance progressed, I stood face to face with the male practitioners. I felt as if I stood naked before them, unable to hide, revealing all that I am. I gazed into their eyes, doing my best to see them clearly, without judgment, while presenting them with a clear mirror upon which to see their own reflections. As I continued the dance to its conclusion, I felt the vibratory quality of the sound and movement making contact with subtle forces deep within me. Even though I had been a dancer all of my life, immersing myself in the strict and exacting disciplines of ballet, modern dance and Kathak, the ancient Classical Dance form of Northern India, I found that this was a dance unlike any other I had experienced. It was a dance of integration, each sound and movement created to awaken, massage and control energy points in my body, bring equilibrium to its elements and balance my vital energy. At the same time, it offered a direct experience of the non-dual state of contemplation, beyond thoughts and the incessant grasp of the emotions.

This experience took place many years ago, when Rinpoche first received and transmitted the Vajra Dance. At that time I noticed that it had a profound impact upon our Community, for not only did it deepen our practice, but it seemed to magically harmonize and balance the energies that flowed between female and male as well. Prior to Rinpoche’s transmission of the dance, we had always been quite a wild bunch. Many of us were artists, dancers, musicians, scholars and other adventurous souls who, after the teachings were completed for the evening, liked to party. I have many distinct memories of rowdy drunk males trying their best to seduce me into bed with promises of their great knowledge of ‘Tantra’. But once we began to dance, the energy within and between the members of the community changed dramatically. Through the vehicle of this powerful practice, this wild energy was tamed and a new, more harmonious and respectful way of relating began to unfold - all through the subtle power of the dance.

From Sharron Rose, practitioner, and author of *The Path of the Priestess; A Guidebook for Awakening the Divine Feminine (Inner Traditions)*

A Poem by Sean ‘Jampa’ Wardell

To Rinpoche who made this possible and to Geshe-la who led me here.
May these few words help someone somehow.
Here I sit in the reading Room at Namgyalgar.
How can one really describe the experiences one has.

I arrive in this place my head buzzing with Dharma;
My heart weary with Murwillumbah and its entrapments and comforts.

Thirsting like a dog for a place where I may do some serious practice with few distractions,

For a while I take refuge here and my expectations are exceeded as I had hoped.

Suddenly every one is offering me their dwellings to live in undistracted by knowing the comings and goings of these places I vow to venture little instead to make Mantra my friend and walk the path so often clear ahead of me like a full bright moon shone place.

Were I to see it like the noonday sun then I fear I might burn up from the bliss this would bring.

I am glad for my shortcomings they always humble me when nought else will.

Sometimes my thoughts turn to loved ones’ friends and I hope I can uncover some jewels within me to bring to them and make them glad.

I think over and over of my mistakes and wonder that I still live so free;
Someone must be looking out for me.

In dreams I have waking and asleep the Buddhas, give advice; show and talk to me

Tara visits and says come home child - it is time to be free.

It is the only way to help others to be.

I know my time is short but it is good to be asked home and to be able to invite all beings to come with me

These words fall short - nothing sticks to the void
May they be received with the love they have been given

May all sufferings lose power against the wrath of compassion
And its unswerving efforts awaken hope in hearts that have been soiled.

First thoughts from the wandering Dharma Bum Sean exiled from his homeland by the overwhelming need to bring all things for once up to speed.

Cheers and May all be as it must needs be.

SPELL FOR ACCUMULATING JEWELS

Diamonds melt in humid leaves
Rubies bleed their tender rose
Emeralds hold Caribbean
Depths the circumference of
Sapphire planetariums
Freckle the milky way
With limitless love lights

Your eyes posses what you see
The shape of fire the brilliance
Of the mind mirrored in the
Flash of water the sky
Deep within holds every stone
To it’s breast an equal gem
Worth traversing heaven for

For tomorrow we die
Your eyes will set into mine
And know all the laughter
Of those bright human jewels
Once held under lock and key
Are smoke rising in the night
Are autumn colors falling

SPELL FOR COURAGE

There are bodies everywhere
The blood runs in torrents down
The gutters of this iron city
And the war has just begun
The bombs are falling
May rain the breeze of Spring
A firestorm of atoms

Tears apart everything
Do you think you can survive
Cowering in the corner
Of self-preservation
With your bodies everywhere
Newborns spilling from mothers
Screaming and covered in blood

And the war can never end
Our fathers will never give in
Because the war never began
And this is why courage is
Heart-certainty physical death
Is the perfect wake-up call
To the pure dream of this life

by James Fox
NYC

Waking up on Sunday (May 25th)

I am just a child
Cradled by earth
Brought here by the sea
Dressed with fire
Taught by the wind
Subtle clouds in my hands
Universes in my dreams

To the 8 directions of infinity
I offer the five colors of my true family
From the castle of light
Within my heat
They flow and spread banners of victory

Nicole Bini

How I Met Chögyal Namkhai Norbu Roman’s Story

by Romain Piro

At the age of 23, after a very typical youth, I decided to look further and travel. However, I had never left Pau, my home town in the Southwest of France. I decided to make a stop in Paris to get used to any and all kinds of change. Here I was, a young, inexperienced man in the capital city with my own idea of success and dreams; with the fantasies of a young, carefree and demanding European. Events rapidly took a much unexpected turn; after spending a few weeks with my cousin in a worry-free ambiance, I discovered some ideas of Buddhism and Zen - a completely new way of life. I was very happy with it.

During a visit to the Burgundy countryside, where I went on my own to take care of my friends’ house, I found a book “by chance”, the title of which I did not find that inspiring: “The Tibetan Book of Life and Death”. I opened it and was shocked by the truths and explanations of experiences so simple and profound at the same time. Dzogchen seemed so clear, so evident, so attractive... already somehow familiar but still so distant from all my concepts, from my whole education. I could not close this book for more than six months and must have read it five or six times.

I went back to Paris where I discovered a great Tibetan store on my street and a Tibetan restaurant whose owners became excellent friends. On the other side of town, in the area where I was working, I also discovered three other Tibetan restaurants, another store, a book-store; I found myself immersed in Tibet all day long. This was the opportunity for me to discover a surprising country - its people and culture – a place I had never previously heard of. I rapidly developed a real interest in Tibet; it became nearly a passion!

After eighteen months spent in Paris, I decided to change my mind on my departure to start a trip out of France. I was attracted by the old Tibetan and Mongolian cultures, so I decided to go East in order to reach Asia, the cradle of humanity, with the secret hope to reach secret places where I could meet the people who could guide me in this newly discovered path of spirituality. I then decided to cross Europe, the Middle East and then Central Asia.

I still had only Dzogchen on my mind. I had read a few brief but brilliant explanations by Sogyal Rinpoche, with sentences like: “This path needs the teachings of a qualified master, of which will come a fervent devotion that will lead the student to the path of Realization...” And me, all I had was this book as an ally!

Here I was on the road of former Yugoslavia, walking with my overweight backpack and walking stick. It did not take long before the first happy coincidence of my trip occurred. Upon my arrival in Ljubljana, the capital of Slovenia, the friends I met there told my that His Holiness the Dalai Lama was to come in a few days for a public meeting, the first one in this once tormented part of Europe. I decided to wait for his arrival and I attended his conference which was an intense moment of joy and training.

On my way back towards Croatia, I was more motivated than ever to discover this Tibetan culture which carried this priceless wisdom through the centuries! Once I arrived in Croatia, I decided to go on with my trip by bicycle toward Budapest, Hungary. I spent a few pleasant weeks there and was getting ready for the next step of my trip to Romania. One morning, a friend of mine convinced me to go to the open air baths, where I had already enjoyed a few pleasant afternoons. I did not really feel like going, but I went anyway.

I was walking on the path that lead to the main basin when I found myself behind a man with an impressive stature, and whose skin tone and hairstyle caught my attention. He was like a Native American chief with the look of eternal wisdom on his face. I could see that two Europeans accompanied him, and one of them was wearing a chain around his neck and a medal with a Tibetan character. Undoubtedly, this man was Tibetan.

At the same time, I discretely approached him and while he had a waterfall massage on his neck and asked him:

“Do you speak English?”

“Yes”, he answered while only turning his eyes towards me, which he kept partly closed because of the water.

“Are you Tibetan?”

“Yes, why?”

Then I had to justify these sudden questions. I told him I had a number of Tibetan friends in Paris and that when I saw him I thought he was Tibetan.

He kindly answered all my questions: “Where do you live? Why are you in Eastern Europe?”



What is your job?” He told me he lives in Italy but he travels a lot because he is a teacher.

We went on chatting while bathing and he asked me if I knew what this basin was over there. I told him that it was some kid’s game; a circular basin with a strong current that makes you spin around. He asked me if I wanted to go, I said yes and then he said, “I am coming with you”. Here we are in a place normally reserved for children. It was late in the day, so it was no issue. It was fun to see him carried by the stream. He was laughing a lot. Then we went to another basin with bubbles. There we started chatting and he told me a few stories.

Then I felt it was time to leave him alone. I thanked him for these few shared moments and before I forgot, I asked his name, which I did not know yet.

“Namkhai Norbu”, he said. “Namkhai What?”, I asked like an idiot.

“Namkhai Norbu.” “Ah! OK, then pleased to meet you, my name is Romain.”

I got out of the water and one of the Europeans who accompanied him came to introduce himself. He gave me a flyer presenting the venue of this professor, and explained to me that there was a 3-day seminar I could attend. I was very interested. I took the flyer and sincerely thanked him.

As I saw my new friend leave a chilly wind started to blow. I took the flyer that was given to me and read: “Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche, Buddhism and Dzogchen” As I watched him going away, I realized something incredible just happened to me - one of these occurrences that makes life so incredibly exciting and interesting. My legs were shaking a little.

Later I called my friends Tcheuni and Tenzin who own the Tibetan restaurant in Paris. I told them I met a Rinpoche in the pools of Budapest. Tcheuni asked me, “Which one?” I took the flyer and said, “Namkhai Norbu !” She was very impressed and said, “Oh! He is a great master, and he comes from our region in Tibet, Kham!”

“I am very lucky!”

“This is not luck”, she said, “it is good karma!”

I attended the seminar. There I met 500 very different people. At the end, after everyone had gone to shake his hand and exchange a few words with him, I got close to him and gave him my hand. He recognized me and pulled me towards him across the table that was in front of him. I was very surprised and even embarrassed with all this enthusiasm, and still greatly flattered. He said:

“ Ah! My friend, you came! What is your name again?”

“Romain”

“What?”

“ROMAIN”

“I am happy to see you again.”

After the greeting he took the cat I had carried with me for several weeks. He looked at him and said, “How is this little cat today?” Then he blew in the cat’s face for a few seconds before giving it back to me. Finally he gave me a small stone that someone had probably just given him and told me, “Good night, see you tomorrow”. I had just received my first teaching from my Dzogchen Master.

I actually never went to Romania as after this retreat in Budapest. I decided to follow him to Crimea, on the Black Sea. After that I went to Prague for three days and then ten days with Jim Valby for the Santi Maha Sangha Base Level Practice Retreat. After Prague I went to Merigar for one month to see Rinpoche again before his departure to Australia.

So, here is the story of how I met Chögyal Namkhai Norbu. This is an encounter I will never forget. After eight months on the road I am back home, and this is where I wrote these lines, ready to depart for Merigar very soon.

Born in central France on June 17th , 1976
One sister, 3 years older
2 lovely parents, a bit disappointed but confidant...)
1 dog and THE cat
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INTERNATIONAL GAKYIL NEWS

Here is the new, updated version of page 116 of the book “The Dzogchen Community” , Shang Shung Edizioni 2001

B. GUIDELINES ON RUNNING SANTI MAHA SANGHA COURSES by the International Gakyil with the collaboration of Jim Valby and Adriano Clemente

New version of July 2003
The first Santi Maha Sangha (SMS) students have now reached the third level of the nine levels of SMS Training. While proceeding along the path, SMS students learn many different practices and study different aspects of the Teaching, namely Dzogchen Semde, Longde and Mennagde.

Regarding the Base Level of Santi Maha Sangha:
Chögyal Namkhai Norbu has always put great emphasis on the fact that the study and practice of the SMS Base level is very important for all his disciples whether or not they want to proceed further with SMS studies. As long as SMS study and practice is done in small informal groups of practitioners, there are no further rules to observe.

On organizing a SMS Base Level Course:
At the conclusion of the February 2002 teacher’s training at IslaMargarita, Chögyal Namkhai Norbu appointed ten official SMSBase Level Teachers.Any Gakyil who wants to organize a SMS Base Level course can turn to one of these 10 practitioners (see list below) and ask them whether they would like to come and teach there.

The person invited to help with the SMS Base Teachings should be treated with respect. Travels should be organized well for them by the inviting Gakyil. Travel expenses and related expenses must be covered by the inviting Gakyil. SMS Base Teachers are not supposed to receive a certain payment per day like Vajra Dance or Yantra Yoga teachers. Nevertheless they should receive some offering from the inviting Gakyil. This also shows the respect for the work they are doing at the Retreat. Even though SMS Base Level Teachers can be invited directly, it is always kind to also inform Chögyal Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche of the invitation and all plans regarding SMS Base courses.

For further clarifications you can contact the SMS coordinators of the different Gars or the General Supervisors:

SMS General Supervisors:

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Jim Valby JimValby@compuserve.com

SMS Coordinators of the Gars (list updated July 2003):

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