

THE MIRROR

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Schedule Chögyal Namkhai Norbu 2005 - 2006



2005

BARCELONA, SPAIN

Oct. 4

Conference:

The Three Ways of Spiritual Liberation

Universitat Pompeu Fabra

Ramon Trias Fargas, 25-27

Oct. 5 - 9

25 Spaces of Samantabhadra

(Terma of Changchub Dorje).

(see page 5)

BRAZIL

Oct. 14

Public Talk, Introduction to Dzogchen

Oct. 15 - 19

Brazilian retreat: The main teaching will be A Guru Dragphur

Donwang and some other Dzogchen Instructions.

MARGARITA ISLAND, VENEZUELA

Nov. 4 - 8

Longsal Tregchöd retreat: The main teaching for this retreat is

Longsal Tregchöd.

Closed Web Cast

Nov. 25 - 29

Santi Maha Sangha Teacher training & Yantra Yoga and Vajra Dance

Dec. 2 - 8

Longsal Jñanadhakkini retreat: Teaching and practice of Gomadevi

Dec. 26 - Jan. 1

Longsal Longde retreat: The main teaching for this retreat is Longsal

Longde

Closed Web Cast

2006

Jan. 27 - Feb. 5

Santi Maha Sangha Base Teaching and Practice Retreat

Open Web Cast

Feb. 17 - 26

Longsal Saltong Lung teaching and practice retreat

Closed Web Cast

March 10 - 19

Retreat of Dzogchen Semlung Namkhache: Teaching and practice

Namkhache.

Open Web Cast

April 14 - 23

Tibetan Moxabustion teaching and application retreat

May 5 - 14

Ati Lam-ngon Nasjyong: A retreat of Longsal teaching Preliminaries

of the Path of Ati about the Purification of the Six Lokas, teaching

and practice.

Open Web Cast

FRANCE

May 18 - 22

Paris Retreat

May 26 - 28

Karmaling Retreat

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Under the canopy, Crimea, May to June, 2005

A BESEDIN

Ukraine with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu Kiev & Crimea

May 31 - June 12, 2005

by Andrei Besedin

In the beginning of February , we were absolutely happy to find out that Rinpoche agreed to give a public lecture in Kiev on his way to Crimea. Our Community consists of about thirty practitioners and more than a half received transmission only by video, so for many of us it was the first possibility to meet our Teacher in person.

We didn't advertise for the lecture, so before the event the Gakyil was a little worried if enough people would come to fill at least half of the 650 seat hall of the Artists' House in Kiev . But our worries were in vain, because about 800 people attended the lecture, filling the hall and sitting in the aisles. With much attention people listened to Chögyal Namkhai Norbu's explanation of the three paths: Sutra, Tantra and Dzogchen, and the essence of the Teaching. At the end, the Master answered numerous questions.

The next day Rinpoche took a flight to Simferopol from Terminal A of the Kiev Airport. On that occasion the Gakyil decided to rename the facility "the Terminal of White A". On the first days of June, in a small

recreational village called Malyi Mayak, practitioners who study Tibetan Medicine took a moxabustion course with our Master , and others studied the Vajra Dance from Ruslan Kim and Tania Pronicheva, under the supervision of Adriana dal Borgo. Most people came on the 7th of June to join the general retreat on "The Heart Essence of Guru Jnana Dakini" practice. A huge awning was spread above the old basketball playground that housed the two thousand and five hundred people listening to the Teacher and practicing together.

Such a great number of people is definitely a record for Rinpoche's retreats in post-Soviet territory - perhaps a world record for all the Community. The number of people interested in the teaching is increasing year after year. So, this June, in Malyi Mayak, experienced practitioners and newcomers gathered from Russia, Ukraine, Latvia, Poland and other countries.

During the retreat, Chögyal Namkhai Norbu gave the transmission of body, speech and mind of Jnana Dakini, the instructions on the short practice of Jnana

Dakini and the explanations on how to integrate the knowledge in our daily life. Besides the thuns of teaching and practice with the Master, beginners could also learn eight movements of Yantra Yoga with Fabio Andrico.

The location for the retreat was very nice, at the foot of the Crimea Mountains, on the shore of the Black Sea, which was surprisingly warm for the beginning of June. Everybody was able to relax and integrate with the beautiful surroundings.

Closer to the end of our retreat, after a Ganapuja, we had an auction for the ASIA foundation. Practitioners bar gained for beautiful thankas, a damaru from skulls, a kapala with the marks of Phowa practice, and other items. Very early in the morning of June 13, about two hundred people came to say goodbye to Rinpoche. A trip by car to Simferopol, a plane to Kiev , six hours in the airport - and Chögyal Namkhai Norbu flew to Rome, to continue transmitting knowledge of our real nature to all interested in the Dzogchen teaching.

C O N T E N T S



pg 2

Teaching
Chögyal Namkhai Norbu,
VAIDURYA'I CHUNPHYANGS
(THE GARLAND OF
LAPISLAZULI) OF PATRUL
RINPOCHE

Interview with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu
by Bruno Baumann

pg 3



pg 22



Yartse Hunting
Part II
by Daniel Winkler



I would like to welcome everybody to our five-day retreat here at Merigar and good day to all Dzogchen Community people near and far - also to all the people listening and interested in this retreat. Each time we do a retreat the most important aspect is our intention. When we do a retreat it doesn't mean that we learn everything and have realization, but for five days we can learn something and integrate what we learn into our daily life. Integrating what we learn into daily life is more important than learning in an intellectual way. Life is in time and time is passing; we don't realize it is passing and for that reason we are not able to integrate the teaching and what we have learned. If we learned something and do not integrate it, there is not very much benefit. If we have learned something and integrated it into our daily life, even if it is something very simple, it has great benefit. We need to have this kind of intention from the beginning.

In these days I will try to explain what we should do, what the teaching means and how it functions in our daily lives. In that way, maybe we can have benefit. Most people have probably read in the publicity that I am going to give a teaching by a famous Dzogchen Master, Patrul Rinpoche. It is a short teaching, very condensed, and it is the real sense of the Dzogchen Teaching. I am giving this teaching for a few reasons. It is not so easy to teach on books explaining the Dzogchen teachings. There are so many important teachings and books, so to choose one is not so easy. The reason I have chosen this particular teaching is because I had a dream related to it.

First of all, I received the *trilung* for all the teachings of Patrul Rinpoche in college. I chose this teaching because I had a dream in the year I went to Austria, Hungary and Crimea and I want to explain this dream. My dream took place in the part of east Tibet where we have a place called a Dreu Pelthang (*gre'u dpal thang*). Pelthang means a very, very vast place that takes two days of travel to reach. I had a dream I was at this place with some Western students. I was not sure if the place was in Tibet, but it seemed like a place I know. My students and I were doing the practice of outer *rushen* and we thought no one was there. After a little while, from very far, we saw two people coming and we were surprised. We stopped and waited for these people to arrive. One was a lady, quite old, a kind of nun, and the other a little younger but also old. These two women arrived and asked, "Are you students of Patrul Rinpoche?" I replied, "We are not really students of Patrul Rinpoche but we are following in the lineage of that teacher." The woman said, "Oh, I thought maybe you are his direct students. I want receive this teaching." She showed me a small book and I took the book and read just a little. (That is the book I am going to explain at this retreat.) Then I said, "Do you know if Patrul Rinpoche is somewhere here?" It seemed impossi-



Rinpoche at Merigar

R. PIRO

EXCERPTS FROM THE TEACHING ON VAIDURYA'I CHUNPHYANGS (THE GARLAND OF LAPISLAZULI) OF PATRUL RINPOCHE

DAY 1
MERIGAR JULY 1 – 5, 2005
WEB CAST RETREAT

ble he was there because there was nothing there - no nomads and no people. The lady said, "I heard that Patrul Rinpoche is somewhere here." I said, "I don't know and I have not heard that." She said, "So it is not so easy for us to find Patrul Rinpoche. Even if you are not direct students of Patrul Rinpoche, since you are following his lineage, could you explain this book?" I said, "I can explain a little if you are interested." She said, "Oh yes, thank you, we want to receive that explanation!" We stopped there and I tried to explain and the women were listening, and because we couldn't do *rushen* my students were listening too. I was explaining the book and then I woke up. After this dream, I became interested in this book and later I found it in Merigar and read it again. It is interesting and really explains the principle of the Dzogchen teaching. I thought to explain this book for the people who are interested and do a retreat. So, that is why I decided to give this teaching.

Patrul Rinpoche is a very important Dzogchen Master and a very special teacher, particularly for ordinary people. Ordinary people can learn and understand the teaching of Patrul Rinpoche. His more general writings are very easy for ordinary people - they can understand when they read them. Patrul Rinpoche lived a simple life. For example, once when he was traveling in north of eastern Tibet with the nomads he met an old lady, and that old lady asked, "I heard there is a teacher called Patrul Rinpoche, and I want to meet him at least once in

my lifetime. Do you know him? Have you heard of him?" Patrul Rinpoche said, "Oh yes, I have heard of him but I don't know him." "Oh," she said, "He is a fantastic teacher!" Patrul Rinpoche was always hiding in that way and living everywhere. Patrul Rinpoche said to the old woman, "I don't know Patrul Rinpoche very well, but I live in the same region." Then the lady said, "Next year I want to go and see him, maybe if you in that place we can meet again." The old woman was very kind to him and invited him to live in her big nomad tent. Patrul Rinpoche was happy and spent some days there, also doing some puja. Then he went away.

The next year the same old woman went to see Patrul Rinpoche in the place where he was giving teachings; many people came to this place in the summer time. Patrul Rinpoche gave teachings in an open place because there was no temple; he did not live in a monastery. He was a very simple man, so when he gave the teaching the local people made a kind of seat for him with small pieces of earth. When Patrul Rinpoche sat on this seat, he was very comfortable and gave a nice teaching. One day while he was giving teaching, he saw quite far from his seat that the old lady was arriving and he recognized her immediately. He stopped teaching and said, "Oh, we should take a break because a very important person is arriving." All the students were very surprised and Patrul Rinpoche came down from his seat and went to welcome this lady and the

lady recognized that it was Patrul Rinpoche. That is an example of how Patrul Rinpoche taught.

Another time, Patrul Rinpoche went to Palyul monastery because it was one of the biggest and most important Nyingmapa monasteries in Palyul. No one knew who he was because he seemed like an ordinary person. While there, Patrul Rinpoche went to the top of the monastery where people did personal retreats and found a small house. A monk was living in that small house, came out and went near to Patrul Rinpoche. Patrul Rinpoche said, "Oh, you are fantastic, being all alone here, you are a good practitioner. Can you give me some teaching?" The monk said, "Oh, I am trying to my best to do practice, but I couldn't give any teaching. I have no experience of teaching. I am doing practice of the explanation of *ngöndro* practice by Patrul Rinpoche (there is a famous book by Patrul Rinpoche on *ngöndro* called, something like, "The Words of the Teacher Samantabhadra"). Then Patrul Rinpoche said, "Oh, that is very interesting, can you teach me that?" The monk said, "Oh, I don't know, but if you like I can try." Patrul Rinpoche said, "Oh, I am really very interested!" The monk started to teach and every day Patrul Rinpoche went there for one hour to receive that teaching. He went for many days. Finally some people recognized him and told people that Patrul Rinpoche was in the Palyul monastery. Everyone was searching for him and discovered that he was going on the top of the mountain everyday. They asked the people doing retreats if they had seen Patrul Rinpoche and the monk who was giving teachings realized to whom he had been giving teachings. That day when Patrul Rinpoche went to receive the teachings, the monk shut the door and would not open it.

After the people discovered that Patrul Rinpoche was there, they begged him to come to the Palyul monastery and give teachings. He went to the Palyul monastery and the people prepared a big ritual ceremony. Patrul Rinpoche was not happy. He said, "Some serious people interested in the teachings of Patrul Rinpoche interrupted the very nice teachings I was receiving on the mountain top." The people in the monastery insisted that he give teachings and he remained one day and at night he escaped and disappeared. That is an example of how Patrul Rinpoche was. Patrul Rinpoche was really very studied and learned and was a very high quality practitioner, but he always lived his life in a very simple way. He would escape if the monasteries performed in a very elegant style. These are the stories of Patrul Rinpoche. It is important to know which kind of teacher wrote the books you are studying. Now you can have some idea.

In Dzogchen, knowledge from a book is not the only important knowledge. Our knowledge and understanding of Dzogchen, meaning our potentiality, is the most important. Dzogchen is not a book, not a tra-

dition and not a school. All this is relative in Dzogchen teaching. When we say the Dzogchen teaching, Dzogchen means how we can discover and get in that knowledge and that kind of teaching is called Dzogchen teaching. We know, for example, in the Buddhist tradition, we start with Sutra, Tantra and then arrive at Dzogchen. All these teachings, directly or indirectly, are related to Dzogchen. Dzogchen teachings mean being introduced to our real nature. This is something very important for us.

For example, if we live an ordinary life in modern society, we have an idea of why we need Dzogchen teachings. In modern society we need money. We cannot make money with Dzogchen. We can make money working. When we make money we can have everything - if we need a nice car we can buy it, or if we need a comfortable house we can buy or build it. When we have no money we have problems in society, so it seems money is more important than other things. People think they can't make money with Dzogchen, so why should they be interested?

Dzogchen is very important for our existence because we have body, speech and mind; we cannot overcome all problems of body, speech and mind through money. For example, if someone has an energy problem of disordered or damaged energy, that person can have many problems. That person can have both physical and mental problems that cannot be overcome with money. For that reason, people think and feel it is necessary we do meditation. Everybody can, more or less, have a little idea of what meditation means, but more importantly, the real sense of meditation is that we try to be in our real condition. We can have many problems if we are not in our real condition. We can have an antidote to overcome problems, but the possibility to globally overcome all problems doesn't exist. To overcome all problems we need to get in our real nature and be in our real condition.

For that reason we need the teaching, particularly a teaching like Dzogchen, from mind to nature of mind, direct introduction. When we learn that, then we have the possibility to get in our real nature. So you see, the Dzogchen teaching is useful for all. People have different ways of seeing Dzogchen teaching or knowledge. Sometimes people go very much in a traditional way; people have learned to use some kinds of prayers or practices linked to Vajrayana or Tantra and apply methods and pujas related to Tantrism.

I have heard some people saying they like Dzogchen teaching but don't feel to do rituals. Rituals are not Dzogchen teaching, but in the Dzogchen teaching there is no limitation. So if there are some ritual practices within the Dzogchen teaching, we apply without limitation. Sometimes ritual practices can be very useful, for example, in relationship to our attitude in daily life; we live with dualistic vision in our physical body and our physical body needs

continued on the next page

to move. We cannot remain like a dead body for many hours; movement is necessary for our physical body. In the same way our voice, our energy level, needs movement, and we use our voice by singing, chanting and talking. In the lower Tantra system called *nyung ne*, *nyung* means diminishing things like talking or eating. If we do *nyung ne* in a perfect way, one day we eat and one day we don't eat; two days makes one pair of *nyung ne*. When we eat we can talk, but on the same day we are not eating, we cannot talk. We can only chant prayers and mantras and not talk in an ordinary way. Then we feel a kind of sacrifice because we like to talk, that is an example of our conditioning. For example, there are practices where we are in total silence for weeks, but we can't apply these kinds of practices without preparation. That is an example of our real condition, so in that case we are dealing with movement, chanting, singing and doing pujas, etc., and that is how we integrate our attitude in the practice. Of course, that is not the principle of Dzogchen teaching. Some people think if we do Dzogchen practice we need always to do Ganapujas. You can always do a Ganapuja, but that is not the *principle* of Dzogchen

teachings. The principle of Dzogchen is being in your real nature. If you are in your real nature, in your aspect of body, speech and mind, your application is relative and for that reason there are no limitations. This is important to know. Otherwise, if we explain and use many ritual practices, people think that is Dzogchen.

If you want to learn Dzogchen seriously you must first understand what limitation is. We are always limiting ourselves, and even if we receive very nice and beautiful teachings to help us liberate from limitations, the first thing we do is limit that teaching. We say, "Oh, this is our teaching, our teacher taught this teaching, this is my practice, this is our way of practice". If you limit in any way it is negative, so it is not necessary to limit anything. If you don't want to limit, first you must discover what limitation is. The first principle of Dzogchen is going beyond limitations, any kind of limitation. Any kind of practice you learn to go beyond limitation will produce positive fruit and create great benefit.

*Transcribed and edited
by Naomi Zeitz*

INVESTIGATING THE ANCIENT KINGDOM OF SHANG SHUNG BRUNO BAUMANN INTERVIEWS CHÖGYAL NAMKHAÏ NORBU AT MERIGAR

Austrian-born Bruno Baumann is an award-winning writer and photojournalist who lives in Munich, Germany. He is a contributing editor to National Geographic Magazine and author of numerous travel adventure books, trekking guides and a popular lecture series. In June 2004, using whitewater rafts he led a European expedition into the Sutlej canyon in western Tibet to reach the ancient Kingdom of Shang Shung. He interviewed Chögyal Namkhai Norbu about his own research into Shang Shung and about his visit there in 1988.

Bruno Baumann: Could you tell us about your own research on Shang Shung and why you consider the area of Khyung Lung to be important?

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu: In general in Tibetan history there are many important places related to the ancient kingdom of Shang Shung because the Shang Shung kings of the past lived in different places such as Guge, Khyung Lung and many others. But we consider Khyung Lung to be a little more interesting because it is the place where the last king (of Shang Shung) lived. So it is more recent for us even though it was at the time of Srongtsen Gampo, which was not so very near. Since the history of Shang Shung is very ancient, it was for that reason that I went mainly to Khyung Lung to do research. I know most Western professors have studied and made the area of Guge very famous, but it was not considered to be particularly important in the past. It was related to the history of Shang Shung and scholars such as Lotsawa

Rinchen Zangpo and Atisha considered that the last Tibetan kings, for example, Lha Lama Yeshe O



lived there before the union of Tibet. There were many ancient cultures during that period, there were characteristic paintings of that period and so on, so they considered Guge to be very important. But when we study and go a little deeper into the history of Shang Shung, while Guge and many other places are important, Khyung Lung is more interesting because it is related to history. During our trip there we saw many caves and understood that in ancient times the Shang Shung kings lived there in the winter. But I think that during that period, they didn't always live in a fixed palace such as the Potala. Although they stayed mainly in a stable place during the winter, in the summer they moved to different places and did a lot of activities. I also think that the weather and general situation in that part of the country is a little different

from what it was in the past because the situation doesn't correspond very much. We visited a lot of these caves and we understood that even when the last Shang Shung king no longer lived there, some Bönpo groups continued to live there for many years. Later on there were Buddhists. For example, at the time of La Lama Yeshe O, there were some Buddhists living there who were following the teachings of Lochen Rinchen Zangpo and then later, some followers of the Sakyapa tradition. There were Kagyupa and Nyingmapa practitioners who treated it more like a refuge place because it was no longer that characteristic of the last ancient residence of Shang Shung. Finally there was a kind of small Gelugpa monastery there. We discovered that because in one of the caves there were small remnants of books, and even though not a single book

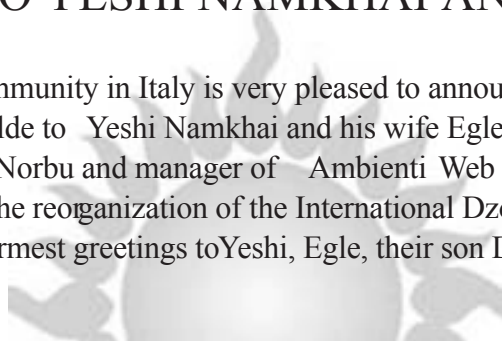
was intact, we could see in which period different kinds of schools and traditions were there. The books show this very clearly. Later, during the Cultural Revolution, they did not permit the Gelugpa community to continue living there and after, when things became a little freer, they rebuilt the Gelugpa monastery in a nearby town because it wasn't so comfortable to return to the caves that were completely empty. The way in which these kings and their functionaries lived in Khyung Lung was characteristic of the kingdom of Shang Shung; in Khyung Lung, Ladakh, which now belongs to India, Guge and Purang and other areas, there were many of these kinds of places where people lived in an unstable way. Here we are referring to a very ancient period in which the Bönpo tradition

in a Buddhist way. Modern Bönpo have taken much from Buddhism and have almost lost the ancient Bönpo tradition. In that period there were the ancient Bönpo who were related to the eighteen famous kings of Shang Shung. Some of these kings lived in Khyung Lung; it was their residence and later on they continued to live there.

ChNN: I want to thank you very much for your interest and research and attempt to discover

BORN TO YESHI NAMKHAÏ AND EGLE

The Dzogchen Community in Italy is very pleased to announce the happy event of the birth of Matilde to Yeshe Namkhai and his wife Egle. Yeshe, the son of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu and manager of Ambienti Web Consulting, is currently involved in the reorganization of the International Dzogchen Community. We send all our warmest greetings to Yeshe, Egle, their son Diego and their new daughter Matilde.



explains that there were eighteen famous kings of Shang Shung who lived in different regions. It is a kind of rough history. In this period Tibet didn't even exist. The land and people were there, but it wasn't called Tibet and there was no Tibetan king.

that. It is something that is very important for ancient Tibetan history because at the time of the last Tibetan king, the kingdom of Tibet existed and also the kingdom of Shang Shung. When I wrote and taught about Tibetan history, I advised all my students

I was Tibetan and I am still Tibetan even though I am an Italian citizen; even though I live here [in the West], I always feel I have a kind of responsibility for maintaining and helping Tibetan culture.

This came much later. The first Shang Shung king mentioned goes back to very ancient times. Historically, the first Shang Shung king was more or less at the time of Tonpa Shenrab, the founder of the Bön tradition. The Bön of that time and the Bön of today are a little different. The characteristic of ancient Bön was knowledge of different kinds of medicine and astrology, rituals for having good crops and eliminating illness. It was related to the countryside, to the people, the local guardians and there was a kind of interdependence within their knowledge and they studied very much in their own way, not

that it was not enough to study Tibetan history in a traditional way, because in the traditional way they start with the first Tibetan king and from this time to the time of Srongtsen Gampo there were something like thirty, thirty-one or thirty-two generations of Tibetan kings. They say that during this period there was no form of writing and no forms of civilization that writing and civilization only existed after the time of Srongtsen Gampo. So how could they have governed the country? They governed it with Drung, Deu and Bön. These three were the main means of government, even though they had no form of writing. Why do they say 'Drung'? They say 'Drung' because even if there was no form of writing, they always spoke about history from the time Nyatri Tsenpo, the first Tibetan king, to Srongtsen Gampo. It is not a very rich history, but there is some information about this period. They say that this (historical information) was passed from generation to generation through memory, so this is called Drung because they say there was no writing. 'Deu' means signs or a way to understand and refers to different aspects of divination or aspects related to astrology. Even if there was no writing, they used that knowledge. 'Bön' refers to the kind of situation that exists: for example, if someone is ill, overcoming that problem, if there is no prosperity in the country, how to develop prosperity, etc. There were twelve different kinds of Bön that developed, particularly in Tibet. Even if there was no writing, they used these things and governed. There was no real explanation of Drung, Deu and Bön. It says only that they [the Tibetans] were governed by Drung, Deu and Bön. Everyone who talks about Tibetan history repeats that - Drung, Deu and Bön governed that way from the time of Nyatri Tsenpo to Srongtsen Gampo. I have done research on Drung, Deu and Bön and researched the twelve characteristics of Bön to help people understand that the idea that there was no writing at that time does not correspond. Later I studied Tibetan history,

continued on next page

and hoped my research and study would become something stable; a base for people interested in learning about Tibetan history. I was Tibetan and I am still Tibetan, even though I am an Italian citizen. Even though I live here, I always feel I have a kind of responsibility for maintaining and helping Tibetan culture. For that reason, it is not sufficient for me simply to write a nice book on history. I want to show something very important - Tibetan culture is very ancient and has value at an international level. For that reason I did all this research to explain that in the second epoch, during the time of the kings of Shang Shung up to the last king, the Tibetan kingdom was composed of two main kingdoms. Others were more like tribes, some stronger, others weaker, but in most parts of Tibet it was that way in that time period.



BB: The Bön religion practiced today seems very similar to Buddhism. Was the Bön religion like this in the past?

ChNN: For me, ancient Bön was very different. Today, for example, all Bönpos are very similar to Buddhists and there is no difference between Bönpo and Buddhist. But in the real sense we say Bön and Bende*. Then there are a lot of discussions and we never consider that Bön and Bende is the same thing. Today Bönpos are considered to be Buddhist. It is not the same as ancient Bönpo. For example, in ancient Bönpo, there was no development of the Vinaya style monks, like today. But, for example, in ancient lineages like the Shang Shung Nyengyud and Shang Shung Meri, both very ancient lineages, there are no monks. But there were monks later when Bön was reformed.

BB: What was the effect on Bön of the introduction of Buddhism into Tibet?

ChNN: When Guru Padmasambhava arrived in Tibet, Tibetans were practitioners of Bön. They had a very strong Bön attitude, and for that reason, Shantarakshita had not succeeded in teaching them Buddhism and had gone back to Nepal. Then they invited Guru Padmasambhava. When Guru Padmasambhava arrived, he started to teach Vajrayana, explaining mainly about the real condition of the elements and energy. Then many Bönpos became interested, because ancient Bönpo is based on the principle of the five elements. However, the way that the five elements are considered in ancient Bön and modern Bön and Buddhism is not the same, so at the time of Guru Padmasambhava it was difficult to spread the Vajrayana teaching. For that reason, Guru Padmasambhava did not destroy or eliminate many of the Bön rituals and attitudes, but transformed them into Vajrayana style. Guru Padmasambhava kept the way of seeing as it was. That is why, I think, many Westerners call Tibetan Buddhism 'Lamaism'. Tibetans don't like this name very much, but the reason for this name is because the characteristics of Tibetan Buddhism compared to the characteristics of Mahayana and Hinayana Buddhism practiced in south Asia and in Japan are very different.

BB: What do you consider to be the origin of the culture and language of Shang Shung?

ChNN: Originally, in ancient Tibetan history, in the Bönpo tradition, they say that everything originates from the egg of existence. Then from this egg comes 'lha', 'lu', 'nyen'. That means 'dewa', 'naga' and 'nyen' beings of the 'masang' (class of beings). So then from the 'nyen' beings spread many different types of human beings. And among them they say that originally there were 'miu dung drug'. There were six brothers from the same origin. In the history of Lang kyipoti seru, there was one egg and from it came forth six brothers. From these six brothers arose six kinds of tribes, one of which was called Khyung or dra (sbra). That is the generation of Shang Shung. The others were in central Tibet and east Tibet. Then different kinds of

tribes developed, each with their own language and their own attitude. That is why the Shang Shung language and language of central Tibet are not the same.

BB: Was there any type of writing at the time of Shang Shung?

ChNN: Officially we say that Thonmi Sambhota invented Tibetan writing because Srongtsen Gampo said that Tibetans needed their own writing and language and went to India to learn Sanskrit and then invented Tibetan writing. Tibetans consider that to be the source of written Tibetan. In the real sense, some history records including Buddhist history, say that



a kind of writing was used before the time of Srongtsen Gampo and that it originated in Shang Shung. Historically, Tonpa Shenrab, the founder of the Bön tradition and the first historical king of Shang Shung invented Shang Shung writing. That refers back to a very ancient time. They invented a form of writing called 'mar' (smar) which,



in the Shang Shung language, means 'dewa', so the 'writing of the dewa' (gods). And Tibetans continued to use that language until the new writing was developed at the time of Srongtsen Gampo. Today, for example, we have two different kinds of Tibetan writing: one is cursive and the other is 'uchen', which we use for block printing. But the origin of 'ume' or cursive writing is, I believe, from Shang Shung, and did not originate from the writing that was invented by Thonmi Sambhota because the way of writing is different. For example, when we use Tibetan 'uchen', we always write from left to right: first there is a kind of head, and then we develop the written letters. But when we write in 'ume', or cursive writing, it is the opposite - we write from right to left. That is different, easier and much quicker. This is called cursive. But when we write from left to right, we have to write, stop, and even if you can write quickly, it is never as fast as cursive writing. Therefore I think these two sources are very different.

BB: What is your opinion of the popular western idea of a

Shangri-La?

ChNN: We have an explanation of Shambhala, an explanation of Oddiyana - all these ancient places. We have very nice explanations and they are considered to be very important and for that reason today a lot of people think that Oddiyana and Shambhala are something like paradise. So for that reason maybe they invented something like Shangri-La as a wonderful dimension. I think that is possible.

BB: Since the Bön religion of Shang Shung is older than Buddhism; can it be possible that the Buddhist concept of Shambhala is inspired by the Bön concept of Olmolungri?

ChNN: I don't know which concept is more ancient, but Olmolungri was originally considered to be the place where Tonpa Shenrab taught and many things developed there in that period. That place was called Olmolung or Olmolungri. But later it developed a concept of something like Shambhala.

BB: I learned recently that in the Bön Gumpa Gurugem, located at the gateway of the Sutlej Canyon, a Shang Shung statue was discovered which is quite similar to ancient Indian statues from Latin America. Is it possible that Shang Shung was not only the source of Tibetan culture as you wrote in one of your books, but also the source of ancient Indian cultures?

ChNN: Some years ago there was an article in the Peking People's Journal saying that some Chinese researchers had gone to an area near Kailash, they didn't say Khyung Lung, and in some places they found Shang Shung writing on rocks. I didn't see any photographs, only the article. Maybe they actually found something like that. When we were traveling in the direction of Khyung Lung, at one place we stopped to eat, drink and rest a little, there was a rock nearby and I went over and saw many figures and some writing on the rock that were very ancient. It looked like something I had seen before; the writing of the

Aboriginal people on rocks in Australia. So there may be a possibility to find other writing and even objects there.

BB: Which sources did you use in your own research? Did you find any Bönpo texts, which included historical data on Shang Shung or something about the ancient form of Bön practiced at the time of Shang Shung?

ChNN: I couldn't find very much in the official Bönpo books, such as their history books. But when I was doing research, I found many things in the Bönpo rituals. For example, the Bönpo still use many of their ancient rites and there is a part of every rite called 'mang' (smrang) in which they explain a kind of short history. These historical explanations are very useful for understanding how ancient Bönpo really was.

A question from the audience: How can we approach the study of Tibetan history in the future?

ChNN: We should be more aware of how the real situation is, not only going after 'official' histories, because official books and histories change according to the situation, so we cannot put much faith in them. But we should look at the concrete situation and try to do research. I think that is very important. When I was working at the university, at the beginning, when I spoke about Shang Shung many people laughed. They said that it was only a kind of legend; it didn't exist. That is an example of how histories change according to the situation, because it has been officially documented that way. Then when we are a little aware and do some research, we can discover many things. That way in the future, I hope very much that Tibetans and particularly Westerners, scholars, and people doing research, will try to find something more concrete and develop this kind of research. I think that that is very important.

* *Bende in Sanskrit Vandyā means a Buddhist*
Transcribed and edited by Liz Granger

Photographs by A. Siedlecki / ISS, 2005 ©

These photographs were made during the expedition led by ChNN to Khyung Lung and the Kingdom of Shang Shung, in Western Tibet during the autumn of 1988.

ITALY

June 9 - 18

Merigar

Longsal Nadjyang of Tawa

Teaching of the Main Points of the
Conceptual Mind,
Closed Web Cast

View Totally Beyond the

BHUTAN

June 30

BANGKOK

August 4 - 6

JAPAN

August 10 - 14

(Tentative Retreat)

TAWAIN

August 18 – 22

(Tentative Retreat)

SINGAPORE

August 25 – September 3

Longsal Ati'i Gongpa Ngotrod Retreat

Closed Web Cast

AUSTRALIA

Caloundra

September 27 – October 1

Longsal Yeshe Zangthal:

Upadesha on All-Penetrating Wisdom

Closed Web Cast

NAMGYALGAR

October 9 - 15

Jnana Dhakini Teaching Retreat of Longsal Gomadevi

SANTI MAHA SANGHAOctober 24 -26 Santi Maha Sangha 1st Level ExamOctober 27 - 31 Santi Maha Sangha 2nd Level Training

November 10 – 17

Nadjyang of Tawa Retreat

The Main Points of the View Totally Beyond the Conceptual Mind.

Closed Web Cast

November 24 – 26

Teaching in Sydney

(To be announced)

ARGENTINA

December 8 – 19

Buenos Aires Retreat

(To be announced)

December 26 – January 1

Ati'i Gongpa Ngotrod

Upadesha of the Introduction to the State of Ati

Closed Web Cast

**CHÖGYAL NAMKHAI NORBU IN BARCELONA, SPAIN
OCTOBER 2005****A CONFERENCE on****“THE THREE WAYS OF SPIRITUAL LIBERATION”****with CHÖGYAL NAMKHAI NORBU****October 4, 2005 at 19h**

Place: Universitat Pompeu Fabra

Ramon Trias Fargas, 25-27

08005 BARCELONA

Tel. 93 542 17 00 – Fax 93 5

Public transport: Subway L4 to Ciutadela stop or Bus n. 41 to C/ Marina stop

Spanish Dzogchen Community: www.dzogchen.org.es**DZOGCHEN RETREAT IN BARCELONA, SPAIN****OCTOBER 5 - 9, 2005****with CHÖGYAL NAMKHAI NORBU****THE 25 SPACES OF SAMANTABHADRA**

Terma of Rigdzin Changchub Dorje

http://www.dzogchen.org.es/dzogchen_retreat_in_spain.htm**Vajra Dance** course of The Three Vajra (OM A HUM) with Adriana dal Borgo (Internacional instructor) & **Yantra Yoga** beginners course with Fabio Andrico (International instructor)**REGISTRATION AND INFORMATION**

On-line at the Cultural Association of the Dzogchen Community in Spain web page:

www.dzogchen.org.es

At La Mar Bella: day 5th from 10-13 h. and from 15-16,30 h., next days from 8,30-9,30 h. and from 12,30-13,30 h.

More information: kungaa@wanadoo.es and info@dzogchen.org.es**ADVICE**

At the Dzogchen Community of Spain web-page you will find a lot of updated information on accommodation and transport, with a wide selection of hostels and guest houses in the centre of the city, well connected with C.E.M. La Mar Bella. Transports work well, and a card with 10 trips is only 6,30 ¤.

We kindly request to be at the main hall, at least, half an hour before the teachings start. We advice to bring cushions for the teachings, comfortable clothes to practice Yantra Yoga and fine socks to practice Vajra Dance.

It is not allowed to film the teachings, and to record is only allow with consumer pocket-size recording equipment and only from where they are seated.

Although, usually at the beginning of October Barcelona weather is still warm, we advice to bring a light raincoat.

All of you will enjoy Barcelona, it is a joy-full and well organized city. WELCOME!!!

*Dzogchen Community in Spain****Budapest with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu
Introduction of the Dzogchen Teaching and the Longsal Ngöndro****by Artur Skura*

The retreat in Budapest gathered a large number of practitioners, especially from Central Europe – Austria, Slovakia, Czech Republic, Poland, Germany and others. We were happy to live and sleep in a Buddhist college; I wasn't the only one surprised to learn some time ago that there were Buddhist schools and institutes in Hungary, with years of tradition.

Rinpoche was teaching in a big hall in a Buddhist Center. Before Rinpoche started to teach, there was a long introduction, presenting him as a great master and incarnation of Adzom Drugpa. Rinpoche alluded to that some time later, while explaining the Nirmanakaya level, asking us not to follow the titles of “reincarnations” and not to think they are always true, because very often these are just titles. “You see, at the beginning someone introduced me as an incarnation of Adzom Drugpa, who was a famous master. So you thought ‘Oh, Namkhai Norbu must be very important, because he is an incarnation of a great master.’ But I don't see it that way. I just had a good fortune to meet a good master of Dzogchen, receive transmission, and

*Rinpoche teaching in Budapest*

A SKURA

tion.

The official topic of the retreat was the practice of the Purification of Six Lokas combined with Vajrasattva belonging to the Longsal cycle, which is contained in the 3rd volume of the Longsal Teachings. Rinpoche transmitted the *lung* to the root text and explained how to do the practice. In fact Rinpoche was introducing our real nature, using several examples. The single example of the mirror was used in two ways: first, as a metaphor of Dzogchen point of view, which is like looking at oneself rather than outside (this is how Changchub Dorje introduced the view of Dzogchen to Rinpoche), and second – not looking in a mirror, but being the mirror itself, is an example of being

through this, to gain some knowledge. That's why now I can share this knowledge with others and bring some benefit”. Rinpoche also took some time to explain that even if Dzogchen is considered to belong to Buddhist teachings, it was taught much earlier. Moreover, when someone is practicing Dzogchen, they can use both Buddhist and non-Buddhist methods, as long as these methods are helping them in reaching realization.

in one's own nature. At that point, all our thoughts, emotions, and confusion – all is at the level of reflections and cannot influence us in any way. And when we are looking dualistically, there is a huge difference between a Buddha and a pig, whereas when we go beyond dualism, there's no difference between pure and impure vision – both are reflections. If someone understands that, there is no problem of impure vision, because it's recognized as our qualification. Rinpoche ended the first day saying, “OK, today I opened a great road before you. Tomorrow I will show you how to ride”.

As we had some time before the end of the teaching, Rinpoche asked us if we have some questions. Of course – there were plenty. One person asked about visualization – she had had an operation and was feeling her body very strongly, because of physical pain, and it was disturbing her practice of visualization. Rinpoche answered that even if we don't have any physical problems we still have a strong feeling of our human body when we are transforming, and that's why many methods of completion stage are used – to integrate the visualization in our existence in a more concrete way. Someone else started a question by saying “The mind is pure...” but Rinpoche immediately interrupted: “Who said that?” The person asked, “I said that”. Rinpoche laughed: “You said, but I didn't say the mind is pure”.



REPORT ON THE THIRD MEETING OF THE TIBETAN TRANSLATOR TRAINING

by Saadet Arslan

The Tibetan Translator Training, initiated by Rinpoche, manifested due to a generous donation from the Shang-Shung Institute, Austria, in 2003. The aim of the project is to give further training to people who have a basic knowledge of the Tibetan language so they gain qualifications to properly translate Tibetan texts into Western languages. We are around twelve people from various countries who come together once a year for a period of six weeks to collectively work on a text selected by Rinpoche. Our tutor, Elio Guarisco, supervises us with competence acquired during the last two decades of studying and translating Tibetan literature. From time to time, Adriano Clemente drops in to share his knowledge about Tibetan written language and especially early Dzogchen texts where he is certainly one of the rare experts worldwide. The first text we dealt with in Merigar, in the summer 2003, was a new edition of *Nascere e Vivere* called "Birth, Life and Death". Rinpoche had originally prepared this book for the first international Conference on Tibetan Medicine in Venice, 1983. The section on "Life" has been extended in the new version and a further section on "Death & Dying" has been added. This very interesting book concludes by showing the link between healthy living and the practice of Dzogchen. It is translated now into English and should be available by October this year. Thanks to the multilingual translator group this publication will be soon also available in many different languages.

Last year, in the second round of the training, we met in Tashigar Norte, Margherita Island. At that time, Rinpoche suggested to study an ancient Dzogchen Semde Tantra called "The Marvelous Primordial State" (*rMad du byung ba*). This text belongs to the twenty-one fundamental Semde texts, which the great Tibetan translator Vairocana, who lived in the eighth century and is famous as one of the first seven monks ordained in Samye, introduced to Tibet together with the Tantras and Instructions of the Longde series after getting the transmission of the teachings of the lineage of Oddiyana from Shri Simha. "The Cuckoo of Rigpa" (*Rig pa'i khu byug*) as well as "The Supreme Source - The All Creating King" (*Kun byed rgyal po*) belong to this subdivision of the twenty-one texts. Recently, in Los Angeles, Rinpoche taught another Semde Instruction out of the twenty-one Semde texts called "The flight of the great Garuda" (*Khyung chen lding ba*).

This training is a fantastic opportunity to come together and have access to these wonderful sources of wisdom. In the whole world only a few have this possibility, and even among Tibetans, not many read or understand these texts.

In this third year of the training we looked at another Semde Tantra called "The Sky-like Vast Expanse" (*mKa' mnyam klong gi rgyud*) and are facing the same difficulties as last year; it is written in poetic style, the grammatical structure is not easy, the text contains some terms you cannot find in dictionary...

ies...but the magic is that the point of view of these texts is the "state" that is directly speaking to you. You "hear" Rinpoche teaching and the transmission is alive!

Sometimes the participants, who bring different capacities and come from different backgrounds, like professors, students or self-taught, are pondering over the same textual problems ("who is who? where is the subject? what is meant by 'existing through non-existing'???"), but through exchanging and discussing, somehow we come to some conclusion and if not, there is still the precious presence of the Master to consult for clarification. That is why we try to meet in a place where Rinpoche is staying. Since the first year, most of us improved our capabilities in Tibetan reading and translating very much due to the strict learning schedule: two sessions a day, in the morning two hours working on our own with notebooks endowed with electronic Tibetan dictionaries and trying to get to a provisional translation and afterwards there is (are) the common hour(s) in which, one after another reads his or her version and communicates his or her understanding of the lines. The same procedure happens after the lunch break and we are worn out mentally, so to speak beyond mind, so that some of us were looking forward to the end of the day filled with Vajra Dance and/or playing Bagchen for some grounding. Sentences like *"overcoming the net of concepts ignorance is subdued into Rigpa"* or *"wherever the garuda flies that is the dimension of space, wherever the fish swims that is the depth of the ocean, whatever thought arises that is the ultimate dimension, wherever the mind looks at that is the expanse of wisdom"* or *"the nature of mind is primordial beyond place and reference point, it is beyond change and transition, it cannot be examined by the mind; it cannot be sought and accomplished; it is beyond failure and obscuration, beyond virtue and non-virtue"*

compensate any hardship one undertakes like sacrificing time, costs, one's annual holiday, just to take part in the training. The training is ego challenging because twelve individuals means twelve opinions concerning one sentence! Turning away from interpretation and moving towards the literal words written, though often the grammatical interconnections are missing due to the poetic meter, that is the art of translation, of getting to the real meaning and another lesson we were taught in the "training of Tibetan translators".

After our pre-work on the Semde Tantras, "The Marvelous Primordial State" and "The Sky-like Vast Expanse", the advanced translator trio of the Dzogchen Community - Adriano Clemente, Elio Guarisco and Jim Valby - are going to work more precisely on them so that hopefully in two to three years they will be published and available for the general public.

The Shang-Shung Institute, Austria, which is organizing the training, has expenses like room rental fee, salary for the tutor and scholarships for those in need. As the initial donation, which brought this pro-

ject into life, runs out after three years, we are a little worried about the continuation of the project. Presently we are looking forward to meet again next year to explore another text that will sooner or later reach all who share the same interest in the Tibetan wisdom heritage.

For further information please contact Oliver Leick at office@ssi-austria.at or check the web site at: www.ssi-austria.at.

Saadet Arslan met Rinpoche in 1993, has participated in the Translators' Training since its inception and is a student of Tibetan Studies at the University in Bonn, Germany.

IMPORTANT UPDATE FROM SHANG -SHUNG INSTITUTE, ITALY

Much to our regret, Doctor Nida has repeatedly manifested his will to stop the collaboration with the ISS, and the Institute has decided to accept his resignation. Consequently, the ISS Managing Board is temporarily forced to cancel all the courses in progress in Italy and all over the world.

In order to fulfill the expectations of all the students who have spent so much time and energy in Tibetan Medicine and correlated subjects and in order to expand the activity of the Medicine Department, the ISS is happy to announce that at the end of October the ISS will start a new collaboration with Doctor Ugyen, a medical doctor and astrologer. We also have fully qualified, after a five years' curriculum of intensive study, eight instructors of first level Ku Nye who are authorized to hold courses wherever we received invitations from. We are planning to resume our didactic activities from 2006.

The Managing Board of the ISS

Shang-Shung Institute Austria KA-TER TRANSLATION PROJECT

The main activity of Shang-Shung Institute, Austria, is the KA-TER TRANSLATION PROJECT, initiated by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu in the summer of 2004. The Ka-Ter Translation Project is divided into three initiatives.

1. The three main experts regarding translations of sacred Dzogchen texts within the Dzogchen Community: Elio Guarisco, Jim Valby and Adriano Clemente, work intensively on the Dzogchen Tantra Translation Project. Most of their work is done individually daily. Once or twice a year Elio, Jim and Adriano meet for some weeks to work collectively on their translations. In that way, it should be guaranteed that these timeless wisdom texts of Tibetan masters, which were preserved by the Tibetans, are correctly and precisely translated into Western languages.
2. About fifteen qualified translators from all over the world take part in the Training for Translators from Tibetan, which started in 2003. (See article on page) Under the supervision of Elio Guarisco, the translators have the unique possibility to deepen their knowledge and understanding of ancient Dzogchen texts and how to bring their essential meaning into a Western language. This work is very intensive as the translators not only meet for about 6 – 8 weeks every year but also work individually throughout the whole year on their translations.
3. The preservation of the Tantras of Changchub Dorje, the master of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, is another initiative and collaboration with the Shang-Shung Institute of America. These precious texts are being preserved in every possible way - in digital as well as in paper form – and are put in an archive in Tibet and in the libraries of the various Dzogchen Communities and the Shang-Shung Institutes.

Besides enormous individual effort of work and dedication to Tibetan Culture, all these initiatives also need large financial resources. In the last months many people have given donations and I really want to thank everybody for their contribution and support.

In order to have some income for our work we now offer you something very special. Due to the generous and kind support of Steve Landsberg, we were able to procure two wonderful statues, one fantastic one of Garab Dorje and one wonderful statue of Dorje Legpa. We will *not* do a kind of auction, so the first person that decides to get one of these statues will get it.

Short description:

Garab Dorje:

It is fully gold plated with painted face.

It is 13 inches tall (33 cm) and 9 inches wide (23,5 cm) on a deer skin base.

Please have a look at:

<http://www.ssi-austria.at/ssi-engl/shop-engl-garabdorje.htm>

Dorje Legpa:

Height: 14,5 inch or 35,5 cm

Width: 11 inch or 27 cm

It is excellently carved and has a gold plated face.

Please have a look at:

<http://www.ssi-austria.at/ssi-engl/shop-engl-dorjelegpa.htm>

The regular price for the statue of Garab Dorje is 1000 Euro and that

of the statue of Dorje Legpa is 950 Euro.
As these two statues were bought for reasons of fundraising for the Ka-Ter Translation project, we raise the price with 20 %. So, the first person that is willing to offer 1200 Euro for this beautiful statue of Garab Dorje and/or 1140 Euro for the statue of Dorje Legpa will get the statue. The mailing costs to your address are not included in this price. The payment can be done by credit card or by bank transfer .
In case that you cannot afford these wonderful statues but you want to contribute to our activities please feel free to use this web safe site: <https://ssl13.inode.at/ssi-austria.at/creditcardoffering.htm>

Thank you very much for your interest and your support,

Very best wishes,
Oliver F. Leick
Shang-Shung Institute Austria
Email: office@ssi-austria.at
Web: www.ssi-austria.at

new web site shang-shung institute, usa

The Shang-Shung Institute in America is happy to announce the upgrade of its web site <http://www.shangshung.org> to reflect the Institute's development effort and most recent activities. Among the new features you will notice, in addition to a renovated graphic layout, is first of all a more comprehensive Tibetan Medicine section. In it, multiple Learning Options are described, including the Institute's Residential Program taught by Dr. Phuntsog Wangmo, the Institute's in-residence certified Tibetan Doctor graduated from the Lhasa University School of Traditional Medicine. The web site now provides you with all the current information and details pertinent to the program, including the aspects related to the Accreditation and Certification in the USA: issues that the Institute considers of primary importance to bring the residential program to the level of a fully recognized professional career opportunity. This aspect is the flip side of the growing effort to grow the Institute into a fully credited education body. On the user-friendly side, we have added the possibility allows to complete an online application form through the web site secure server, as well as downloading forms and brochure in PDF format. The online shop is also being enhanced with Tibetan Medicine related products, including the Institute's unique 80-hour/MP3-formatted *Foundation Course in Tibetan Medicine [3 levels]* by Dr. Thubten Phuntsok [recorded from lectures presented at the Institute from 1998 to 2001] and the 50-hour/MP3-formatted *Foundation Course in Tibetan Medicine* by Dr. Phuntsog Wangmo [levels 1 & 2 only] [based on materials presented to the Institute in the years 2001 and 2002]. These 2 non-available-elsewhere audio courses are part of a Tibetan Medicine Audio Series that is further completed by 10-hour/MP3-formatted *The Theory and Practice of Moxibustion* by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, based on teachings on this ancient healing technique that utilizes heat and herbs, given in November 1983 and the *An Introduction to Tibetan Medicine* also by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, based on an extensive lecture given in Bangkok. This material is truly special and represents the first and only products that offers a complete, professional and authentic introduction to traditional Tibetan Medicine.
An additional innovation of the revised website is the new Micro-donation System. Micro-donations represent a simple, affordable opportunity to contribute to the Institute's support and development. The System allows activation of different virtual Prayer Wheels that will actually "spin online" for the amount of time associated to the donation made. Starting at only US\$7.00 for a week [US\$1.00/day], the Micro-donation System is at once an innovative proposal to activate traditional Tibetan practices for the accumulation of merits in our Western contemporary environment and an affordable way to aggregate the efforts of Community members interested in contributing to the preservation of the Tibetan Culture through the Institute's effort. As we know, the Shang-Shung Institute, in its different locations, represents a critical component of Rinpoche's vision for the protection of the Teachings and the preservation of the Tibetan Culture. All of the Dzogchen Community members and individuals interested in participating to this effort are cordially invited to visit the website section at <http://www.shangshung.org/microdonation/index.php>. We would love to have your feedback and, if you feel like it, your helpful and much appreciated contribution.
More projects are currently in the preparation stages and will be announced in the future within the Shang-Shung institutional mission. Besides the progression of the academic effort in the area of Tibetan Medicine, projects related to Tibetan Art and Tibetan language are in preparation.
The Shang-Shung Institute in America is a non-profit and tax-exempt 501 (c) organization incorporated in the State of Massachusetts. The Institute receives funding from private donations, corporate matching grants, and grants.

More information can be accessed through <http://www.shangshung.org> or by calling 413-369-4928.

ASIA IN SRI LANKA

Assistance for reconstruction and redevelopment in the zones worst struck by the Tsunami, using methods based on the active participation of the local communities.

Sri Lanka is one of the countries most seriously devastated by the Tsunami. Thousands of Singalese people have lost their homes and their livelihoods; entire villages have been swept away with all of their inhabitants. The balance of the victims amounts to more than 30,000, a third of them children. The damage to material structures: homes schools and workplaces and to the infrastructures is extremely severe. A little more than three months after the catastrophe it is still enormously difficult to make a complete estimate of the extent of the damage.

In order to make a rapid and effective response to this tragic emergency immediate contact was made with the Singalese Community and the Theravada Buddhist

Community in Rome, or ganizations able to guarantee immediate and direct contact with the most affected towns and communities. Both of them had already been in action since the first hours after the catastrophe, sending funds and first aid materials through the available means of the Italian Civil Protection and activating relations with the Sri Lankan authorities and the communities of the affected areas, in particular the Districts of Galle and Matara.

Already in January ASIA was able to send the first mission of experts who went to Sri Lanka, accompanied by some monks of the Rome Theravada Buddhist Community and by the head of the Singalese Community in Rome to evaluate the situation on the ground and to identify the hypothetical projects most suited to meet the needs of the stricken populations.

The strategy that ASIA is acting upon is to concentrate on the post-emergency phase, on reconstruction and development and the individuation of capable and trustworthy counterparts with the aim of contributing, through medium and long-term projects to the gradual recovery of this country that has been so horrendously stricken. With the collaboration of local communities a series of activities will be undertaken with the aim of re-establishing the minimum indispensable conditions for normal life in villages where people are facing extremely difficult and precarious situations.

In the course of the mission, through an analysis made together with our local counterparts (including an important environmental organization) one of the worst damaged centers, from the material point of view was identified in the district of Kalutara, along the coast to the south of Colombo, where homes, infrastructures, and equipment have been totally destroyed and where the request for help is most pressing. In this zone, in spite of the presence of numerous international organizations, it has not been possible to cover all the collective needs. One of the most urgent necessities is to give back homes to the families who are at present living in tents in refugee camps or in public building put at their disposal by the local authorities.

Taking into account the local culture and customs and the particular climactic conditions (hot and damp), if we succeed in obtaining the necessary funds through institutional financing and private collections of funds, ASIA, with its many years of experience in this field, will build as many homes as possible according to bio-construction and bio-climatic principles.

Since we do not intend to only limit ourselves to reconstruction, but also believe it to be indispensable to reconstruct together with the interested communities, concrete sustainable development plans and building interventions will be accompanied by an economic-productive component aimed at sustaining traditional activities like fishing and tourism and the cultivation and harvesting of medicinal herbs. Such activities will guarantee the sustainability of the projects, offering to the beneficiaries the possibility to get back to work and support their families.

Moreover, the ASIA intervention will also be directed to the maintenance of the most vulnerable members of a society: children and old people. In fact the maintenance of orphan children and those of families hardest hit by the Tsunami will be undertaken. Using its many years of experience in this sector ASIA will contribute to the maintenance of as many Singalese children and old people in need as is possible, covering all the expenses necessary to conduct a decent way of life, at the same time helping families and their villages. With regard to old people, on the proposal of our counterparts - who have also offered a gift of land - we are studying the possibility of restructuring a building to make an old peoples' home.

So, alongside the first aid emergency assistance that has been managed by or ganizations with the necessary technical and operational skills, ASIA is concentrating on the study and realization of long-term projects to raise the quality of life and to initiate real and true processes of development among the beneficiary populations.

To realize these projects ASIA does not hesitate to ask for contributions from all those who know of its commitment to aid minorities in Asia and who are sympathetic to its goals and methodology.

To this end two modes of collecting contributions have been organized which - it is important to remember - are tax deductible on the basis of current laws.

Bank transfer to the account: c/c ASIA- Tsunami n. 000114660, (bank sorting codes) ABI 05018, CAB 03200 of the Banca Popolare Etica S.c.a.r.l. The transfer should be made out to ASIA- Onlus.

Post office account: c/c 89549000 made out to ASIA-Onlus indicating the motive or "causal": Emergenza Tsunami.

It will be possible to follow the work of ASIA and the development of both the collection of funds and the activities in the field by directly contacting the person responsible in the ASIA office in Rome (Riccardo Ducci - Tel: 06 44340034, Email: progetti3@asia-onlus.org) and also by visiting the web site www.asia-onlus.org.

As in other situations in which we operate, our commitment remains constant in time and with the help of all the people who are aware and sensitive we will succeed in helping as many people as possible who have been struck by this terrible tragedy to rebuild their lives, contributing to the reconstruction of their hopes and prospects, with full respect for the identity and culture of this country.

A.S.I.A. Associazione per la Solidarietà Internazionale in Asia is a non-profit association founded in 1988 by Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche. A.S.I.A. promotes the economic, social and cultural development of minorities whose ethnic and cultural identities are threatened and is committed in particular to help the Tibetan population. It has realized projects in the field of health and education, in the conservation and restoration of ancient monuments and manuscripts, projects of emergency aid with the distribution of cereals and animals to the nomadic peoples struck by natural calamities. With its project of adoption from afar ASIA maintains Tibetan children and students in schools built by ASIA in the poorest and most disadvantaged zones of Tibet and in refugee settlements in Nepal and India.

ASIA Associazione per la Solidarietà Internazionale in Asia
Via S.Martino della Battaglia 31
00185 Roma
Tel: 06/44340034
Email: info@asia-onlus.org
Web site: www.asia-onlus.org



book reviews

*Memory, Suicide and Reintegration
Her Voice Is Blackberries*
by Joan Marie Wood
Amherst Writers and Artists Press, Amherst,
Mass, 2004

Joan Marie Wood's 'Her Voice Is Blackberries' is at once a collection of poems, a journey into memory and grief, and a ritual of integration. It begins with an invocation of the white lotus of compassion in a Rockridge café as the till clatters and the radio blares and the poet confronts her internal grief and rage in the mundane and uncaring routine world of simple commerce, and this invocation is followed by a song to the sea to give up its memories. This collection is the story of a daughter confronting her mother's suicide, looking back from middle age to the painful years of childhood when the rich and, at that time, inchoate mother-daughter bond was so violently ruptured. From that devastating loss the poet uncovers, investigates and reconstructs the painful shards of memory into graceful poetry, a portrait of a lost mother, an exploration of lost emotion, and in the telling and retelling of the story, the poet weaves a tapestry of reintegration and release. The collection is divided into six main sections. 'Light on the Water' gives us a child's eye view, often uncomprehending, often insightful as only children can be, as her mother struggles with mental illness and the strains that it causes in her family relationships. From succinct poems and short prose pieces, a picture emerges of a bright and sharp-minded woman caught in the stifling post-war constrictions of American middle class life with its strict family roles and mores, who is stifled by these suffocating conventions to the extent that she can't cope with, or find an outlet for her unnamable confusion, with disastrous results for her fragile psyche as she commits herself into a psychiatric institution that is run with precisely the same cultural and sexual conventions which she found so empty in the society from which she sought respite. With 'Empty Squares of Lace' the poet confronts the moment when her father announces her mother's suicide to the children. As each successive section progresses, we travel on a harrowing journey as the poet revisits those places in her life, or takes up the objects, within which her mother's presence still dwells: a perfume bottle, the taste of a button on a silk shirt, a room in a mental hospital, a psychiatrist's office with would-be reassuring Japanese prints that fail to mask an atmosphere of cold incomprehension. The writing is spare, poignant, clear and precise. This poetic investigation confronts fear, reticence and honesty, and creates a portrait of two female souls – mother and daughter – finding a way to meet across lost years, and the stark reality of death by suicide, to find reconciliation and release from rage and grief. This is an extraordinarily courageous and powerful collection of writing, which has transformed a devastating and inevitably scarring childhood experience into poignant and beautiful poetry.



by Des Barry

*Dakpo Tashi Namgyal,
Clarifying the Natural State.*
Ranjung Yeshe Publications,
107 pages, with Tibetan original on facing page to English translation.

Once again, Eric Pema of Rangjung Yeshe Publications has prepared an authoritative translation of a classic meditation text. "Clarifying the Natural State" is a pithy set of practical meditation instructions composed by a sixteenth century Kagyu lama and scholar, Dakpo Tashi Namgyal. This lama also composed "Moonbeams of Mahamudra", which has previously been published under the title "Mahamudra, The Quintessence of Mind and Meditation" (translated by Lobsang P. Lhalungpa, published by Shambhala, but out-of-print; may be available from Motilal Banarsidas, India). "Moonbeams" is a thick book, very dense, full of scholarly quotations and philosophical arguments. In contrast, "Clarifying the Natural State" is a much more practical, "hands-on" instruction manual, which presumes that the reader already is grounded in the preliminaries, understands the context, and has received transmission. This book is a manual of Mahamudra, the ultimate teaching of the Kagyu lineage. Although there are apparently some distinctions between Mahamudra and Dzogchen, to my non-expert mind, it is difficult for me to perceive how the Mahamudra instructions presented in this book differ greatly from the spirit of Dzogchen Semde. A meditation master or a scholar could probably point out differences between the two, but it feels to me that there is much advice in this manual that could be useful to a student of Dzogchen. The book begins with instructions of shamatha and vipassana, starting with supported shamatha, through unsupported shamatha, to various aspects of vipassana, to ultimately seeing an identity between shamatha and vipassana. The author makes a point of stating that in this method emptiness is not used as an antidote:

"However, it isn't certain what you mean by aware emptiness. Do you mean an aware emptiness that happens after a thought event has ceased or dissolved? Or is it an aware emptiness while the thought is present? . . . Someone may say, 'When I look directly into a thought or perception it dissolves and becomes an aware emptiness.' This is a case of not having established certainty about the nature of thoughts and



perceptions, but rather of fusing the idea of aware emptiness as an antidote against them" (p.31). The remainder of the book discusses pointing-out instructions, how to identify mistakes and faults in meditation, how to train in not separating meditation

and post-meditation, transcending into non-arising, and utilizing conduct. There follows a brief description of the famous "four stages", one-pointedness, simplicity, one taste, and non-meditation. One particular detail that I found interesting was the author's discussion of the attitude toward illness: "Practitioners of Equal Taste, 'Ro-Nyom', may hold that one should now give up medical treatment. Here, in this context, it is more a matter of using your sickness for spiritual training, rather than foolishly assuming that it does not matter whether or not the physical support for attaining enlightenment dies" (p. 75). This book is authentic and enjoyable. It is short enough that I might actually read it, and even reread it. It contains the original Tibetan text on the page facing the English text. So after I have learned Tibetan, I will be able to read the original. (This latter comment was meant to be humorous. I've tried learning Tibetan, and have given up.) I wonder if the students of this sixteenth century teacher ever suspected that English-speaking people in the age of computers and television would be reading this manual. I wonder who will be reading the teachings of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu four hundred years from now.

by Paul Bail

SHANG SHUNG EDIZIONI

The following book was reprinted and it is now available:

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu
SANTI MAHA SANGHA LEVEL ONE TRAININGS
July 1994 to June 2001

Edited by Jim Valby
Two Volumes, 622 pages, Euro 40,00

Shang Shung Edizioni has published an English language book with transcriptions from Rinpoche's first thirteen Santi Maha Sangha Level One Trainings. Rinpoche's explanations are arranged firstly by topic and secondly by the retreat dates. The content of the SMS Level One Training evolved over the years. Rinpoche added new topics and explanations.

This book is intended for those who have already passed the SMS Base Level examination, received the SMS Level One teachings, and kept their Nine Samayas.

SMS practitioners who wish to receive this book should contact the SMS Coordinator of their own Gar:

Tsegylgar: Jim Valby <jimvalby@dzogchen.ru>
Merigar: Igor Legati <edizss@tiscali.it>
Kunsangar: Grisha Mokhin <mokhin@dzogchen.ru>
Namgyalgar: Elise Stutchbury <elise777@austamet.com.au>
Tashigar: Ricky Sued <rsued@onenet.com.ar>

3 stages of Meditation



Errata in Issue 74

In the front-page article by Jacqueline Gens in the last issue number 74 there was the following error: The Mani stones carved by Gyaltzen were placed in the ground corresponding to the six sacred syllables, not the four directions as stated in the article.

On page of issue 74, in the second photo referring to Daniel Winkler and Soden, the photo caption was reversed. Daniel is on the left and Soden on the right. Apologies.

On the last page, 20, of issue 74, in the How I Met Chögyal Namkhai Norbu story by Oliver Leick, Oliver states that he met Kalu Rinpoche in the spring of 1997 but it was 1977.

APARTMENTS FOR SALE IN MONTALATERONE, ITALY

6 apartments in the historical center of Montelaterone, a medieval village about 8km from Merigar. The apartments are part of an 19th century oil mill, 3 with large private gardens and one with a 25 sq.m panoramic terrace, all with a wonderful view over the Val d'Orcia. Renovation will be carried out according to the principles of bio-architecture and using traditional materials such as terra cotta tiles, chestnut beams, "peperino" stone, and plastering in lime. Each apartment has an independent entrance and autonomous heating.

Projects for the different apartments can be seen on www.abitaresani.com.

More information from Rita Renzi at rita.renzi@tiscali.it or Mob. Phone 0039-3356065058.

new books from shang shung editions

CHÖGYAL NAMKHAI NORBU
THE MIRROR - ADVICE ON PRESENCE
AND AWARENESS
EURO 13,00



The Mirror - Advice on Presence and Awareness was written during a gathering of the Dzogchen Community held at Lu Cumitoni in Sardinia at Christmas 1977. It is a brief text that with astonishing simplicity and depth expounds the three fundamental aspects of the Dzogchen path: the view, or intuitive understanding of one's primordial state; the meditation, or the application of this

knowledge; and the conduct, or the integration of meditation with all one's daily activities. This text was written in particular to define the principle of awareness and its continuous presence, which is the only substitute for all the rules and limitations proper to the diverse religious traditions. The commentary that follows the text is based on an oral teaching given by the Author himself when he presented the book to his students. Often Chögyal Namkhai Norbu has said, "Dzogchen doesn't ask you to change your religion, philosophy or ideology, nor to become something other than what you are. It only asks you to observe yourself and to discover the 'cage' you have built with all your conditioning and limits. And it teaches you how to get out of the cage without creating another one, in order to become a free, autonomous person."

CHÖGYAL NAMKHAI NORBU
DZOGCHEN TEACHINGS
MERIGAR, 6-11 JULY 2001
EURO 13,00

It is important when we are doing a retreat, that you try to listen to what is being transmitted and what is being said. You must be aware of this and try to listen attentively. I have had this experience again and again that I explain something today and repeat it again the next day. Then the day after that someone wants to talk to me and they ask me something that I had already just explained over the last couple of days. Then, I sometimes say, "But you didn't listen to what I told you". If you really listen well, then you will get all the answers. It is sufficient that you observe yourselves a little and listen carefully.

This is important because the teaching is not only a technique about how you sit and how you do practice. The teaching is also about how to live your life within society. This is what we need to know above all. For example, even if the teaching doesn't tell you how to work in your shop, when you are there, it can show you how to work with your mind and your existence. Through the teaching, you can learn how to guide your mind and how to deal with your situation.

CHÖGYAL NAMKHAI NORBU
LONGSAL TEACHINGS – VOLUME FIVE
EURO 15,00

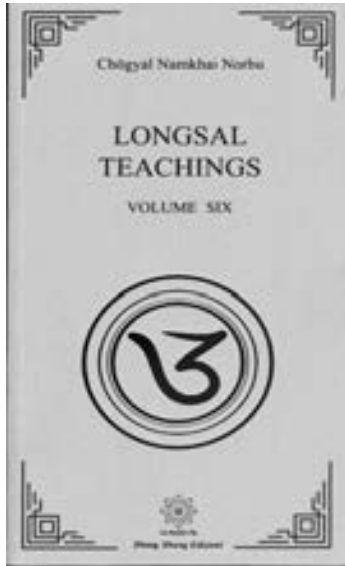
This volume contains four upadeshas and the histories of their discovery. These teachings were received through dreams over a period of time from 1961 to 1999. *The Principle of the View Totally Beyond Conceptual Mind*, written down in its final form in 1983, contains the root verses of a special teaching on the View of Atiyoga. The detailed explanation of this teaching has already been published in volume 4 of this series as *The Main Points of the View Totally Beyond Conceptual Mind*. *The Direct Introduction to the Principle of the Mirror of Vajrasattva* is an introduction to the nature of self-perfec-

tion or *lhundrub* through the symbol of the crystal. This upadesha was received in two different dreams, in 1997 and in 1999, respectively related to the author's master and paternal uncle Tögen Ugyen Tendzin (1893-1959), and to his root guru Changchub Dorje (1826-1961).

The Upadesha on the Tregchöd of Primordial Purity, originally received from the Fifth Dalai Lama Lobsang Gyatso (1617-1682) in a dream and written down in its final form in 1998, contains special instructions on the practice of the Four Chogzhags, the essence of Tregchöd.

The Upadesha on the Profound Path of Illusory Body reveals the fundamental points of the practice of Illusory Body according to the Ati Dzogpa Chenpo teaching. It is mainly connected to a dream in which the author met Gyalse Gyurmed Gyaltzen (1914-1972), son of Changchub Dorje.

CHÖGYAL NAMKHAI NORBU
LONGSAL TEACHINGS – VOLUME SIX
EURO 15,00



This volume contains three upadeshas and the histories of their discovery. These teachings were received through dreams over a period of time from 1985 to 1998.

The Upadesha on the Guruyoga of the White A, received in 1987, is a special teaching on the Guruyoga of Garab Dorje. The dreams related to this teaching are connected to Nubchen Sangye Yeshe (9th century) and Garab Dorje.

The Actions of the Guru Jñanadakini, received in dreams from 1992 to 2001, contains three extraordinary practices respectively related to the dimensions of the Body, Voice and Mind of the Jñanadakini Gomadevi. The dreams through which these teachings were received are mainly related to Gomadevi herself and to the female master Ayu Khandro Dorje Paldrön.

The Profound Essential Upadesha of the Long Life Practice "The Thigle of Vajra Life", written down in its final form in 1998, belongs to the Mandarava cycle of practices and contains profound instructions on the methods of Tsälung. Included in this section is a dream in which Ayu Khandro Dorje Paldrön clarifies important points of the main practice of Mandarava.

DZOGCHEN INVOCATIONS

This booklet contains five invocations, the first four particularly tied to the principle of Dzogchen and the fifth to general Vajrayana.

The Invocation of Samantabhadra belongs to the cycle of the Northern Treasures (*byang gter*) discovered by the tertön Rigdzin Gödem Chen.

The Invocation to the Base, the Path and the Fruit belongs to the Longchen Nyingthig cycle of Jigmed Lingpa.

The Invocation and Introduction to the Bardo is found in the *Miscellaneous Writings* of Longchenpa.

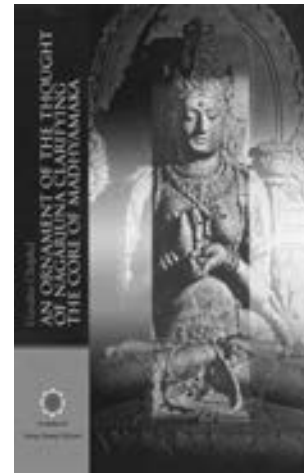
The Natural Vajra Energy of Instant Presence and Emptiness - An Invocation to the Inseparable Meaning of the Base, Path and Fruit of Manjushri Dzogpa



Chenpo is a famous invocation by Ju Mipham Gyatso. *The Invocation of the Lamp* belongs to the *terma* cycle *The Secret Treasure of the Vajra of Luminous Clarity* discovered by Adzom Drugpa.

GENDÜN CHÖPHEL
AN ORNAMENT OF THE
THOUGHT OF NAGARJUNA
CLARIFYING THE CORE OF
MADHYAMAKA

Preface by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu
Translated and with a Foreword by Pema Wangjié and Jean Mulligan
Edited and with an Introduction by Elias Capriles
Euro 15,00



From Chögyal Namkhai Norbu's Preface: Gendün Chöphel, eminent scholar of 20th century Tibet, was a master of both the traditional curricula of his time — the five branches of Buddhist wisdom and the five subjects of Tibetan culture — and of numerous modern subjects in such fields as philosophy, language and history. I need not detail his accomplishments and life history here, as these are well

known from other sources.

The *Ludrub Gonggyen* (*klu sgrub dgongs r gyan*) clearly demonstrates his profound knowledge of both Sutra and Tantra and his precise understanding of the essence of the teachings of Buddha and the thought of Nagarjuna. Careful study and analysis of this work — whether by scholars who approach it with impartial minds, practitioners who seek understanding of the Buddha's teachings, or those engaged in research — will lead to an understanding of the essential meaning of the Buddha's teachings.

Postage and packaging: in Europe add 4 Euro per order every 3 books. To order please send the list of books you require by letter or e-mail: Shang Shung Edizioni, 58031 Arcidosso, GR, Italy. Tel. 0564 966039, e-mail: shangshunged@tiscali.it. Or order the books through our web site: www.dzogchen.it

TSEGYALGAR BOOKSTORE

The Mirror: Advice on Presence and Awareness is back in print and is available at the Tsegylgar Bookstore!

If you would like to place an order you can email, fax, or call in to me the following information:

Credit card number (MC or Visa) with expiration date, your billing and shipping addresses, and the list of items you would like to order

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\$15.00US

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m e r i g a r

*Dzogchen Community in Italy
Arcidosso 58031*

GR Italy

Tel: 39 0564 968 837

Email: merigaroffice@tiscalinet.it

Web site: web.tiscalinet.it/merigar

Policy Regulating Recording Activities during Chögyal Namkhai Norbu's Retreats and other Events, and the Distribution of such Recordings.

1) RECORDING 1.1) During Chögyal Namkhai Norbu's retreats, public talks etc., recording activities cannot be indiscriminately allowed. As a rule, only the official operators appointed by the **Shang Shung Institute of Merigar** are authorized to install and use professional or semi-professional recording equipment at the location of the event.

The same events can also be professionally recorded by operators working for the local Archives of the **organizing Gar or Gakyil**, on condition that the **legal representative** of the local Gar/Gakyil signs the **Authorization to Record** (attached) and sends it to the Shang Shung Institute, Loc. Podere Nuovissimo 58031 Arcidosso (GR) Italy, before the event takes place. 1.2) All possible **exceptions** to the above rule require a **specific written permission** by Yuchen Namkhai, Director of the Shang Shung Institute and Chögyal Namkhai Norbu's copyright proprietor. Such written permissions must be obtained well in advance of the date of the event. All requests must be addressed directly to Yuchen Namkhai, Director, Shang Shung Institute for Tibetan Studies, Loc. Podere Nuovissimo 58031 Arcidosso (GR) Italy. E-mail: ssinst@tiscali.it.

1.3) Individuals attending a retreat or other events with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu may be allowed to record **exclusively for their own personal use**, using consumer pocket-size recording equipment, but precise limitations must be applied.

Only official operators as specified in 1.1 and 1.2 can install **camera tripods** at the place of the retreat or place **microphones** on Chögyal Namkhai Norbu's desk or close to him, or use **extension cables** of any kind, or connect their equipment to the power outlets; no other person attending the event can put microphones around Chögyal Namkhai Norbu using extension cables, nor connect to power outlets, nor install any tripods, even of the smallest size, for their pocket-size cameras or mini-recorders or microphones.

Students must always record from where they are seated, without moving to find a more favorable position, without using extra space for bags or equipment, without ever standing or kneeling, - in short, **always avoiding to disturb the other students around them.**

1.4) The **number of official operators** must be kept as small as possible. There is no need for additional operators to come to the place of the event to record on behalf of other Community bodies besides those specified in 1.1 and 1.2. Audio and video recordings of any event can be obtained by all Gars and Gakyil from the Central Archives of Merigar, so there is no reason to allow redundant operators to crowd the location with more tripods and other equipment. 1.5) The Central Archives and the local Gakyil must at all times work in a co-coordinated way and with full collaboration in order to ensure that the event is properly recorded and the recording is preserved both at the local and at the central archival levels. So whenever the Central Archives cannot have their own operator present, the local Gakyil representatives – after duly signing and sending the Authorization to Record as explained in 1.1 - should arrange the audio/video recording and make sure that **a 100% quality (1:1) digital copy is sent to the Copyright Proprietor**, as specified in the Authorization to Record.

2) DISTRIBUTION 2.1) The only Community body currently authorized to **edit, duplicate, stock** and **distribute** Chögyal Namkhai Norbu's audio/video recordings is the **SSI Central Archives**, located in Merigar and directed by Yuchen Namkhai. 2.2) All **Gars and Gakyils** wanting to distribute/sell recordings of teachings or other Community productions must receive a case-by-case written authorization from SSI Merigar. In absence of this written authorization, to duplicate and distribute/sell any of the recordings made loc

NEWS FROM THE VAJRA DANCE PROJECT TEAM

It is now possible to purchase beautiful reproductions of the original Gomadevi painting by Dugu Chögyal Rinpoche, traditionally framed as thankas with silk brocade. The thankas can be ordered by email at vdd@yahoo.com. All sales go to the various projects of ASIA and the Vajra Dance.

Dance of the Song of the Vajra For Beginners Merigar, Italy September 2005

September 2 – 4, 2005

with Prima Mai

(Group:
Sambharathamekhacantapa -
Masminsaguliitayapa)

September 23 – 24, 2005

with Adriana dal Borgo

(Group:
Guragurasaghakharnalam -
Bhundhabhundhacishasakelam)

Each course is open maximum to 24 participants (12 Pawo and 12 Pamo). It is absolutely necessary to book before the 27th of August for the 1st group with Prima Mai and before the 16th for the 2nd group with Adriana dal Borgo.

(If we don't reach the minimum number of participants the courses will be cancelled.)

Beginning: Friday 4pm to 7pm
Saturday: with the Teacher, 10am to 1pm - 3:30pm to 6pm
Sunday: with the Teacher, 10am to 1pm - 3:30pm to 6pm

We would like to remind the people participating in the courses to review the previous steps before the beginning of the related stages.

For booking contact Merigar
Office:
Email:
merigaroffice@tiscalinet.it
Tel: 0564 966837

Vajra Dance Course Part II at Dejamling, France October 23 – 29, 2005 with Stoffelina Verdonk

The course of the Vajra Dance of the Song of the Vajra / 2nd Part with Stoffelina Verdonk will be held in Dejamling, South France near Montpellier, from October 23 to 29. Cost (without meals or accommodation): 245 Euros. Current discounts for the DC members are applied. For all information & registration BEFORE October 8, please contact:

Nadia Poureau
Tel: +33 1 47 49 07 16
Email: cadette@club-inter-net.fr

New Gakyil Slovak Community

Blue: Juraj Sladek
Email: slademan7@yahoo.com
Red: Tomas Chaban
Email: panoramatix@yahoo.com
Yellow: Martin Simcalek
Email: bigbang@pobox.sk

e u r o p e

Mandarava Retreat with Nina Robinson Prague, Czech Republic Sept. 12 – Sept. 18, 2005

Long Life Practice and Chüdlen of the Immortal Dakini Mandarava
Place: Studio Modry ostrov, Dolnocernosicka 443, Prague 5 – Lipence

(A nicely renovated farm barn. Accommodation available on the spot – bring your own mattresses and sleeping bags; showers, toilets and kitchenette at your disposal, meals available from Tue Sept. 13 for the price of 150 CZK/day)

Price: 60 € or 1800 CZK – 1 day/10 € or 300 CZK

Time schedule:

(Exact schedule of the practices will be specified on the spot)

Sept. 12: starting 9.00 - 4 thuns a day, Sept. 13: 4 thuns a day

Sept. 14: 4 thuns a day, Sept. 15: 4 thuns a day

Sept. 16: 4 thuns a day, Sept. 17: 4 thuns a day

Sept. 18: 4 thuns a day, ending at 18.00

Accommodation at the place is included in the retreat price

Applications and information about the payment etc. at:
blue@dzogchen.cz

How to get there (from Prague):

By train: Take the train from Hlavni or Smichovske nadrazi (Main Station, Smichovske Station) to the station Cernosice. Cross the bridge over the river Berounka to Dolni Cernosice; the second street to the right is Dolnocernosicka. The farm is at the very end of the street; above the gate of the farm you can see a sign Atelier Modry ostrov.

Yantra Yoga with Fabio Andrico

September 2005
Kunsangar, Moscow and Latvia

Advanced Yantra Yoga
Kunsangar, Russia
September 3 – 7
Contact: Oksana at oksanaailina@mail.ru

Breathing
Moscow, Russia
September 9 - 11
Contact: Oksana at oksanaailina@mail.ru

Yantra Yoga for Beginners
Riga, Latvia
September 17 – 30
Contact: Lena Beliutina at namdrol@inbox.lv

YANTRA YOGA FOR ADVANCED PRACTITIONERS 2nd AND 3rd SERIES OF YANTRA with LAURA EVANGELISTI at TALAVERA DE LA REINA (near Madrid - Spain) from September 7 to 11, 2005

“Who ever approaches himself to spiritual practices and especially to Dzogchen should first of all developed the capacity to relax completely body, speech and mind into one's own natural condition. The exercises of Yantra Yoga which imply all these three aspects are a great method to reach this kind of relaxation, and consequently are a special kind of preliminary for every kind of practice.”

From: The Base Yantras of the 3th, 4th and 5th series and the Seven Lotuses, Editors: Laura Evangelisti & Fabio Andrico

Laura Evangelisti is an international instructor of Yantra Yoga, authorized by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu to hold courses of Yantra Yoga around the world and together with Fabio Andrico prepare and train new instructors for Yantra Yoga.

REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPATION: Participants must have received the Dzogchen transmission by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu and should have a basic knowledge of Yantra Yoga. Please bring a mat and comfortable clothing for the practice.

FURTHER INFORMATION: There is the possibility of lodging at the homes of practitioners of Talavera. The course will be held at the open air in a beautifully wooded area.

RETREAT FEES will be 150 €. 20% discount for ordinary member, 50% reduced member, 40% sustaining and meritorious members.

Asociación Cultural de la Comunidad Dzogchen de España

Vajra Dance Course in Berlin, Germany Dance of Three Vajras September 16 – 18, 2005

with Karin Heinemann, a certified local instructor of the first level Vajra Dance for Germany

COST: members 120 /80 Euro - with payment by 9/2/2005
Without membership 135 /95 Euro - with payment by 2/9/2005

FOR MORE INFO CONTACT:

Natalia Gershevskaya
Tel: +49 (0)211-9179047,
+49(0)1794804157
Email: nataliager@web.de

Helga Betz
Tel: +49(0)211682657
Email: office@dzogchen.de

TO REGISTER: Registration is limited to 20 people.

Dzogchen Gemeinschaft
Deutschland e.V Stadtparkasse
Duesseldorf account number: 110 478 91

Mail your check to:
Dzogchen - Gemeinschaft
Deutschland, Geschaefsstelle
c/o Helga Betz, Lindemannstr.
12, 40237 Duesseldorf

Transmission of the Dzogchen teachings from Chögyal Namkhai Norbu is necessary.

Accommodations for the Barcelona Retreat October 5 – 9, 2005

Via Internet: You can find an overview about accommodation, registration, and transportation on the web site: <www.dzogchen.org.es>. At this site you can organize your accommodation and journey by yourself.

Via Post: The Spanish Gakyil has an official hotel list. If local Dzogchen Communities want to provide an accommodation service for members who do not have an internet connection, or for individuals who do not have internet access, you can request information from the Spanish Gakyil by sending your postal addresses to:
<kungaa@wanadoo.es>.

Spanish Gakyil

VAJRA DANCE CLOTHES

AS ORIGINALLY

TRANSMITTED BY
CHÖGYAL NAMKHAIR
NORBU

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CUSTOM MADE

INFORMATION AND
ORDERS

AT
VDDRESS@YAHOO.COM

COSTANTINO ALBINI IN FRANCE NOVEMBER 2005

MEDITATION & CONTEMPLATION

with Costantino Albini
Paris (in the center Dharma Ling)
November 5 & 6, 2005

The full immersion course (4 sessions of 3 hours each in 2 days) will explain the fixation on an object and other exercises from different traditions, in order to reach the knowledge of contemplation. The course is open to all people* and is interesting for both beginners & advanced practitioners, for those who want to perfect their practice of contemplation and for those who are beginning to study the Santi Maha Sangha.

(The number of participants is limited to 50)

*For the whole 2 days course the cost is:
Euro 50,00 (for the inscription before the 15th of September)
Euro 60,00 (for the inscription after the 15th of September)*

SANTI MAHA SANGHA BASE LEVEL RETREAT

with Costantino Albini
November 7 – 11, 2005

DEJAMLING, South France, near Montpellier

Cost (without meals or accommodation):
150 Euro
Current discounts for the DC members are applied.

For all information & registration for both these events, please contact:

*Nadia Poureau:
Tel: +33 1 47 49 07 16
Email: cadette@club-internet.fr*

Yantra Yoga for Beginners in Germany with Elke Glander November 11-13, 2005

Venue: Höfen 12, 91460, Baudenbach (at Hans Vogel's retreat house)
Tel: 00499166995311
Email: HansVogel@t-online.de

Cost: 80 Euro for Dzogchen Community members & Non-Members 95 Euro for pre-registration until two weeks before the course
After two weeks: 120 Euro for Dzogchen Community Members & Non-Members 135 Euro

Dorm facilities in Höfen

Bank account: Stadtparkasse Düsseldorf IBAN:
DE40300501100011047891 BIC: DUSSEDEXX
For registration contact: Cristian Lang, Email: cristianl@gmx.de, Tel:
00497425/328226

k u n s a n g a r

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LETTER FROM THE MOSCOW DZOGCHEN COMMUNITY

Dear All,
We are very happy to have this possibility, thanks to *The Mirror*, to tell you about ourselves. We are The Moscow Dzogchen Community "Rinchen Ling". Community in Moscow and have been in existence for twelve years. The Moscow Community is one of the first Dzogchen Communities of Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche in Russia and the countries of the former USSR. Everything started quite long ago when at the late 80's, when a group of people from Moscow interested in Buddhism found out about the Dzogchen Teaching. Piece by piece, they collected information and communicated with friends from Europe and North America. Finally they found the Master, Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche, who was traveling around the world and transmitting Dzogchen. In 1990, Vladimir Maikov and Yelena Antonova, in spite of many obstacles and difficulties that were peculiar to the times of the USSR, went to Conway to the retreat of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu. During the retreat, a Russian delegation met Rinpoche and invited him to come to Russia saying that there were a lot of people there who were interested in the Teaching. In 1992, the first retreat with Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche took place in Moscow. Up until this time, there had been already been some books on collective practices translated and published in Russian. After this retreat, the first Gakyil was elected and Rinchenling appeared as one

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tsegyalgar east & west

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TSEGYALGAR UPDATE

HELP WANTED:

The Tsegyalgar Gakyil is looking to develop its office administration. We are looking for independent, self-motivated practitioners committed to a strong future for Tsegyalgar.

We plan to open 1 or 2 full or part-time positions at the Gar. Pay will be a competitive per hour wage based on experience and knowledge. Applicants must provide their own lodging and be able to work legally in the United States.

The positions we create will depend on the applicants and may include the following tasks:

To apply please send your resume and cover letter to Patricia Shahan, Yellow Gakyil, at patriciashahan@starpower.net or fax to 413-369-4473 by October 1, 2005. In your cover letter please refer to the number of hours per week you would be available, date of availability, and your pertinent skills.

Please feel free to contact Ed Hayes at the Tsegyalgar Office at secretary@tsegyalgar.org or 413-369-4153 with any questions.

The Farm

The Farmhouse was put to the test as a support system for retreats, and it passed with flying colors. Meals were prepared there, loaded into the truck (recently donated by Vern Harrington and Joe Zurylo, many many thanks!!), driven up to the pond, and served still nice and warm. People could walk down to the Farmhouse for showers or to use the phone, and several people stayed in the guest rooms there.

On one of the karma yoga days during the retreat, a huge pile of debris from the Barn was taken to the dump, bringing us closer to our goal of making the Barn a useable space. We have gotten one bid and are currently waiting for another, to see how much it will cost to rebuild the foundation of the barn so that it is a safe space to start working in.

The Gakyil has agreed that one of the first things to do next year is rebuild the old logging road between lower and upper Khandroling (from the Farm to the parking lot), which we estimate will cost about \$16,000. This price would include the \$4000 needed to buy a new tractor that would be strong enough to clear the trees out of the roadway. We need to begin a fundraising campaign for this new road, which would greatly enhance the property, making it much quicker to go from one end to the other and truly united the two pieces of land. When we purchased the land two years ago, Rinpoche agreed this would be one of the first things that should be done. Also, with the Vajra Hall over the Mandala of the Universe still to be built, and many white pines to be cleared from the land, we will be having a lot of heavy machinery driving up and down, and if we had our own road, we could prevent the same kind of irritation to the neighbors that caused us so much trouble in the past.

Retreat Cabins nearing Completion

The Mandarava and Thögal retreat cabins now have doors, windows, and even roofs! After several years of planning and fundraising, they are almost finished, thanks to the many generous donors to this project and the hard work of Santo Santoriello, assisted by Walter Paulus. (See photo) Also, the Bath House is functioning, and a pump has been installed to pump spring water up from the pond for showers. Community members are invited to come do personal retreats in the cabins, just call the office to schedule and reserve.

Practice Schedule

Our schedule of practice weekends is as follows:

Anastasia McGhee will return to Tsegyalgar to teach the rest of the Dance of the Song of the Vajra in sections, on Sept. 30 – Oct. 2 (at Khandroling, weather permitting) and Dec. 16 to 18. The cost for these weekends is \$140. Some reduced price scholarships available upon application.

Sept. 17 - 18 4 pm Saturday to 4 pm Sunday at Khandroling: 24 hour Nagong for Rinpoche's Long Life and the fulfillment of his vision for Khandroling. Followed by Ganapuja at the Mandala at 4:30pm.

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The Teachings of Patrul Rinpoche
Vaidurya'i Chunphyangs (The Garland of Lapislazuli)
of Patrul Rinpoche
July Retreat with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu
July 1 – 5, 2005
Merigar, Italy

by Gabriela Cacho

It was a memorable experience to return to Merigar after two years, especially to receive the incredible teachings of the Great Dzogchen Master Patrul Rinpoche from Chögyal Namkhai Norbu. [See pages 2 & 3 of this issue] Patrul Rinpoche was often misunderstood, but as a free spirit and great scholar of his time, he was able to transcend time and space to be recognized as one of the greatest Dzogchen Masters of all times. More than 700 practitioners came for the July Merigar Retreat and certainly thousands more were united through the web cast. Together we listened to the precious teaching with the best intention to put the knowledge into practice. Many of us were able to reconnect with fellow practitioners from all over the world and that connection gives us the sensation that our planet is quite small when our only purpose is to be near our Precious Master. I also came to Merigar to participate in the Santi Maha Sangha base level exam. Through this

experience of the Santi Maha Sangha, I was able to seriously reinforce my commitment to the teachings and try to integrate this understanding with Our Master's mind. Santi Maha Sangha was a very exciting experience for me and a perfect summation of the path; why it is so important to rest in the Primordial Nature, how to recall the Three Statements of Garab Dorje, the importance of Our Master who introduces us to our potentiality and therefore the supreme importance of practicing Guruyoga. I had the feeling that I was free from duality for a moment and I was filled with profound gratitude toward the Master.

With incredible humility and grace, Rinpoche asked us to work with circumstances and understand that though he will be traveling less extensively to preserve his health, we can join the teachings via web cast or, if possible, try to join him in Margarita. Recently I moved to Tashigar Norte, Margarita, to be near Our Master and it has changed my life.

Thank You, Rinpoche!

A Pilgrimage to Merigar

by Paolo Brunatto

Since the beginning of the 80's, whenever it was possible, I have gone to Merigar to follow the precious retreats of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu. With the passing of time, each visit to Merigar and the hills of Amiata, has made me feel how sacred the place is so that when I go the Gar of the Fire Mountain, I feel like a pilgrim or a traveler who has come to worship at a sacred place.

The last time that I was there for the Master's Teaching retreat on Patrul Rinpoche's "Vaidurya'i Chun-phyangs", one day I made a little 'pilgrimage' around the Gar with Marco Almici, one of Merigar's previous geköes, to discover some of the recent architectural work and restoration that has been done. At Merigar Two I discovered that two new mini apartments have been built for guests, designed by Paola Rispoli, Giovanni Boni and Augusto Trombetta with the indefatigable Migmar heading the construction team.

Then I moved to the Capannone to see the new Reading and Consultation Room designed by Claudio Galeota, a luminous place that is also used for courses and seminars. From there, Marco took me to the great Stupa to show me the work on draining the surrounding land that it is being done. I saw Augustinas Maceina perched on the scaffolding around the rings of the Chorten's spire patiently applying the gold leaf while battling the wind that threatened to carry it away. All this against the golden luminosity of one of the sublime sunsets at Merigar while the Song of the Vajra wafted from the Gonpa shining golden in the last rays of the sun. Before leaving this sacred place, Marco showed me the garden of 'Iceberg' white roses around the Chorten that should be able to survive through the icy winters of Mount Amiata.

But the biggest surprise was the renovation at the Golden House (Serkhang) which besides a thorough reconstruction and restoration has been 'redesigned' in its essential functions and its aesthetic form taking on the beauty of a Tuscan farmhouse, as Rinpoche had suggested to the person in charge of the project, the generous Patrizia Moscatelli.

At Serkhang I made a pilgrimage within the pilgrimage starting from the Reception that was really comfortable and friendly with its wall of rough Tuscan bricks and an artistic flourish to the metal grill over the office windows. Passing to the Dining room I find that the old wood floor has been left: a memento of the Karma Yoga of so many practitioners on the early 80's. The delicate Tibetan style decorations by Migmar are still intact along the wood beams.

From there I move on to the kitchen that has been completely modernized with a new plumbing and electric system and a new floor with emergency drainage. I am impressed by the menu of the day that is refined and exotic: lemon rice, vegetable curry, dhal and fruit.

I go upstairs into the administration office that has been renewed and then onto the terrace that has also become the operative base for the coordination of the project inspired by Yeshe Namkhai. The wall painting of Dorje Legpa has been preserved there.

I can't resist the temptation to tiptoe into the little Gonpa that has always fascinated me for its mystical atmosphere



Stupa

N ZEITZ

with the roof panels painted by Migmar with the vivid colors of a traditional Tibetan Gonpa.

From there I move into the apartment and living room for guests complete with chimney. It has been mod-



Veranda of Merigar Gonpa during Teachings

N ZEITZ

Blessing the Animals with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu August 5, 2005

On the morning of August 5th, under a splendid summer sun tempered by a fresh mountain breeze, Chögyal Namkhai Norbu blessed the many animals that had gathered there around the Gonpa. Seated outside the Great Flower, Rinpoche softly recited mantras and sprinkled the animals with nectar and rice grains as they paused a moment in front of him in the arms of their owners or in their cages. A fluffy brown and white rabbit covered its face with its paws in fear and a tiny mouse started to nibble at the rice grains as they were blessed. There was an array of dogs and cats, big and small, old and young, some clearly with health problems. There were little birds, some tiny insects and even a horse that arrived for the final blessing. Rinpoche carefully and lovingly gave attention to each one of them, bestowing a smile, a gaze, an extra grain of rice, and a mantra blown through the grill of the cage.

It was a special moment for the many fortunate animals present and the first time that this little ceremony has been held at Merigar. The event also had a particular quality for many of the humans there who were privileged to have been able to participate in such a loving little ceremony.



Rinpoche blessing animals

Liz Granger for The Mirror

Rinpoche's Advice to Young People Merigar August 14, 2005

On August 14th, Chögyal Namkhai Norbu had a special meeting with the young people present at Merigar. A wide assortment of individuals from small children up to young people of 25 years gathered around the Master under the large tent in front of Serkhang. In the relaxed manner of an experienced story-teller, Rinpoche spoke at length about his own childhood in Tibet telling the attentive young people several anecdotes showing how naughty he had been when he was young but how, at a certain point, he had become aware of how his actions had hurt other people. He spoke about the importance of being aware and not getting distracted and charged up and told the young people how important it is to respect parents and old people and to finish their studies. He said, "Now you are young but soon you will be adults. We don't realize we are growing up and we have to become a little responsible for ourselves. This means being aware and knowing what life is."



Rinpoche speaks with the young people

Liz Granger for The Mirror

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Santi Maha Sangha Merigar

58 people passed the Base Level Exam in Merigar, 38 in Margherita and 120 attended the 1st Level Training Retreat in Merigar with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu from July 11 to July 15, 2005.



New Gakyil & Geköes

L GRAF

Reorganizing for the Future

The Meeting between the Gars and Gakyils and election of the new Gakyil and Geköes at Merigar

by Liz Granger

On August 19th, two important meetings were held at the Merigar Gonpa in the presence of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu. The first was a presentation by Yeshe Namkhai for Ambienti Web Consulting of the plan for reorganization of the Dzogchen Community currently under way at Merigar. Representatives from Gars and Gakyils in Spain, Switzerland, Austria, Britain, Holland, the Czech Republic, Argentina, Mexico, Tsegvalgar West and Baja were present. Yeshe presented a broad picture of the project and accompanied his presentation with slides, which gave a clear and concise breakdown of the different steps in the process. The first part of his talk covered what is happening right now while in the second part he spoke about what has already been done. This was followed by an ideal plan for going ahead. In the final part of his presentation he focused on what has to be done in the future.

In a future issue of The Mirror, Ambienti Web Consulting will be presenting an outline of the reorganization project.

The second meeting of the morning was the election of the new Merigar Gakyil as follows:
Blue Gakyil: Antje d'Almeida, Gino Vitello (Director), Mauro Nascari
Yellow Gakyil: Giorgio Dallorto (Vice-Director), Andrea Calducci, Maria Grazia Florido
Red Gakyil: Riccardo Giuntini, Fabio Tomassoni, Piero Marotta

Geköes: Michela Moraglia

After the new Gakyil had been presented, Chögyal Namkhai Norbu gave a few words of advice to the new and old Gakyils and to all those present.

"I would like to thank the old Gakyil, especially those who are leaving because those who work in the Gakyil are not paid for this, it is something they are offering, so it's very important. And also the old Gakyil shouldn't think, 'Ah, now I've finished!' They should carry on collaborating with the new Gakyil until they are perfectly ready. And then if they don't have much experience the new Gakyil shouldn't think, 'Ah, now I'm on the Gakyil and

I've got many new ideas." We have many programs based on the experiences of many years so we're going ahead in this way. So you should collaborate in this direction. In this way we won't have difficulties and everything will go ahead. I give my best wishes to everyone that everything will go well.

I also wanted to say to many people who have come from different countries, you've heard what we're doing and what the program is, so maybe it's important to inform and have other people understand so that we can all collaborate. I think that this is a good time for us to collabo-

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by Liz Granger

If a single image could spring to mind to encapsulate the experience of the August retreat at Merigar with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, it would be the bright rays of the sun cutting through the banks of angry grey clouds, like the light of understanding cutting through the heavy pall of ignorance. From the unpredictable and unexpected change in the weather to the incisive and direct explanations of the Master, it was a time of dynamic and immediate experience. About 900 people from all the corners of our planet came together at Merigar for the Master's teaching on 'the Essence of the Heart of Guru Jnanadhakini'. The retreat was held at the yurt shaped Gonpa of the Great Liberation from August 10 to 16, the climax of the torrid Italian summer. This year, however, in disrespect for tradition, the weather kept all retreat participants in a continual state of presence with its sudden and violent caprices. The first blustery day, with its bursts of hot sunshine, later turned into an autumn scene of cold mists and dripping trees, and finally built up into a wild and violent hailstorm that sent people fleeing for refuge under the wings of the Gonpa and left its offering of hard white ice balls in heaps around the scene.

The unpredictable climate provided the background for an intense series of teachings given by the Master that started with a concise and clear introduction to the basic tenets of Buddhism and then passed through explanations of Hinayana and Mahayana up to the Vajrayana and the Path of Self Liberation. Besides the explanation of the simple practice of Guru Jnanadhakini, Rinpoche also gave an empowerment one morning to enable participants to do the practice. For those who had been unable to attend he gave a 'ripe tsewang' on another occasion to introduce them to the real state of Jnanadhakini. Towards the end of the retreat he repeated that the essence of the practice and teaching is Guruyoga through which the teacher introduces the student to the path. He said that although many people don't like to do rituals, we should be free from accepting and rejecting and use whatever may be useful to us and went on to

explain in details the practice of Guru Dragphur and Simhamukha in order to eliminate negativities. As the weather dawned clear and calm on the final day of teaching, the Master transmitted many secondary practices that could be useful for people. In spite of hail, wind and rain, the Master's teaching was flanked by a series of activities with senior students and qualified teachers. Early in the morning, practitioners gathered at the Gonpa for sessions of Yantra Yoga or met in the Mandala Room for instructions on the Dance of the Three Vajras. In the afternoon, Vajra Dancers could either practice in the Mandala Room or receive instruction on the outdoor Mandala in the wood. Contemporaneously, there were explanations of the practices in Italian at Serkhang or in English at the Gonpa. Later in the afternoon there were group practices and explanations at the Gonpa followed by different sessions of Yantra Yoga for beginners and advanced students as well as a complete Thun of the Vajra Dance in the Mandala Room.

As usual, the magnificently decorated Tibetan tent set up by ASIA in the meadow below struck visitors to the Gonpa. After the teachings, this became the meeting area for vast numbers of people who could enjoy food and drinks at the Meri-bar or browse through the tents housing a wide variety of objects and publications from Community groups around the world.

Another summer retreat has come and gone, like a fast moving cloud in an autumn sky. For many people this was the first experience of receiving teachings from Chögyal Namkhai Norbu. For others, it was another possibility to receive transmission from the Master, for which we are profoundly grateful. Whether old or new students, we are all sharing the experience of traveling in the same boat through the storms of samsara with our Master at the helm.

*"May the unsurpassable
Dzogchen teaching,
Like the sun when it rises in the sky,
Spread everywhere."*

THE MOXA COURSE AT MERIGAR WITH CHÖGYAL NAMKHAIR NORBU JULY 22-24, 2005

by Elisa Copello

From July 22 to 24 in the splendid setting of the Merigar Gonpa, Chögyal Namkhai Norbu gave an introductory course on moxa-bustion. Rinpoche had graciously accepted to hold the course at the request of the Shang-Shung Institute. One hundred participants, most of whom were doctors or health workers, listened as Rinpoche introduced the fundamental principles of moxa, mentioning that along with blood-letting, balneotherapy, hot or cold compresses and Ku Nye massage, moxa constituted one of the external therapies in traditional Tibetan medicine.

Rinpoche went on to illustrate how to collect and dry 'trawa' (spraw), the plant, which, once it has been correctly treated, is used in moxa or 'metsa' (mebtsa) in Tibetan. In general this plant is harvested on an astrologically favorable day, washed on site, broken up until the veins on the leaves can be seen and then mixed with charcoal ash according to a very precise procedure that Rinpoche summarized. Among those diseases which chiefly benefit from this therapy, Rinpoche listed the main ones: imbalance of the phlegm humor, insufficient digestive heat, water retention, epigastric pain, lymphatic problems, tumors, hidden fever, certain forms of mental illness, associated imbalances of phlegm and wind, disturbances due to provocations or acute fever that should be treated with moxa to eliminate them completely and avoid them returning, like applying moxa after blood-letting to avoid the illness manifesting again.

Then the Master explained in which cases one should never use moxa, such as, for example, on the sense organs, the glands, the muscles with the exception of the locations of some of the 500 points indicated by Rinpoche, or the channels linked to the sexual organs.

As with all therapies that are considered invasive, moxa should never be applied on the 'lhane' (bla gnas) points or area, that is the area where the 'lha' (bla) is located at that moment. The movement of the 'lha' varies according to the lunar calendar, the day of the week and the hour of the day, thus one requires precise knowledge about this in order to avoid damaging this protective energy by working on the point it is located in. There are also unfavorable astrological combinations such as the movement of the planet BI TI (bi ti) on certain days of the month; therefore one should deepen one's knowledge in order to avoid causing damage.

APPLYING MOXA

There are, said the Master, four principle methods used in moxa: "cooking", or direct application of the moxa on the skin, a painful technique which causes real burning and is beneficial in the case of dangerous illnesses and which only a doctor is able to carry out correctly; "burning" in which moxa is applied indirectly on a layer of salt, for example, in order not to cause burns but only a sensation of strong heat. This is indicated for lymph and wind in the heart; "warming", a technique which today is carried out with a sticky moxa mainly produced in Korea and Japan or with moxa sticks. It is beneficial for problems with the wind humor and blockages in the channels. Each application is repeated five times; "give warning", a slight sensation of heat. This is mainly used with elderly people and children. After treatment, the doctor massages the points that have been "burnt" or "heated" and the patient should have a short walk and avoid drinking coffee, cold and alcoholic drinks, eating yogurt and sleeping in the daytime. By following these precautions, the therapy will be

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R PIRO



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Santi Maha Sangha Base Retreat at Khandroling: Impressions of a New Student

by Kimberly Truitt



Jim and friends in Rinpoche's cabin at Khandroling

N DENISENKO

Arriving at Khandroling for the first time, I was amused to find the way lies along a parallel destination identified as “Mary Lyon’s birthplace,” reminding me of the photo of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu with a lion cub, both smiling “merrily.” It further reminds me that the journey—the way—is as significant as any arrival: Are in fact inextricable, and to find Khandroling the first time (and perhaps the second and third), it is important to have a guide.

Certainly the way into Khandroling poses challenges—the paved road turning to gravel and then uneven dirt winding upward by grades alongside farms, a golf course and miles of old stonewall and forest—to end at a gate marking the entrance. I suppose many decide to park here and hike in order to avoid the inevitable scrapes to the undercarriages of most cars as it cuts over large stones as it winds up and around the hill finally passing under a string of prayer flags. Past this is a clearing. All that lay before seemed like so many thresholds to that moment.

From here, the road traverses to the left a small pond bordered by grass, reeds, and those purple flowering weeds, which I always fail to identify. Small patches of lilies float on the surface. To the right lies a field of very health grass. The road continues on an embankment to the far side to a set of picnic tables and a small cabin—all of which encircled in forest. Here, there is more room for parking, and a wellhead by the pond perpetually pumping spring water. Still the road continues uphill through woods and splits at the top where the Stupa is and beyond which is located a new bathhouse. To the left are personal retreat houses (one of which was occupied), and to the right, and even further uphill lying upon the very crest of the mountain, is the universal mandala.

Most retreaters had pitched their tents here beneath the small shade trees in the grass encircling the mandala. However, my husband and I with our 11-month-old daughter decided to camp below in the field by the pond. In a

reversal of our normal domestic arrangement, my husband assumed baby duty for the duration of the retreat leaving me free to participate. They spent their days lying in the grass, reading, hiking (we have a baby backpack), and swimming in the pond—all of which they enjoyed immensely.

Mornings officially began at 7am with breakfast, but some were up long before for an early morning swim. At 7:30 dance instruction began at the top of the hill with either Anastasia for *Dance of the Song of the Vajra* or Bodhi for *The Liberation of the Six Lokas*. Then Jim held Santi Maha Sangha in Rinpoche’s cabin, which lies partially back down the hill. It was an small, intimate gathering with practitioners seated on cushions, pillows, steps leading upstairs, a bed, chairs—anywhere at all—the room framed by the large bay window looking out over the pond. While we listened to instruction the sun moved through skylights.

Afterwards, Jim sent us out into the world to practice...into the woods, up to the mandala, into our tents, into the pond...wherever we found ourselves. And from all directions of Khandroling then came sounds of mantras. My husband, some days after the retreat, said that he had heard so much of this that by the end of the retreat he heard mantras echoing continuously through the woods.

A bell signaled lunch by the pond—varied but always delicious. After lunch, more instruction with Jim followed by Yantra Yoga with Lyon and more dance with either Anastasia or Bodhi and then dinner.

Throughout we had perfect weather—sunny and clear though cool in the evening when the sun had set. We had rain on one of the last nights of our stay, but it was pleasant. The lightning stuck so close by that there was sometimes no room for counting between sight and sound. The dome of our tent would glow with each strike, but we remained dry and comfortable—my baby slept quite normally in my arms.

Initially, the rain had begun during dance instruction for *The*

Liberation of the Six Lokas. Few were bothered—it felt too good, and everyone danced barefoot...feet squeaking on the wood of the mandala as we whirled. It stopped, seemingly on cue, in time for dinner and it wasn’t until much later, after the last of the stragglers made it up hill with their flashlights and into their respective tents, that the rains returned. The next day, I was told how spectacular the mandala looked during the storm and regret not having seen it. And there were animals too, though I did not see them all. One greeted us the first night by taking a few investigative rubs against the tent. On our very last night I heard the cry of an animal like I never heard before—most probably a coyote I was told. And on both occasions, my husband, Sam, slept straight through. He later said that he heard the cry, half in his dreams, but thought it was just spirits and continued sleeping.

And on the final day at Khandroling at dusk on the mandala during Bodhi’s instruction, dragonflies descended upon us—that is, they descended upon the entire area of the mandala—hundreds of them...mating, hunting—and continued to hang and fly around us through the dance.

I came to this retreat with very little knowledge of Dzogchen and having had only one meeting with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche this past spring. I asked Jim Valby near the end of my retreat what he thought distinguished undertaking such introductory instruction at Khandroling from other sites, and his reply was that, apart from its natural beauty, “Khandroling is special because this is where Rinpoche first received transmission of the *Dance of the Song of the Vajra*. In that very retreat cabin where we held Santi Maha Sangha is the place where Rinpoche had his dreams... The very first mandala was made near that pond”...that pond beside which we had slept. Much thanks and best to all that made this retreat possible.

A Letter from Chögyal Namkhai Norbu to the Gars

To all Dzogchen Community Gars, I would like to inform all the Gars about the Baja Gakyil and Jardin de los Naranjos. The land of Baja, together with Jardin de los Naranjos, serves as the Winter Gar for North America or Tsegyalgar West. The entire international Dzogchen Community should collaborate with the Baja Gakyil in that way.

With many Tashi Delegs,
Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

Hello from Jardin de los Naranjos!

We would like to officially open our doors to all who are interested in doing short or long-term personal retreat here. Rinpoche has emphasized that this land is an ideal place for doing intensive practice, so our goal is to make it as available as possible for this use. Eventually we hope for this to be a true haven where practitioners can engage in long-term personal practice retreats, in an isolated, undisturbed and vibrant setting.

We are still in the early stages of development, so at this time there are few modern amenities for those living here. We are working towards providing more infrastructure and support, in order to accommodate peoples’ varying circumstances; but for now, living is rather rough. Those interested should be familiar with outdoor living, and should have their own tent and camping gear, though we will be renting out stoves and cots for people who want them. You should be in fairly good physical condition. There will be some basic safety guidelines to follow and you will have an attendant who will check in with you and bring you supplies as needed.

There will be a few different areas on the land set up to accommodate retreatants, which vary in terms of proximity to ‘base camp,’ degree of accessibility and isolation, and character. We will be expanding this choice of location as time goes on.

Those who come here at this early stage will also be helping us learn how to best support retreatants in the future, so you will be an indispensable part of our growing process. As such, some patience and flexibility is requested, though it will hopefully not be needed much. This will be a truly unique way to collaborate in a project that will benefit the whole Community, as well as to develop in one’s own practice.

In setting retreat costs, we will try our best to accommodate everyone interested. The focus will be on covering expenses rather than on making profit, and development will be planned in such a way that ongoing expenses are minimized, so that retreat facilities and services will be extremely affordable. For information on retreat costs, payment plans and work exchange possibilities, or to schedule a retreat, please write to <retreats-at-bajasangha.org>.

As this land truly belongs to all of us Vajra brothers and sisters around the world, we invite you all to give us your ideas, hopes, suggestions, and collaboration, in whatever form it may take. In particular, right now, in addition to retreatants, we are asking for participation in the building projects on the land, especially from people with specialized knowledge and skills, and also for contributions towards building expenses. To contact us for any of these reasons, please write to gakyil@bajasangha.org.

Thank you all for your participation, and stay tuned for more news!

Sincerely,
The Baja Gakyil

New York City has SPACE

The NYC Dzogchen Community is happy to announce that we have finally gotten our new space, located at 151 West 30th Street, 4th Floor. This is a dream come true. During Rinpoche’s last visit to NYC, he listened to the Community’s proposal for getting a permanent space, and stated that this was a good idea since the Community “needed to have an address”. He said that it was important to have a place to practice, and supported our plan for making it work. At that moment, many practitioners got together and did a pledge to financially support the space monthly, with the idea of renting it out when we are not using it in the near future to generate more income for rent. On Wednesday, July 6th, we did our first Ganapuja at the space. It was a very special day and we were all very happy. Besides being in a central location of Manhattan, the place is big enough to fit a mandala, do Yantra Yoga, and fit a considerable number of practitioners for collective practices. Thanks to Rinpoche and the generous help of Mark and Jane Fulton, who teamed up with Johanna Bennett to find the right location, we now have a physical support for our practices and activities. Rinpoche named the space Kundrolling (kun=all drol=liberation ling=place). We are very excited and would like to invite people from all over the world to stop by and join us in our practices at Kundrolling when they come to NYC. Our website will have our activities posted. You can find us at www.nydzogchen.com or call our hotline (212) 252-6818.

There will be a gala opening party at Kundrolling on Friday, Sept. 23 starting at 7PM. All are welcome!

Maya Stolkiner



PIONEERS (Longer-term Volunteers) NEEDED FOR BAJA DZOGCHEN COMMUNITY LAND AT THE TSEGYALGAR WEST WINTER GAR, JARDIN DE LOS NARANJOS, BAJA CALIFORNIA SUR, MEXICO

As many of you know, we have been given a wonderfully large (3,000 acres) and beautiful piece of wild ranch land in Baja California Sur, Mexico, near the towns and beaches which are most attractive to tourists and to ex-patriots who have retired there. Small groups of rural ranchero families live scattered throughout the valley where the land of San Miguel is located. It is a forty-five minute drive to the international airport from the property on a rural, dirt road, which is sometimes challenging, and periodically can be closed during the rainy season (August - mid-October). Currently, we are in the process of planning the completion of twenty-two one room casitas already on the property, the water system, the toilets, and other related buildings. We are looking for members or close friends of the Dzogchen Community who would be comfortable living in this wild and unspoiled landscape, and who would be able to commit themselves to a stay of a minimum of two months, but preferably up to a year if this is agreeable to them and to the local Gakyil. In addition, volunteers who wish to work for a shorter period of time (a minimum of two weeks) are also welcome.

QUALIFICATIONS:

- Those applying are preferably bilingual in Spanish and English.
- Having a history of attending retreats with Rinpoche and practicing with other Dzogchen Community members—highly preferable.
- Familiarity and ease with the desert outdoors—comfortable using an outdoor house,

water filtration, tent or tent cabin or unfinished dwelling; able to drive a truck or van with clearance and 4-wheel drive over rough roads; be away from town for days at a time; O.K. with wild animals such as large lizards, wild pigs, wandering cows and donkeys, and the occasional snake; physically hardy and able to do physical work, walk distances on rough desert trails, etc. A plus if you bring your own camping equipment. A double-plus if you own a high-clearance vehicle and are willing to bring it.

We know that for some people, this describes a paradise, but for others, this is not what they had in mind. Our land is just starting to be settled and developed, and the people who are there in the beginning need to be the outdoors types.

4. Prefer those with easy-going personalities, who will enjoy conversing positively and casually with the locals in the area, will not be overly paranoid or worried when something new or challenging comes up, and who like to work.

5. Skills which are of use in this environment: garden and plant cultivation; first-aid training and/or certification; experience with eco-touring and/or providing hospitality services; construction (including skills with cement, cement plaster, tiling, hardscape, stonework, and innovative building techniques such as cob and straw bale); familiarity with alternative energy sources—solar in particular; healing and health; familiarity with water and solar systems; tent and deck installation; shopping for supplies; cooking; engineering or fix-it mechanical background; trail-building and maintenance; compost toilet construction and maintenance; chipping and composting; erosion control; botanical identification; writing and spreadsheet computer skills; leading practices; supervision of workers; general outdoors background; general manual labor background; and interfacing with the culture at large in Baja which is friendly, and low-key.

COMMUNITY WILL PROVIDE

- Vehicle for work and transportation around the property. Gas and repairs for personal vehicles when used for Community purposes.
- Food expenses.
- Information and help with obtaining a visa, locating car insurance, etc.
- A sheltered place to live on the property - tents and camping gear available on a first-come/first-serve basis. At present we can accommodate three to four people with Community equipment; however, all others are welcome to provide their own camping gear. Shelter is also available in the unfinished casitas, but a tent is necessary.
- Personal support - we have a very friendly and supportive group of people in Baja who are working on the land project, and who like to practice together. They are very familiar with all details of living in Baja. This is a wonderful group to work and practice with! Plus, there is a full Baja Gakyil, with members also in California and Mexico City, as well as Baja.
- Retreats with Rinpoche in Baja will be free for volunteers staying longer than two months.
- Yantra Yoga and Vajra Dance Retreats with certified members of the Dzogchen Community on the land will also be free for those volunteers staying longer than two months.
- Opportunity to do supported personal retreat after serving as a Pioneer. One month of volunteer service earns one-half month of retreat; two months earns one month of retreat; where the working day constitutes four hours/day, five days per week, and retreat means having an attendant, but paying for one's own food.

At this point the Community cannot provide a salary or stipend, or transportation to and from Baja. However, hours spent as a Pioneer count toward membership in the Baja Gar, until the new system of worldwide membership is fully instituted. Pioneers can obtain a recommendation from the local Gakyil after their service, to assist them in future employment.

DUTIES:

- Provide support for and take part in work-parties and projects being conducted on the land. This requires working very closely with the local members of the Dzogchen Community and Gakyil, also requires some supervision of local workers.
- Provide a friendly continuous presence on the land, as caretakers and observers, and interface with visitors and neighbors, acting as positive representatives of the Dzogchen Community.
- Keep Gakyil and local Community informed of land and road concerns, suggestions, observations on trespassing, fencing, cattle, wild animals, changes due to weather, resource use, water flows, neighbor concerns, guest accommodation and management, etc.
- Manage eco-tour and camping guest traffic, and assist in developing these programs.
- Help to ready the land for events to be held there by the Dzogchen Community.
- Meet and practice regularly with the local Dzogchen Community.
- Carry out defined roles conscientiously and consistently: such as cooking and shopping; obtaining supplies; hospitality and management of guests; physical work of all kinds; building; gardening and plant care; management of workers, etc.
- Those working on the land are expected to commit to a job description and to have periodic discussions with the local Gakyil members about their progress. Individual work agreements will be drafted according to each applicant's specific skills and strengths.

If you are interested in this opportunity, please send a communication of interest to the following: redgakyil@bajasangha.org Include a resume or history of your background with the Community and your work and skill background, as well as what you wish to gain from this experience. We look forward to hearing from you.

Thank you,
The Baja Gakyil

Adults Study Norbu Rinpoche's Special Teachings for Children - Kumar Kumari

by Rev. Jacquelyn Sendak

According to Laura Evangelisti, a senior Yantra Yoga teacher, Chögyal Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche took a special interest in designing a Yantra Yoga course for children, at the request of two children, who wanted to learn to do the yoga that their parents were doing. Rinpoche took on the project because he felt that adult Yantra Yoga was inappropriate for children, and he decided that he personally would draw the poses and do an oral translation from Tibetan texts, which resulted in the book, *Kumar Kumari Yantra – the Garland of Lotus Flowers*. Laura explained that the Kumar Kumari (Kumar meaning boy and Kumari meaning girl) incorporated inhaling, exhaling, short and long breathing. Rinpoche believes children's bodies, and their breathing abilities were undeveloped, and that youngsters could not hold the air after inhaling as is done in the adult Yantra Yoga. Laura Evangelisti has taught the Kumar Kumari Yantra Yoga system to people who wish to teach

children. She shows her enthusiasm, humor, and joy in talking about the program. She feels that every Yantra Yoga teacher and students of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche interested in teaching children could benefit from taking the course. In Fall 2003, I joined five Yantra Yoga students from the Dzogchen Community in Berkeley, California, traveled cross-country to Conway, Mass. to study the Kumar Kumari Yantra Yoga Course. Our class was so much fun that when I heard that Laura Evangelisti would be in California to supervise a presentation of the parts 3 & 4 Yantra Yoga teaching, I asked whether we could ask her to teach the Children's Yantra Yoga. Because the two resident Yantra Yoga teachers were working so hard on setting up the adult Yantra program, I was asked to help coordinate the training for the Kumar Kumari. I asked Laura to present the children's Yantra Yoga for adults in Berkeley, California. At first, she hesitated saying that this teaching is rarely taught. Since I was requesting that she teach this class at the request for the our local Community members, she said she would consider doing it, adding that many students interested in this class are teachers and Yantra Yoga practitioners. Laura finally agreed to teach a

class designed for adults who are students of Rinpoche who wish to teach their own or other children. I sighed relief, and my spirits soared, as I realized that our Community would be offered this unique learning opportunity! In May, ten of us from two generations arrived to take this very important course with Laura. Participants in our group were a Yantra Yoga teacher, elementary school teachers, Hatha Yoga teachers, and students of Yantra Yoga. We felt the youth is our future for continuing Rinpoche's teachings, and since he took a personal interest in the children, we realized how vital the teaching is. In Italy, Laura taught the pilot program of the Kumar Kumari, and the children also had a curriculum of the Santi Maha Sangha (SMS) base study and practice to deepen their knowledge of Dzogchen. Every Saturday their parents would explain the SMS, and Laura would do the Yantra Yoga. In the summer, the children went before Rinpoche and took exams on what they had learned. Rinpoche could then monitor their progress. Each child would have a personal appointment with him to discuss things. "Rinpoche always asked about their behavior. For example, they would confess whether they beat up another kid," stated Laura.

Rinpoche would patiently advise them to avoid that negative behavior, and the teachings continued. According to Rinpoche, this particular practice of Yantra Yoga for children encourages good health and helps them to balance the five elements. "One could see the benefits resulting from this program of yoga," added Laura. "It was very nice for the children (usually ages 5-13) to learn coordination and attention," said Laura. Some of us met the two teenagers in Conway, Mass, who were the original kids who requested a streamlined course of Yantra Yoga years ago. Both are not only current adult Yantra Yoga practitioners, but are also lovely human beings. We were so impressed by meeting them in our first Kumar/Kumari class that we continued to ask for an update on how they were doing during our California class. "The main point of this teaching is breathing and movement with various syllables. These are very important and like a mantra," said Laura. Rinpoche coordinated a particular sound with the breathing making it easier for the children to learn and develop. During the course, we experienced the ease of this by combining the movements, sounds, and breathing, Laura stated. I felt like a kid doing the simpler Kumar Kumari Yantra, having

just completed the more challenging third and fourth level adult Yantra Yoga training. The Kumar Kumari has fifteen exercises versus the one hundred eight adult Yantra Yoga ones, because there are less breathing that involve holding one's breath said Laura. The Kumar Kumari Yantra Yoga is based on the principles in the *Nyi Zla Kha Sbyor*, a Tibetan text that has the essential teachings on Yantra Yoga introduced by scholar and master Vairocana. This yoga is based on the special needs of children using the same methods as the Yantra Yoga taught to adults. Rinpoche made it adaptable for children's growing bodies and breathing abilities that are different from an adult's. Rinpoche has emphasized that a child's physical condition results in a limited breathing ability when holding the breath. Using the various sounds or mantras such as "OM", "HA" "A" made the Kumar Kumari very different from the adult Yantra. Using these sounds during the Yantra Yoga can help develop their breathing capacity by helping to produce a different type of exhaling or inhaling, thus helping a child to enhance breathing naturally. Movement, breathing, and sound are incorporated into the children's Yantra Yoga, resulting in balancing the elements of the body which in the Tibetan system results in good health and can

continued on next page

New New Mexico Gakyil.

RED Denise Coady
YELLOW Susie Marlow
BLUE Marta Macbeth

The contact email:
Marta: rubystone1215@hotmail.com
Denise: denisecoady@gmail.com

Vajra Dance in New Mexico October 7 - 9, 2005 with Anastasia McGhee

The Dzogchen Community of New Mexico is pleased to announce that we will be hosting the second of a series of weekend courses in the Dance of the Song of the Vajra with Anastasia McGhee beginning September 9th, 2005.

The third course will be held on the second weekend in October , October 7-9 (or 10
We will begin where we have left of f, with a little review of where we've been, and go from there.

Cost: To Be Determined.

Note: To participate in this course, one must have already received transmission of the Dzogchen teachings and the *lung* of the Song of the Vajra from Chögyal Namkhai Norbu. All sessions should be attended in sequence from the beginning if someone has not taken a course in this particular Vajra Dance before. If you have ever taken a course in this Vajra dance it is fine to come to this session. If you have never had this course, but wish to attend, please contact Anastasia at <anastasi - amc@earthlink.net>.

For further information or to inform us you are interested in attending, please email Marta Macbeth at <rubystone1215@hotmail.com>. To guarantee a place in the course(s), please register by sending a check or money order for US \$50 (per course) or the whole amount, made out to DZOGCHEN COMMUNITY OF NEW MEXICO, to DCNM c/o Susie Marlow, 20 Outliers Road, Jemez, NM 87025 USA.

Kumar Kumari continued from previous page

improve the physical condition of a child. According to Rinpoche, the particular sounds used can help a child develop clarity and reduce obstacles through the coordination and reinforcing of the child's energy. Breathing brings the *prana* (vital energy) that helps one to blend the breath with the various mantras. During the class, we were learning helpful hints on how to present this teaching to the children. According to Laura, one should never force a child to do this or learn too much at once. She emphasized having a playful attitude at the beginning and including simple yogic type stretches to prepare them for the Kumar Kumari. A fun and relaxed attitude was maintained during our class, which was designed to be very structured. We concluded our session with the final exercise exhaling to clear the breath and a very short relaxation. After completing the class, Laura advised us to start teaching the children locally. She said that it was good to introduce the Yantra Yoga simply once a week for about 20 – 30 minutes with only one or two things for them to learn. Laura added that it is best to have similar ages grouped together; for example, a younger group of ages, 5-8, and with older children ages 9-13. However, it is fine to mix the ages she stated. For younger children it is usually more difficult to remember things, however, eventually with repetition they do it, added Laura. While teaching, one should make eye contact with the younger children while exaggerating with the face the various sounds and breathing that use both the mouth and nose, stated Laura. She

added that it is nice to have a visual connection for the children to follow.
“If you show them the mouth with the sound, it is easier for the children to imitate the movement,” she said.
In contrast, she has found the older children are able to retain and do more. Laura's relaxed, joyful, humble and loving attitude during the teaching of this class made it an inspiring and pleasant experience. We regretted the end of the class, and Laura encouraged and inspired us to start a group to teach children connected with our Community. After completing the course, I felt grateful to Rinpoche who paid homage to the enlightened beings, Vajrasattva and Guru Rinpoche, for this particular teaching to expand prosperity and benefit all sentient beings. I highly recommend that anyone interested teaching yoga to children not miss this invaluable and precious teaching next time it is offered.

Reverend Jacquelyn Sendak, a student of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche since 2001, is a certified Hatha Yoga teacher who has taught children yoga for many years in Virginia and California.

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DZOGCHEN RETREAT IN SÃO PAULO, BRAZIL OCTOBER 15 - 19, 2005

with CHÖGYAL NAMKHAI NORBU RINPOCHE

GURU DRAGPHUR DONWANG AND OTHER DZOGCHEN INSTRUCTIONS
(Including Yeshe Zangthal Empowerment)

São Paulo, 15 to 19 October, 2005
Hotel Della Volpe
Rua Frei Caneca, 1199
Phone (hotel): +55-11-3549-6466

Cost of the retreat:

Full participation: R\$300 (= approx: USD 130 or 110 Euros, at today's official rates)
or R\$100 per day

Yantra Yoga classes for beginners and explanations of the practices in the afternoons.

REGISTRATION AND INFORMATION:

If you speak Portuguese or Spanish:
Please send an email to retiro@dzogchen.com.br or call Heloisa at +55-11-3287-1324

You can also send an email in English, French, Italian or Spanish to:
contato@dzogchen.com.br or brazil@dzogchen.com.br or otavio@dzogchen.com.br

We kindly request everybody (even if you are sustaining or meritorious members) to send us an email for the registration before the beginning of the retreat (as soon as you can).

With kind regards and many Tashi Delegs,

The Dzogchen Community of São Paulo, Brazil (Blue Gakyil)

south america

Tashigar South
Rosa Akamirano – Secretary
Comunidad Dzogchen
Tashigar
Calle pública S/N
Tanti 5155
Pcia. de Córdoba
Argentina
Tel & Fax: 0054- 3541-498 356
Email: tashigar@dcc.com.ar

Tashigar North
Finca Tashigar
Prolongación de la Calle Bolívar
Valle de Pedro González. Isla de
Margarita
Tel: 00 58 295 415 5800
Email: tashinor@mail.dzogchen.ru
Web site:
www.dzogchenvenezuela.org

VAJRA DANCE AND YANTRA YOGA TEACHER TRAININGS, MARGARITA

VAJRA DANCE FIRST LEVEL TEACHER
TRAINING TASHIGAR NORTE, MARGARITA
ISLAND
NOVEMBER 19 – 24, 2005
WITH PRIMA MAI AND ADRIANAN DAL BORGO

The Gakyil of Tashigar Norte is very happy to announce the Teacher Training of the Vajra Dance, first level with Adriana dal Borgo and Prima Mai.

Date: November 19 - 24

Cost: \$200US

We inform you that in order to participate in this training you must know the Dances of OM AH HUM and the Dance of the Liberation of the Six Lokas, Pamo and Pawo, very well. We, therefore, kindly, ask you to communicate with us your intention to participate at the earliest possible date.

Warm Greetings from Tashigar Norte!!

Blue Gakyil

YANTRA YOGA COURSE IN TASHIGAR NORTH,
MARGARITA ISLAND
SECOND LEVEL TEACHER TRAINING
NOVEMBER 13 – 18, 2005
WITH FABIO ANDRICO AND LAURA EVANGELISTI

Tashigar Norte, Margarita Island, invites you to participate from November 13 -18, 2005, in a Teacher Training Course on the Second Level of Yantra Yoga, led by Fabio Andrico and Laura Evangelisti. This course is for those who wish to deepen their practice and knowledge of Yantra Yoga, particularly Pranayama practices and the application of Kumbhaka. It's very useful and advisable for everyone and a good occasion to study in depth for those intend engage to become local instructors.

Cost: \$200US, with no discounts.

We ask you to please register as soon as you can at:
Email: secretary@tashigamorte.org
Tel: 00 58 295 2580332/00 58 295 4155800

(The course could be cancelled if we don't have enough participants.)

Thank you.
Tashigar Norte, Blue Gakyil.

Tashigar Norte
www.tashigamorte.org

Namgyalgar Gakyil News - June / July 2005

Namgyalgar Retreat Program 2005 – 06

The Blue Gakyil is devising a retreat program for Namgyalgar for the next 12 months, which will be finalized and publicized in the near future. A summer retreat program at the Gar between December 26 and January 15, which will include a Family retreat (incorporating a program for children) followed by two weeks of Santi Maha Sangha study and practice guided by SMS teachers, Angie & Lisse, is being planned.

Tourism Grant

An application for a Federal Government Tourism Grant has been lodged with the AusIndustry. The grants, from \$50,000 to \$100,000, are for businesses that want to move some of their business activities into tourism activities. After seeking the approval of Rinpoche, the Gakyil applied for this grant with the view to constructing the Camper’s Kitchen and developing some walking paths for day tourists. This is an attempt to enable the Gar to become financially self-sustaining by tapping into an Eco-Cultural Tourism niche market. It would also raise the profile of the Dzogchen Community and facilitate more integration with the local region. If successful, the project, “Sacred Spaces and Mountain Paths” will be overseen by a committee of three Gakyil members from each of the colors. It will be known at the end of September if the grant application has been successful. For more information about the grant please contact the Red Gakyil.

Dark Retreat Cabin

The construction of the dark retreat cabin has just been completed. Furnishings and some finishing touches still remain to be done, such as installation of water and some painting (with non toxic paint), which local and visiting practitioners are welcome to help with during August. Guidelines for doing dark retreat are being developed and will become available when it is announced that the cabin is ready for use.

Namgyalgar Gakyil

Madeleine Fogarty is our new Vice-President, providing support to President, Joanna Tyshing.

Building Fund Trust

Many thanks to Andrew Palmer who has joined the Board of Trustees of the BFT to help advise on legal and administration matters.

DCN Fundraising Ideas

If regional groups or individuals in the community have any fundraising ideas they wish to pursue (on behalf of DCN) please convey these to Yellow Gakyil member Madeleine Fogarty at: <madeleinef@iprimus.com.au>

Bookkeeper Position

The Gakyil is considering applications that have been received for the position of bookkeeper for Namgyalgar.

Namgyalgar Website

Welcome Paul Kapp as new manager of the Namgyalgar Website, who replaces Paul Mortensen who has kindly fulfilled this role for the past few years. Chris Kinross and Bruno Irmici will provide Website support.

Happenings at the Gar

Catherine Williams continues as Geköe at Namgyalgar, welcoming people and ensuring the Gonpa, cabins and surrounds are kept tidy and functional and that wood heaters provide much needed warmth in the winter months. Assisting her with various tasks on the land are Georgia and Paul, who will be resident for a few months. Rabgyi and resident SMS Scholarship holder Angela and several local practitioners also assist Catherine. The Geköe, Gar residents and local practitioners meet regularly to discuss and coordinate the daily / weekly activities and operation of the Gar.

Fundraising Film Nights: To help support Rabgyi Lama in obtaining a permanent residents visa the local Gar community have been organizing film nights at the Narooma Cinema. 77 people, despite heavy rain on the night, attended a special screening of “Himalaya”. Elise Stutchbury gave an introductory talk and answered questions at Himalaya and will do so again at the next film, providing the audience with an opportunity to learn something about the films cultural and Buddhist aspects, as well as about the Dzogchen Community and the Gar. DCN pamphlets were made available in the foyer while wine and local practitioners served cheese. The next fundraising film screening will be “Travelers and Magicians” on the August 18.

A meditation & contemplation course will be advertised on the night. Angie Gilbert at the Gar will lead the course. Similar courses will be led by Elise Stutchbury in Moruya, (30km north of the Gar).

WWT: There were four new people in attendance at the World Wide Transmission at the Gar on 16 July.

Tibetan classes at the Gar: Rabgyi is starting a Tibetan class for local people to attend. It is for written and spoken Tibetan and is starting around August 1st.

Broadband for Namgyalgar: The Gakyil is investigating the possibility of the Gar connecting to broadband. As the web casts are now being offered in audio and video, broadband will be a definite advantage.

Regional News

Melbourne: Recent events held in Melbourne included a ‘Death & Dying’ workshop led by Joanna Giblin, a two weekend SMS Base level course of led by Angie Gilbert, and a fundraising stall that reaped \$600, which was offered in scholarships to assist people to attend the SMS course. Thirty-five people in Melbourne attended the WWT on July 16.

Sydney:

A practice weekend was held on July 23/24 led by Elise Stutchbury that focused on the training in the Paramita of Discriminating Wisdom, including sessions on Reflection & Meditation and Absence of self-nature.

Brisbane / SE Qld.:

There will be a course in the Song of the Vajra Dance led by Rita Renzi on 15-30 October at Maroochydore, Southern Queensland (and not at Caloundra as was previously publicized). For further information and to register please contact Elizabeth Nielsen at: Tel: 07. 54739146 Email: <arya@powerup.com.au>

Namgyalgar DzogchenCommunity in Australia
PO Box 14 Central Tilba,
NSW 2546
Tel/Fax: 61 02 4473 7668
Email: namgyalg@acr.net.au
Web site: www.dzogchen.org.au

Vajra Dance Courses in Australia September and October 2005

with Rita Renzi, authorized Vajra Dance teacher from Italy

The Song of the Vajra Dance: Two Parts

Namgyalgar, Tilba Tilba, NSW (via Sydney or Melbourne):
Sept. 24 - October 9

Caloundra, Queensland (via Brisbane):
October 15 - 30

Cost:

Parts 1 & 2 Full Price: AUS \$650.
Parts 1 & 2 Concession Price: AUS \$500.
Parts 1 & 2 DzCmt Members: AUS \$500.

One part only Full Price: AUS \$325.
One part only Concession Price: AUS \$250.
One part only DzCmt Members: AUS \$250.

This pricing does not include meals or accommodation.

Registration Deposit: \$50.

Registration:

Namgyalgar Course:
Part One: September 24th to 30th
Part Two: October 3rd to 9th
Registration forms are available from the Secretary, Viki Forscutt at:
Tel / Fax: 02 44 737 668
Email: <namgyalg@acr.net.au>
Postal address:
Namgyalgar, PO Box 14, Central Tilba, NSW, 2546 Australia.

Information about Namgyalgar and caravans or tent sites on the land, as well as travel to the Gar is available from the secretary. If you are interested in off land accommodation, please inform the secretary as soon as possible - bookings must be made immediately owing to peak holiday period.

Caloundra Course:
Part One:
October 15 to 21
Part Two:
October 24th to 30th

Inquiries & Registration:
Elizabeth Nielsen:
Tel: 07 54739146
Email: <arya@powerup.com.au>

Information:
Jean Mackintosh
Tel: 02 44737 049
Email: <jeanimack@southernphone.com.au>

These courses are available for beginners or advanced practitioners. However, practitioners must have transmission from Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, either by having attended a retreat with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu or through participation in a World Wide Transmission Practice Session with a Dzogchen Community group.

This is a special opportunity to learn The Song of the Vajra Dance, and everyone who is interested is encouraged to participate in one of the courses.

If you have difficulty with funds, please contact one of the retreat coordinators or the Namgyalgar secretary. Concessions are available and also fees may be paid off gradually in installments. You can start paying now. Please don't let finances stop you, contact us!

DIED:

JEY CLARK

It is with profound sadness that we inform the Dzogchen Community about the death of our Vajra Brother and beloved friend, Jey Clark. He passed away Tuesday morning, August 9, 2005 at 12:48am at a hospital in Berkeley, California. Jey was surrounded by his family and friends. Jey died peacefully while practitioners were performing Shitro around him. Jey was a long time active member of the Dzogchen Community and was certified by Rinpoche as a teacher of Yantra Yoga and Santi Maha Sangha. We are grateful for his loving contributions of hard work, humor, and a sparkling presence in our Community. Jey will be missed. We encourage everyone to include him in his or her practice.



GEORGETTE KELLY

It is with sadness that we write to let you know that Georgette Kelley died in the early hours of Tuesday, July 12, 2005. She was at home, with her life partner, Daphne Hawkes, and her two best friends. Her passing was peaceful and filled with grace. Georgette was diagnosed with Stage 4 cancer in August 2003 and elected to use alternative medicine treatment, and her last two years were vital and fulfilling for her, as she continued her analytic practice, lectures and remarkable friendships and deep interests in spirituality and psyche. She was very grateful for these months, having been informed that her prognosis was grave, her projected lifespan being under 9 months. She will be deeply missed by so many. Georgette was a long time member of the Dzogchen Community of North America and brought to it a generous heart and wonderful spirit.



ERIC FATABENE

Sadly, our Vajra brother and member of the Dzogchen Community from the United Kingdom, Eric Fatabene, took his own life late Sunday night, July 26, 2005. Any friends or acquaintances that want to send their feelings or condolences, please send them to Peter White at peter@cambridgeacupuncture.net and we will make a compendium for his friends and relatives to read.



"I place a certain trust in human nature, even the most limited."
Jean Genet

in this shivering evanescent dream illusion
one isolated hermit poet
one piper at the gate
one ray of enlightenment from under a tree
one writer on the fringes
one heroic solitary seeker
waking in the midst of this contrived universe
can cut through the fundament of conventionality
and with pure individualistic naked mind awkward illumination
stand forth
as one veritable thing
in this phantom world

Michael White

Reorganizing, continued from page 13

rate – at least during these years so that we can have a future. Otherwise, when I was ill I thought what a shame that I hadn't managed to finish the Santi Maha Sangha and we don't know how long the Dzogchen Community will continue. I sacrificed for so many years. My aim is that even though I won't be in this dimension any more, the Dzogchen Community will remain for future generations."

more effective and long lasting.

THE POINTS

Rinpoche went on to speak about the points in general, explaining how some of them become evident by swelling up and becoming painful when there is pressure on them (one can apply moxa even in cases of trauma, wounds and infections), while all the others are fixed and located in precise points which can be identified using a unit of measure referring to a thumb or two fingers (tson), four fingers (sor), etc., calculated on the basis of the patient's structure, not the doctor's.

In the book on moxa that Rinpoche has almost completed, he mentions 500 fixed points, which are distributed along the spine, at the sides of the spine, on the trunk, at the sides of the trunk, on the head, on the arms and legs. The map of these points is the result of very interesting research carried out by the Master, in which he has compared various texts and documents and not limited himself to merely mentioning the points described in the "Four Tantras of Tibetan Medicine". Regarding each point, he speaks about the various sources and in some cases only one source is identified. The texts and documents on which Chögyal Namkhai Norbu based his research are the following:

- "DAWE GYALPO" (zla ba'i rgyalpo), a text, which was translated by Vairocana, in which there are many points, not mentioned in the Four Tantras;
- A text with the same title translated from Sanskrit into Chinese and then from Chinese into Tibetan in which points not described in the other are mentioned;
- A document which was found at Tun-Huang in which they speak about moxa as a therapy that was used very much at the time of the ancient kingdom of Shang Shung;
- A text on moxa written by DEU'UMAR or DILMAR (DE'U DMAR DGE BSHES BSTAN 'DZIN PHUN TSHOGS), a famous 18th century doctor who was held in high esteem by Changchub Dorje;
- A 'gterma' teaching by Changchub Dorje in which he speaks about applying moxa for illnesses that will manifest in the future;
- A text written by Kyungtrul (khyung sprul nam kha' rgyal mtshan), an erudite 18th century Bönpo who was dedicated to the study of medicine, Bön medicine.

Explaining all the points, their location and the benefits from moxa application on each one of them requires a great deal of time and so Rinpoche confined himself to showing in detail the points on the back and on the sides of the spine and then concluded with a description of some

of the points on the upper part of the trunk. Then he announced that in the future he plans to hold a course of theory and practice of at least fifteen to twenty days on the same topic when he has finished the final version of the book. We sincerely hope that it will be translated as soon as possible for the benefit of all those who have studied and developed the capacity to practice this ancient therapeutic skill.

The course concluded with a few moving words from Rinpoche who announced that even though he has concluded his research on the ancient history of Tibet and has almost finished his work on moxa, he will never finish his commitment to the Dzogchen teaching.

We thank you Rinpoche for your generosity and commitment. May that be an incentive for us all.

Moscow DZC continued from page 11

more center of Dzogchen Community. Rinchenling organized all the retreats in Moscow, from 1994 till 1998.

Since 1993 our Community was officially registered in the Ministry of Justice as a religious organization. We actively started making translations, holding collective retreats on different practices and invited Fabio Andrico and Adriana dal Borgo for Yantra Yoga and Vajra Dance courses. At the second retreat of Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche, which took place in 1994 in the Moscow region, there were already about one thousand people who came from all parts of Russia, Ukraine and Baltic Countries. A lot of people received the transmission of the Teaching and the Moscow Community became very big, so we really faced the necessity to have our own premises. In 1997, thanks to large efforts of some Community people, Rinchenling was able to rent a small premises in an old house at the center of Moscow.

From this moment, there started a new stage in the life of our Community: there appeared a Gonpa and Library; we created a Publishing House and mini Printing House. Many new members came to the Community and we permanently were holding collective practices as well as Yantra Yoga and Vajra Dance. As soon as the Community got its own premises, a serious work started on translating and publishing books, creating audio and video archives. During work of our Publishing House there were made 92 different types of Rinpoche's books, including the books on the first three levels of Santi Maha Sangha and also 30 books of other teachers of Buddhism. Translating, editing, typing, imposing, printing – all this we were doing by ourselves. At present, more than 90% of all

the books of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu published in Russia are made in Moscow. All Russian-speaking Communities from Baltic Countries to the Far East use these books.

We have collected a large archive of audio and video recordings of different retreats, created a library of books on Buddhism and, in particular, the collection of books and texts on Dzogchen Teaching of our Master Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche. Now in our library can be found about 800 different types of books on Dzogchen Teaching, Buddhism and Bönpo in Russian, English, Italian, French, German and Tibetan languages.

We are in a close contact and fruitful collaboration with Shang Shung Edizioni in Merigar. Our Edition helps Shang Shung Edizioni in annual publishing of the practices calendar by verification it here in Moscow. Also, the Moscow Community makes transcripts of different retreats and sends them to Merigar.

Constantly Rinpoche has been reminding us about the necessity of creating a Gar in Russia. Finally in 1998 there was found a nice place in Moscow region and Kunsangar appeared. A lot of Community members from Moscow also took active part in this process. So, this is our story.

What is happening now?

Unfortunately, the district where our Community had its premises is under reconstruction and old houses will be destroyed, so we were asked to move out. For two years we have been negotiating with the Moscow Government about giving us another premises, but no results at the end. The prices for rent in Moscow are unreasonably high so there's no chance for the Community to rent a suitable place.

Considering our circumstances, the Gakyil has made a decision to buy new premises. In this case the Community will get the possibility to develop for many years in the future and to continue its activities as it used to be before. We still have Kunsangar, but it is situated in the Moscow region and many practitioners are not able to go there regularly to take part in collective practices, Vajra Dance or Yantra Yoga because it takes quite a long time to get there and back. All of us live and work in Moscow and we need a place there.

That is why we have created a Sponsorship Program and an Accumulating Fund for purchasing new premises. The Accumulating Fund exists with a principal "a little bit but from everybody". The majority of Community members don't have a large income, but thanks to the collaboration of many people quite a considerable amount of money has been already collected. Unfortunately, it's still not enough. That is why we continue to ask Community members liv-

continued on page 21

PASSAGES

BORN:

On July 21 at 6:36 in the morning, Anabel was born to Aleksandra Adamek and Dimitri Fieri in Montepulciano in Tuscany, Italy. Mother and baby are both doing well and the practitioners of Merigar send their very best wishes to the three of them.



Special Practice Calendar for Four Months

Wood Bird Year 2005-2006

Part IV and Final Calendar for the Year

Including the 7th – 10th Tibetan months (September 13th – December 31st 2005)

GLOBAL TIMETABLE

ANNIVERSARY OF ADZOM DRUGPA

9th Tibetan month – 25th day
Saturday 26th November 2005

01.00 Wellington, Auckland
02.00 Hawaii
03.00 Fairbanks
04.00 San Francisco, Los Angeles, Vancouver
05.00 Denver, Salt Lake City, Pagosa Springs, Edmonton
06.00 Chicago, Mexico City
07.00 New York, Conway, Montreal, Atlanta, Detroit, Havana, Kingston, Indianapolis, Ottawa, Lima, Quito
08.00 Caracas
09.00 Buenos Aires, Sao Paolo, Rio de Janeiro, Santiago
12.00 GMT, London, Dublin, Lisbon
13.00 Rome, Berlin, Oslo, Paris, Madrid, Amsterdam, Copenhagen, Brussels, Geneva, Prague, Salzburg, Stockholm, Budapest, Vienna, Warsaw
14.00 Helsinki, Athens, Ankara, Beirut, Jerusalem, Vilnius, Johannesburg
15.00 Moscow, Murmansk, Baghdad, Kuwait City, Riyadh, Tashkent
16.00 Kabul
17.00 ODDIYANA, Islamabad
17.30 Delhi, Bombay
17.45 Kathmandu
18.00 Dacca
19.00 Bangkok, Jakarta, Saigon
20.00 Singapore, Beijing, Lhasa, Manila, Hong Kong, Kuala Lumpur, Taipei, Perth
21.00 Tokyo, Seoul
22.00 Brisbane, Vladivostok
22.30 Adelaide
23.00 Kamchatka, Melbourne, Sydney

7th Month, 10th day
Tue. 13th Sept. 2005

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

7th Month, 15th day
Sun. 18th Sept. 2005

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

7th Month 19th day
Wed. 21st Sept. 2005

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

7th Month, 25th day
Tue. 27th Sept. 2005

This is a Dakini day and also the anniversary of Phagmo Drugpa (1110-1170), the chief disciple of Gampopa. Try to do a Ganapuja together with your Vajra sisters and brothers. If there are no other practi-

tioners nearby, you can do a Medium Thun on your own. In either case, when you transform yourself into the Dakini Simhamukha, recite her heart mantra as much as possible and then do an intensive practice of Ekajati.

Month, 30th day
Mon. 3rd Oct. 2005

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

8th Month, 10th day
Wed. 12th Oct. 2005

This is a special day of Guru Padmasambhava, therefore you can do the Guruyoga of Padmasambhava. If you have time and the possibility you can do a Ganapuja with the Guruyoga and the long life practice of Guru Padmasambhava together with your Vajra brothers and sisters. Otherwise you can do the long life practice “Universal Wisdom Union”.

8th Month, 15th day
Mon. 17th Oct. 2005

FULL MOON. This is an important day to do the long life practice of Amitayus, “Union of Primordial Essences”. It is best to do it early in the morning and a Ganapuja in the evening.

8th Month, 19th day
Fri. 21st Oct. 2005

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

8th Month, 25th day
Thu. 27th Oct. 2005

This is a Dakini day and also the anniversary of two great Dzogchen masters, Rigzin Kumaraja, who transmitted the Dzogchen teachings to Longchenpa and to the third Karmapa, and of Rigzin Tsewang Norbu (1698-1755), a great Dzogchen master of the Nyingmapa School. It is therefore an excellent day to do *Akar Lamai Naljor*, the Guruyoga with the White A. If you can do it in the morning, that is best. Then, if you have the time, you can do a Medium or Long Thun later in the day, with an intense practice of Simhamukha, or a Ganapuja, if you have the possibility.

8th Month, 27th day
Sat. 29th Oct. 2005

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

8th Month, 30th day
Tue. 1st Nov. 2005

DARK MOON.

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

9th Month, 3rd day
Fri. 4th Nov. 2005

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

9th Month, 10th day
Fri. 11th Nov. 2005

This is a special day of Guru Padmasambhava. It is also the anniversary of the 16th Gyalwang Karmapa and of Tertön Sogyal, a previous reincarnation of Sogyal Rinpoche and discoverer of many *terma*. It is therefore a good day to do the long life practice of Guru Padmasambhava “Universal Wisdom Union”, which is included in the Medium or Long Thun. You can do this in the usual way or, if you have the possibility, you can do it with a Ganapuja.

9th Month, 15th day
Tue. 15th Nov. 2005

FULL MOON. This is a day of the Buddha and a good day to do the long life practice of Amitayus, “Union of Primordial Essences”, either collectively or individually according to your possibilities, in the morning and in the evening a Ganapuja.

9th Month, 22nd day
Wed. 23rd Nov. 2005

This day is the important celebration of Buddha Shakyamuni’s descent to earth from the realm of the Divinities. It is called “Lhabab Tuchen”, the Great Time of the Descent of the Divinities. It is an ideal day to do a Ganapuja with your Vajra brothers and sisters. If there are none nearby, you can do a Short or Medium Thun on your own.

9th Month, 25th day
Sat. 26th Nov. 2005

The 25th is a Dakini day and also the anniversary of the great Dzogchen Master Adzom Drugpa (1842-1924), a previous reincarnation of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu. He was a disciple of Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo and a master of great masters such as Changchub Dorje and Ayu Khandro. Therefore, when it is 7 pm in East Tibet on this day, Chögyal Namkhai Norbu will give the transmission of Guruyoga with the specific practice linked to the anniversary of Adzom Drugpa. In this way the transmission will be live because the transmission has no distance. Rinpoche will transmit and throughout the world people who do the

practice at the same moment will be in the transmission and will thus receive the transmission. This practice should be done at the appointed time together with your Vajra brothers and sisters or, if that is not possible, alone. (In Italy, this practice will be done at 1 pm.)

SEE THE GLOBAL TIMETABLE

9th Month, 30th day
Thu. 1st Dec. 2005

DARK MOON. This is a good day to do *Namcho Shitroi Naljor*, the Yoga of the Peaceful and Wrathful Manifestations, in the morning. It is also an important day for the practice of Ekajati, so try to do a Long or Medium Thun, reciting the heart mantra of Ekajati as many times as possible.

10th Month, 10th day
Sat. 10th Dec. 2005

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

10th Month 11th day
Sun. 11th Dec. 2005

This is an important day for the practice of Ekajati.

10th Month, 15th day
Thu. 15th Dec. 2005

FULL MOON. This day is considered to be the day to honor the Lord Buddha in general, and it is one of the best days to do the long life Practice with the Dakini Mandarava in particular. Generally the best moment to do this kind of practice is between 7 and 8 in the morning but if you don’t have this possibility, then do it in the afternoon or later in the evening when you are free. It is also a good day to do a Ganapuja.

10th Month, 25th day
Mon. 26th Dec. 2005

Today is a Dakini day and the anniversary of Tsongkhapa (1357-1491), who made a synthesis of the previous schools and founded the Gelugpa School. It is a very beneficial day for reinforcing the energy of the universe so try to perform a Ganapuja with your Vajra brothers and sisters. If there are no other practitioners nearby you can do the Medium Thun on your own, transforming into the Dakini Simhamukha and reciting the heart mantra as many times as possible.

10th Month, 30th day
Sat. 31st Dec. 2005

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



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Tseggyalgar Update continued from page 11

Sept. 30 – Oct. 2 Friday – Sunday ,
Part II of the Dance of the Song of
the Vajra, with Anastasia McGhee

Oct. 14 – 16 Friday – Sunday at
Khandroling: Practice of the
Purification of the Six Lokas.
Practice times: 9 am, 11 am, 3pm,
and 5pm

Oct. 28 – 30 Friday – Sunday , at
Khandroling: Chöd Practice
Weekend. Practice Schedule: 9 are
Sang Offering. Chöd: 11 am, 3pm,
and 5pm.

Oct. 29 Saturday: Halloween Party
at the Farmhouse, Khandroling.
Potluck, 7pm

Nov. 4 – 8 Web cast of Rinpoche's
teachings from Margarita retreat,
and Guru Rinpoche Practice
Weekend. At Schoolhouse: Practice
schedule: 9am Web cast. Guru
Rinpoche practice, Friday 7pm. Sat
& Sun, 1pm, 3pm, 5pm.

ing in Moscow to contribute into
the Accumulating Fund because
even small donations give a lot at
the result.

The Sponsorship Program has the
aim to work with the sponsors
who can donate larger amounts of
money. Such people have already
appeared and we continue to col-
laborate with them.

We made a decision to thank
everybody who will donate some
money for buying new premises.
For this reason we prepared dif-
ferent memorable gifts as a sign
of our gratitude.

We are working with several real-
tors and lawyers who consult us
and help us to find the right
premises. At present, we have
collected one half of the minimal
amount of money that we could
use to buy at least a small of fice.
All this has been done in one year
Full variant of “Own premises”
program will soon be published
on our website www.rinchenling.ru

“It's very important to have own
place”, that's what Rinpoche said
at the meeting with Moscow
Gakyil in Crimea during the
recently held retreat there when
we told him about our program of
collecting money for buying the
new premises. For us it's a bless-
ing.

Until now we rent different places
in the city for the collective prac-
tices, The Vajra Dance and Yantra
Yoga. In spite of hardships we try
not to interrupt the translators' and
publishers' activity. And we are
sure our efforts will be justified
after some time.

Using this possibility that *The
Mirror* kindly gave us, we would
like to thank everybody who par-
ticipated in Accumulating
Foundation or became
Community sponsors.
We wish all the Community all
over the world had stable devel-
opment for the benefit of all sen-
tient beings!

*With best regards,
The Gakyil of Moscow DC*

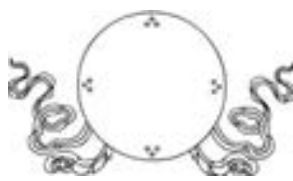
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Pilgrimage from page 12

ernized and a raised platform has
been constructed there. At the
moment the Shang Shung
Institute is holding a meeting
there with the new director ,
Yuchen Namkhai.

I go out of the Golden House and
see that on the east side of the gar-
den, the acacia tree that was in
danger of falling on the roof and
whose roots were interfering with
the drainage pipes has been
removed but that the garden has
been adorned with three new rare
trees. A new boundary wall has
been built behind the house and a
water cister n with double th e
capacity of the old one has been
set up on the hill. Finally on the
east side of the house there is
something new: a lovely little
porch with an external fountain in
brick.

At this point my moving pilgrim-
age comes to an end.
I do not go down to Gadeling, the
residence of the Master and his
wife, Rosa, in respect for their
privacy.



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Infested by the Caterpillar Fungus A once in a lifetime experience (Part II)

by Daniel Winkler

In April 2004, I found myself crawling on all fours over the slightly moist ground, inhaling the aromatic smell of the small-leaved rhododendron and the fungal breath of soil awoken by spring. The pleasant warmth radiating from the strong subtropical sun was cancelled out by a cold wind blowing down from the snow-covered jagged peaks surrounding us. However, the sunlight was supposed to be a major help in spotting the tiny stromata, the fruiting bodies of the Caterpillar fungus, which emerge with the first green sprouts of sedge grasses in an otherwise brownish landscape. Sonam Doden, a Tibetan butter dealer from Dardsemdo, who agreed to take my friend Sherab Gyaltsen and me on a Yartsa Gunbu hunt, told me that the shadow of the tiny fungus would help me to tell the stroma apart from all the other little brown objects that carpet the ground in early spring, such as rhody twigs and withered stems of edelweiss and asters. Finding the elusive stroma by its shadow sounded a bit better than the Tibetan folklore that the caterpillar fungus can be bestspotted on a windless day, since only a plant with an insect as its root would tremble slightly.

We had been crawling around for over an hour now at 4,500m [14,000 ft] and had not found a single “bu” as Sonam called it for short. At least this mode of movement did not cause any altitude-induced shortage of breath. Scanning the ground so closely, I was reminded of the vegetation studies I had done in the early 90s in East Tibet, and in the absence of the fungus my mind kept itself busy by babbling names of plant remains I thought I recognized, such as *Kobresia pygmaea* sedges, *Notholirion bulbiferum* lilies, and *Meconopsis horridula* blue poppies. Luckily, not far above us a Tibetan family had interrupted their beautiful singing, breaking out a few times into excited screaming. Apparently they were sharing their joy when finding some “bu.” Their success told me, it should be only a question of time until we stumbled upon the elusive Yartsa Gunbu too.

I marveled at all the small azaleas that blanketed the slopes. All were about half a meter tall, kept in check by browsing livestock. I recalled the beauty of these shrubs in late May. Once I drove by when all the surrounding slopes were ablaze in bluish purple from their tiny flowers. Set on fire, my chain of thoughts went on, probably all these slopes had been burned before to create good pastures. Pastures replaced uncultivable slopes where dark spruce-fir forests or evergreen oak-spruce forests had grown and shrub lands owing to centuries of grazing and slope burning. This must have substantially extended the habitat of the caterpillar fungus in Tibet. The yak and its herders as the best friends of *Cordyceps sinensis*? Interesting idea.

Suddenly I realized I was looking at a minuscule brown straight protuberance between tufts of grey grass. And it had its own shadow! But it did not move. Could this be it? Was this the nee-

dle in the haystack? Sonam and Sherab were sure it was Yartsa Gunbu. I got out my Swiss knife and was ready to dig it up. Wait a



Cordyceps in the ground D WINKLER

minute, Daniel, I told myself; first you have to document it. Get out the camera. I had come half way around the world to find some *Cordyceps sinensis* growing in the wild after years of collecting info and data, especially on its importance for Tibetan nomads and farmers. Seven years after I first encountered it in Bachen, I was finally looking at a stroma pushing its way up from the soil.

Digging out the caterpillar fungus I first used my knife to cut the turf. *Kobresia* sedges have very dense root systems. Often Tibetans cut the turf into bricks and build walls out of it, definitely a form of ancient green construction. Most of the biomass of *Kobresia* is concentrated underground, a great strategy to protect itself from extreme weather and widespread intense grazing. The “host” of *Cordyceps*, the ghost moth larva, feeds off these sedges, which make up most of the grasslands of the Tibetan Plateau, over which I was crawling like a larva myself. Once I had carefully removed the humus-rich topsoil and tough roots of the sedges from the front side of the fungally transformed worm, I started carefully to peel back a thin layer of mycelium that encapsulated the insect part of the whole Yartsa Gunbu. Finally, the larva showed its yellowish body so I could take a photo of the whole organism *in situ*. We continued our search but found only two more “bu” within the next few hours.

Around noon, in typical Tibetan hospitality, the fungus foraging family invited us to join their picnic. They had brewed a pot of tea, although to my tongue its taste did not invoke any memories of tea. It is better described as a kind of broth, since lots of salt and butter, most of the time rancid, is added. But a cup of soup is just the right thing on a cool spring day up in the mountains, even if it tastes rancid. This is the unique taste one has to accept to find culinary contentment in Tibet.

I had my teacup with me. Every Tibetan always brings his own bowl with him wherever he goes, since it is also needed for eating “tsampa,” roasted barley flour mixed into the tea, Tibetan’s daily staple. Mixing tsampa into tea is a challenging exercise that takes practice and refined finger coordination. First, one has to guess the right amount of flour and, second, the flour gets mixed into the greasy tea with your

index and middle fingers. Watching a Tibetan mixing tsampa it seems very simple, even gracious and clean. Actually, clean is a misnomer for two reasons—first, I was using my dirty fingers after digging larvae and, second, the procedure is rather messy for the under skilled. I have developed an approach to minimize the mess: I do the first mixing with my knife. Yes, in this instance the blade I had just used to cut turf.

In the end the batter is supposed to turn into a kneadable mass. A Tibetan friend told me how he had been admonished as a child for not cleaning his bowl properly with the words “every dog is able to keep its bowl cleaner than you,” which makes perfect sense when considering that



Sonam Doden Cordyceps Hunting D WINKLER

the bowl is often licked clean after use. Along with the tea we were of fered bread and a tasty string cheese. I felt regret that I only had some roasted almonds to share.

Chatting about our Yartsa hunt, we found out that the family was also disappointed with their meager harvest. Sherab speculated that there might be so few specimens because the area was well searched. This was a plausible explanation as evidenced by the multitude of colorful dots in the brown landscape moving steadily but trance-like in slow motion searching all over on this Saturday in late April. Also, it was the very first week of the season. When I looked closely at the dug specimen, it was apparent that the spore producing asci-cells growing along the top of the fruiting body had not fully developed yet. This is bad news for *Cordyceps*. In an ideal world *Cordyceps* should not be collected until after the first week or two, when they would have released their spores to guarantee sustainability of collection. However, no such regulations are formulated anywhere yet, and so far *Cordyceps* seems not seriously endangered, a promising fact for a very precious organism collected intensely for centuries in Tibet.

At this point it might be time to explain what all this fuss is about. This funky fungus, besides its larva-fixated feeding fancy, is a highly sought-after medicinal mushroom in the two ancient systems of medicine in Tibet and China. While there are plenty of fungi to go around for the 6 million Tibetans living right among it, the demand of 1.5 billion Han Chinese is a market force of a completely different dimension. The western market so far is rely-

ing on lab grown mycelia, since most westerners don’t encounter enough social pressure to eat larvae.

In Tibet, the use of *Cordyceps sinensis* was traced back by Dr. Yonten Gyatso to documents of the 14th century, where it is mentioned in the Tibetan text “Instructions on a Myriad of Medicines” [*Man ngag bye baring bsrel*] by Zurkhar Nyamnyi Dorje’s (*Zur mkhar mnyam nyid rdo rje*’s [b.1439-d.1475]). Some Tibetan doctors (i.e. Gawā Dorje) want to recognize *Cordyceps sinensis* under a different name in the ancient Gyu Zhi [*rGyud bZhi*], the “Four Tantras” [by Yuthog Yontan Gonpo [the older 8th, the younger 11th Century], but other Tibetan doctors and

scholars insist that Gyu Zhi’s “*Da byid*” is clearly a lizard, not a fungus.

Thus, Tibetan Medicinal use of *Cordyceps sinensis* is clearly documented for over 500 years, maybe even close to 1000 years. For sure Tibetan documents predate the first references in Traditional Chinese Medicinal (TCM, see below) texts by at least three centuries. However, this fact is so far not to be found anywhere and *Cordyceps* is basically presented as a TCM drug. In Tibetan Medicine, Yartsa Gunbu is placed in the category of “medicinal essences” (*Tsi Man*), which includes several tonics. It is used as a tonic for general strengthening, boosting the immune system and increasing virility, and is prescribed for kidney and heart problems. It is also used for treatment of hepatitis B. Unlike in China, where patients consume the whole fungus, in Tibetan medicine it is mostly prescribed in formulated composite remedies, which contain a variety of ingredients to balance each other, thus optimizing their efficiency and minimizing side effects.

In Traditional Chinese Medicine “Dong chong xia cao”, which is a literal translation of the Tibetan name, is regarded as a powerful remedy for asthma and TB, and thus was rumored to help against SARS. However, its main lure is its tonic function, to speed up convalescence, prevent sickness, and boost the immune system and vitality. Of course, anything that boosts vitality will boost libido as well, which in turn attracts the segment of consumers with the most disposable income, namely men over forty. Many Tibetans perceive *Cordyceps*’ Viagra-like function as the main reason why the Chinese are pay-

ing a fortune for these infested worms. When I asked some Tibetan men in Lihang if they use some of the “bu” they gather, I was answered with laughter. “We don’t need to take that!”

Regardless of how the Tibetological discussion plays out regarding the first written reference to Yartsa Gunbu, currently the oldest Chinese reference to “dong chong xia cao”—the Chinese translation of the Tibetan name “winter worm-summer grass”—is from 1757 by Wu Yiluo, but it was clearly used before that date in China. In 1736 the French Jesuit Du Halde, residing at the imperial palace, described how the court physician treated him successfully with the “Hia Tsao Tong Tchong”. Du Halde mentions the fact that it is hard to “procure” and that its value is four times its weight in silver.

There are other Chongcao species used in Traditional Chinese Medicine, such as the brightly orange fruiting *Cordyceps militaris*. This entomogenous fungus grows all over North America and Eurasia and is also widely cultivated. I came across a zip-lock bag full of it in the office of a Chinese ecology professor, who swore that it had helped him to overcome his late afternoon exhaustion.

There are a multitude of studies demonstrating the medicinal potential of *Cordyceps* and other active components in *Cordyceps sinensis*. Results include lower bad HDL cholesterol, improved blood circulation, and better utilization of oxygen in the body. In 1993, the latter was brought to the attention of the western world during the track and field world championships in Stuttgart, Germany, when to everyone’s surprise Chinese runners won several long distance races. This success raised eyebrows, and the coach partially attributed it to the fact that he had integrated *Cordyceps sinensis* in the athletes’ diet, which is not restricted as a performance-enhancing substance. This success, which was not repeated at the next world championships, is still being used to advertise *Cordyceps*’ capacity to enhance stamina, a scientifically substantiated claim.

If I had true fungal vision I would insist that it is no coincidence that a stamina-enhancing mushroom—our term “stamina” referring to the threads of life spun by the divine Fates—is made of thread-like hyphae spun by the fungus, but I don’t really need to spin this thread too much, since the story of the caterpillar fungus itself suffices.

Daniel Winkler is trained as a geographer and ecologist. He works as researcher and NGO consultant on environmental issues of the Tibetan Plateau and Himalayas. He has published on forest ecology, forestry, traditional land-use practices, and medicinal plants and fungi. His articles and photo essays are published on his web pages [www.daniel-winkler.com], where there is also posted a much longer article with proper references on Cordyceps sinensis. Daniel lives in Kirkland, WA with his wife Heidi Schor and two daughters.

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ALSO IN THE ISSUE: A DISCUSSION OF MIND TRAINING (LOJONG) WITH KEN McLEOD, JUDITH LEE, AND B. ALAN WALLACE. A REPORT BY TODD SITIN THAT EXAMINES THE INNOVATIVE METHODS THAT SANGHAS ARE USING TO RESOLVE CONFLICT IN THEIR COMMUNITIES. TENSHIN REB ANDERSON PUNCTURES OUR NOTIONS ABOUT ZAZEN, AND GIL FRONSDAL PRESENTS A NEW TRANSLATION OF THE CLASSIC DHAMMAPADA.

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Many Buddhists, one *Buddhadharma*

How I Met Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

by Franz-Josef Heim

How did I meet Rinpoche? Naomi asked me to write my story for The Mirror when we met at the July retreat at Merigar and I replied, “Do you have a lot of space, like the whole Mirror?” It is difficult to tell a long story in a short space, but I will try.

I met Rinpoche because I was interested to accomplish something meaningful with my life. First, it became obvious to me that a life lived based only on eating, drinking, defecating and sleeping, all the while waiting for death to arrive but pretending to enjoy, was quite ridiculous. Oh, I forgot, of course, love, sex, money and power were also components of “a nice life”. Nevertheless, that was apparently how we lived in my society. When I was fourteen, that was how it looked to me. I was sure that there was more to life or there was no meaning at all. So I proceeded to look for some.

I met Rinpoche sixteen years later. This journey of sixteen years started with drugs, lots of them, expanding consciousness and reading all the esoteric books I could get hold of. After seven years of dedicated practice, I went to India and realized after taking a closer look at my gurus, those hippies ten years older than me hanging around stoned in Kathmandu’s pie shops, that somehow that road did not have very much meaning either. I decided that I needed a real way, not some doped up fancy dream states, so I looked for a guru, found a Hindu yogi and became his disciple. I did a forty-nine day retreat with him on a mountain top in a mud hut in India, visions and all, waiting for “Babaji” to turn up. Babaji took his time, my visa expired and my guru proved to be very interested in using me to come to the West.

I decided that maybe I should check my backyard first before looking further for strangers with dubious motivations and got myself a copy of the new testament. Originally raised strictly Catholic, I had refused all things Christian as outdated. I was surprised to discover that what Jesus said was really fantastic. I took to Christianity like a duck to water, but I still felt that somehow the Catholic Church had made a mistake. I was raised in the Church, so why had I completely missed the marvelous teaching of Christ? So, I took the Protestant way and became a fervent member of the first sect I met, the “Children of God”, and started to learn how to be Christian in their way. After a few months of running around Kathmandu trying to show Westerners how great it was to have all the answers, I got suspicious about their way of interpreting the Bible. I decided that maybe I should go again to those guys who put it together and started to eye up the old Catholic Church. It was really out of sheer desperation.

The “Children of God” had really devastated my mind planting some very devious double binds into my brain, so that now if I left I was a traitor to God, selling out to the devil and since I had swal-

lowed their thing ‘lock, stock and barrel’, it was very difficult to see what was real Christianity and what was not. At this point, I was twenty-two years old and not exactly the brightest or very educated (I had left school early since I was taken up by my dope research). It was really a very agonizing time. I eventually found my way to Rome, looking for truth, living like a beggar, or Christian pilgrim, practically living in the churches and going from holy mass to holy mass all day from morning to evening, following a more experienced pilgrim. I decided I wanted to become a monk because I felt I had finally found the truth I had been looking for. I went to different monasteries, living there for a week or two, trying to find my place, my order. I was very identified with the Franciscans, but was also drawn to the more contemplative life of the Benedictines. A Polish bishop who took me under his wing and gave me a copy of the Philokalaia, a collection of sayings from a Christian master of the Eastern Orthodox Church. Later I left for Assisi, on foot and begging all the way without touching money, in the same way as St. Francis had done in his life. I arrived in Assisi and settled in a hut in the hills and practiced my prayers. I used to open the Philokalaia and just read a bit. One day I read: “Whoever aspires to sainthood first of all needs to find a perfect master or his road ends in madness”. I was struck; I didn’t have a master and it was getting obvious that my self-styled way was not really working, so what to do?

I knew about a saint, St. Theresa of the Little Flowers, who said she would help all beings till the end of time. There was a specific set of prayers done for a eleven days, without fail. I immediately proceeded to do those prayers with the request to send me the perfect guru. After eleven days, I went to the picnic area behind a little monastery built on top of a cave St. Francis used to stay in, to look for food in the waste baskets. As I approached, I saw a funny looking man sitting at one of the tables and he waved to me to come nearer. He said, “Hi, do you want to eat something? I invite you.” He had a fresh pizza. I said, “Oh yes, thank you”. Then he said, “I heard you are looking for a perfect guru”. I said, “Oh yes, that is true”. He said, “I happen to know one and he is teaching soon in a place called fire mountain and if you agree I can take you there now”. I said, “Oh, but is he Christian?”, and he replied, “Oh no, he is a Tibetan who lives in Napoli, he teaches there at the University”. I said, “I’m sorry, but I couldn’t accept, you see, I need a Christian guru” and he said, “Oh, never mind, I will go then”. And he went. After this meeting it took another eight years before I met this teacher

from Napoli. After the man left I finished the pizza and went back to my cave. That evening I met two fellows while I was sitting doing my sunset prayers asking the same ques-



tion. Search guru? Their guru was a European esoteric man. The next day I figured no one else would manifest and that somehow I already knew my Catholic guru. I searched my memory and after a few days understood the next step. This all happened in the summer of 1979. One year earlier, when I had come down from my Indian guru retreat in the Himalayas and arrived in Rishikesh, I met a German woman called Maria Krieg. I told her about my doubts regarding Hindu gurus and that I was interested in Christianity again, she told me about a remarkable Christian monk she had met in South India called Father Bede Griffiths. I had visited various monasteries in Rome and had met a strange monk clad in orange robes. This monk told me that he was a disciple of that very man, Father Bede, and that if I ever needed help on the path I should go to Camaldoli Monastery and meet a certain teacher who lived there. In Assisi this all became clear, and I decided to go to Camaldoli to meet this monk and ask him to become my guru. I went and asked him and he said no, but if I wanted to meet Father Bede, I wouldn’t have to go to India since the Father was visiting this monastery in a week, so I came back and met him. As soon as I saw him, I knew he was my Christian guru. I immediately went with him to his monastery in India and took Brahmacharya, or preliminary monks vows. The day I arrived in the ashram and Father Bede greeted me and said, “I want you to go down to the river and meet Rupert Sheldrake.” I went to the river (a sacred river in south India) and saw a man deep in conversation with a woman. So I went and said, “Are you Mr. Sheldrake? I am sent by Father Bede to meet you.” He said, “Yes, and this is my future wife.” At the time this interchange meant nothing, but later it became clear it was a key. I also met another woman in the ashram called Sophia, who later turned out to be another important

link to Rinpoche. I was supremely happy at the monastery; I could study, pray, meditate, do yoga, all in a Christian context. A dream had come true. I studied all the Christian mystics, the Upanishads and the Bhagavad Gita. After some time, my visa ran out and I thought I would go back to Germany, apply for a residence visa that would allow me to stay in India forever and live as a monk in the Shantivanam Ashram with Father Bede as my guru. The plan was that I would stay in Germany for one year until my visa came through and study Christian Zen in a Benedictine monastery during my wait. When I went to this monastery to find the priest who was in charge, I discovered he had married his secretary and left the order. The place where he taught Zen was taken over by a Jesuit. I thought that one is as good as the other, so I went there and asked to be allowed to study Zen until my visa came through. This innocent decision proved to be the beginning of the end, not only of my monk hood, but also my Christianity. This man tried to get me away from my Benedictine guru into the Jesuit thing; in the end he had me convinced that it was pure madness for a young man like me to become a Benedictine monk in India and that running away into a monastery was only for idiots and cowards. He sent me to his psychotherapy guide, Graf Von Duerckheim, who headed a center I had visited before my pilgrimage to Rome. I went there, studied psychotherapy, and took up the Alexander technique* as a profession. I met a girl, fell in love and realized that three years of celibate living hadn’t taught me anything about passion or how to deal with it.

In 1981 I lived and studied Alexander technique and therapy in Basel, Switzerland. Over the next couple of years, I lost my belief in Christianity as a transformative force and grew in my psyche and body awareness. I read many books about all religions and was very interested in Tibetan Buddhism. In this time I made my first contact through Ole Nydal and took refuge via the Kagyu order. Somehow I still couldn’t practice; my Christianity was still opposed.

After I graduated, I passed through Paris on my way to London for post-graduate study in Alexander technique. In Paris I visited Sophia, the woman from Father Bede’s ashram. Sophia recommended while in London that I visit a woman who was doing overtone-singing workshops. When I arrived in London I immediately contacted that woman. When we met, I recognized her as the girl who had been standing next to Rupert Sheldrake in the Shantivanam Ashram so many years ago and indeed she was his wife now. I did the workshop and during a break we were

talking about gurus and I told her the story of Assisi and she said, “But wait, that is my guru, Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche!” I said, “What?! Are you sure?” because somehow I had always considered this event as a kind of symbol, never as real. She said, “Sure, he is the only Tibetan teaching anything at all in Napoli and he is a great master of Dzogchen”. I was very surprised; I asked where he lived and how I could meet him. She said he was coming to London in a month to do a retreat in Wales and I could go, but later I got afraid, so I let the occasion pass. I now had a phone number of the London Dzogchen Community in my pocket. This was in 1985. Meanwhile, my work was progressing, I had clients and results, I had many strange experiences due to the techniques of Alexander and a Swiss shaman I was studying with, and my students asked me if their experiences were indications of enlightenment. By the end of 1987, many things had happened. I had had many experiences, many dreams; I had received a Manjushri initiation and a lot more. I was studying and teaching. Finally, I felt limited by the tradition of the Alexander technique, and could no longer find explanations for what was going on with me or for my clients. Over the years I had read widely: Ken Wilber, an every day reading companion ever since he was indicated by Father Bede, Trungpa Rinpoche, Krishnamurti, etc. In the end, I felt maybe I should look for a guru again. So I phoned the number I had kept since 1985 expecting to hear I would have to travel to Italy or some distant place to meet this master, and to my surprise John Renshaw answered the phone said, “You want to meet Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche? No problem. Come to the Rigpa Center tomorrow, (more or less a mile down the road from where I was living), he will be doing a retreat there. It is the first ever in London. You are welcome.” So I went, and, as they say, the rest is history.

Rinpoche has handed me the key to the magic marvelous world of the crystal and the peacock feather, and even though I suspected that normal reality is not what it seems, this vision was (and is) truly astonishing. For eighteen years I have tried to live in this wonderful land of empty rainbow forms dancing in the sky. I know that I’m a rainbow too, but as I soon discovered, old habits die hard. Instead of living in my comfortable natural state home, I find myself more often than I like in exile on Main Street. But at least sometimes I notice that I can find my way home.

** The Alexander Technique is a method that works to change (movement) habits in our everyday activities. It is a simple and practical method for improving ease and freedom of movement, balance, support and coordination. It is not a series of treatments or exercises, but rather a reeducation of the mind and body.*