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View of Tashigar

L. VALBY

Where the Stars Fell to Earth

Christmas Retreat at Tashigar

by Naomi Zeitz

Tashigar, the auspicious and lucky Gar, lived up to its name at Christmas, 1996. Heat, blazing sun, blue sky, lightning displays, torrential rains — all the elements in turn dancing in space. Each day as we jarred and jolted climbing the deeply rutted dirt road to the rocky Gar to receive the teachings of Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche, we witnessed the vast vistas of the Los Gigantes mountains and the sky displaying of various states of adornment and spectacle of color that would change dramatically in a matter of moments. Occasionally gauchos elegantly strode along on horses, some in traditional attire, as well as the ambling burro drawing wooden carts precariously perched on wobbly wheels — all creating the sensation of a timeless dimension.

The earth in Tashigar sparkles with light as if the stars had fallen. The area around the Gar is called El Durazno, which means peach. There are groves of all kinds of fruit trees—pear, apple, fig and peach, all bursting forth and preparing for harvest. There are many exotic bird songs for the ear of the Northern hemisphere. A carefully tended organic garden grows near the dry river bed that must be crossed before coming upon the Gonpa. The Gonpa is a wide open poplar and straw roofed structure called a quincho; a typical Argentine ranch building that housed the Christmas retreat for around 130 people, as well as courses in the Dance of the Three Vajras, the Vajra Dance and Yantra Yoga taught by Adriana dal Borgo and Fabio Andrico.

Tents were scattered all around the camping area near the Gonpa, reminiscent of how it must have been in more ancient times when the pilgrims travelled to see the masters and set up camp. Golden

globes of light in the evenings housed the people; some using the light to study until wee hours for the base level of Santi Maha Sangha. Studious ones in need of a break and other pilgrims congregated at the Tashigar for late night refreshments, dancing and music.

As becomes the tradition, the retreat began late afternoon of the 27th of December and finished at midday of the 3rd of January. After the initial session, each day the teachings began at ten in the morning and in the afternoon and evenings the courses of the Dance and Yantra Yoga were held. Both courses were well attended, and the fledgling instructress Marissa Alonso did an excellent job assisting with Yantra Yoga under the guidance of Fabio. There was the final Ganapuja on the evening before the last teaching, as many people had to leave the next day.

Rinpoche taught a basic introduction to Dzogchen with his consistently clear and direct explanations of sutra, tantra and Dzogchen. Rinpoche gave some direction as to the situation of the Gyalpo, as he feels there is a prevalence of that particular influence in Argentina, as well as people who have had contact with practitioners of this practice. Rinpoche suggested intensive practice of Guru Dragpur and Dorje Legpa to counter the effect of the Gyalpo. He also showed us a wonderful map of the world and the Mandala superimposed and spoke a bit about the interrelationship of the Mandala and the world, directions and points and their meanings and impact. (see Teaching on page 2) Rinpoche also spoke about Santi Maha Sangha, its function and value, the related practices of the base level of semzin, rushen and the seven lojon, and then wound things up with a talk about integrating practice into daily life. There was

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ASIA Activities Report

by the ASIA Working Committee



Children of Gamthog

In the winter of 1990, Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche asked ASIA to go to China for the first time. In Beijing participated in a meeting to start a development project in Galenteng village, county Derge in the province of Sichuan. The results of the first meeting were not exciting. We left China with many promises, but few concrete results. Many other meetings followed and the ASIA representatives went more often to Beijing and Chengdu with the hope of obtaining the authorization to start a feasibility study in the area of Derge. But each time the local authorities refused to sign the collaboration agreements.

In the meantime, ASIA along with another Italian ONG, the COSV, had planned a project for the development of health, social and economic conditions in the village of Galenteng. In the winter of 1990, the project was presented to the Department of International Cooperation of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Unfortunately permission to work at Galenteng never arrived and so it was decided to locate the project at Gamthog, a Tibetan village situated on the border between the Tibetan Autonomous Region and the province of Sichuan. In 1993, after long negotiations with the Chinese government, authorization for a feasibility mission in East Tibet was obtained for the first time. Once permission from the Chinese authorities had been obtained, the mission was carried out on site and there only remained the difficulty of confronting the infinite bureaucratic problems of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The project was reworked and changed at least seven times until finally, in 1994, we received news that it had been approved. Yet another two years passed before we concretely saw the first financing. After the first funding was finally received in May

1996, Giorgio Minuzzo and Phuntsok Wangmo left for Lhasa, followed a few weeks later by the architect, Caselli. What follows is a report on the last ASIA mission in East Tibet and Amdo and a summary of the activities of ASIA during the course of 1996.

In Lhasa official meetings immediately took place in order to get the project going. It took several weeks until permission was obtained and then after buying a Beijing jeep, we left for Chamdo. The trip wasn't easy. The road to Chamdo is about 1,300km with the greater part consisting of dirt roads. The landscape was very beautiful even though there were many difficulties. Two passes at almost 5,000m separated the travelers from the area of the project. During the trip, our new jeep broke down four times making us very jealous of the owners of innumerable Toyota jeeps that were roaming through Tibet. After burning up a certain number of kilometers, the alternator left the car without current, battery and lights. One night, in the area of KyunBo, in East Tibet, under a pelting rain, the lights failed and we were in total darkness. After many hardships, we succeeded in reaching a house where we were received with kind hospitality. Until one day, by chance, after having replaced not one but four alternators, Tashi our driver saw a wire bolted onto the radiator. He took it out and from that moment the car started working perfectly again. "...the mysteries of Chinese machinery..." When we reached Chamdo we began the usual round of meetings to pick up the threads of the project that had been negotiated with the local authorities back in 1993. All their representatives from that time had been replaced and the new Prefects had heard about the project but of course didn't know any of the details. The same situation repeated itself at the

county and the village level. The first thing to do was to check out or verify if the land chosen in 1993 was still suitable for the realization of the project or if things had changed in recent years.

When we arrived at Jakardo we found out that the village was losing its traditional features and had become a stopping post for travelers. In place of the old traditional houses there were ugly modern structures with sloping tin roofs meant for the truck drivers who stopped there. Moreover the land that had been offered to us in 1993 which was near a river had been subjected to quick and constant erosion during those years which had jeopardized its stability. But what surprised us the most was the incredible increase in the cost of construction which had jumped from 400 yuan a square meter in 1993 to 1000 yuan in 1996. Because of this our possibility to build the school and the hospital was seriously reduced. Seeing our difficulties the local people advised us to move the project a few kilometers away to the village of Gamthog.

The village of Gamthog is situated a few hundred meters from the Tibetan Region which belongs to Sichuan. The river Dri Chu marks the border between the Tibetan Autonomous Region and Sichuan.

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OUR APOLOGIES: Due to the urgent nature of the report from ASIA, the second parts of the Tibet Amdowas, Healing & Practice, and Windhorse will be published in the forthcoming issue of The Mirror.

The main attitude of Dzogchen is the attitude of Samantabhadra. Samantabhadra means everything is fine, there is nothing in particular to accept or reject. Everything depends on our circumstance and condition; we know this and apply it. Even though this is the main point of our attitude, we must have the capacity to understand and then apply it. That means we must have the knowledge and understanding, and the base of our knowledge must be very concrete. It doesn't mean that we consider everything is fine; it doesn't matter, good or bad, it's the same thing. In the real sense it is not the same, because we are living with dualistic vision. I am thinking, "Oh, everything is the same thing, there is no difference", and when I am thinking that way and someone is taking away my car, immediately I am upset and asking "Who are you and where are you taking my car?" If you are really feeling that everything is the same, why can't you accept this? In a practical way, it is not the same because we still don't have sufficient capacity for integrating. Until we have this kind of capacity it is important to pay respect. At the same time, there is good and bad and we respect that condition. We do our best for respecting this condition. Some people say "Oh, I am a Dzogchen practitioner and everything is fine", and it seems that person has a very high level of capacity of realization, but when there are some problems that person is immediately upset and then the condition doesn't correspond and the person can create more problems.

At least if we feel that the daytime and the dream time are a little bit similar, it is already an indication of some capacity. Also, maybe that person has less tensions and less problems, because they give less importance to all things. Until we have this kind of capacity it is important to pay respect; to karma and the rule of karma. If I do something wrong, then of course it will produce something bad. Particularly if we look at the close relationships we have, for example, with the people with whom we live and other practitioners. We need to pay respect to them. If one is a good practitioner of Dzogchen one must develop clarity. Developing clarity we then know the dimension of each person; their condition and dimension, etc., and we need to respect that. Of course we can make many mistakes, but that is normal. We can always make mistakes, but what is important is that we recognize our mistakes; not being conditioned by our emotions and just letting go and thinking, "Oh, I have very strong emotions, I want to be conditioned by my emotions and I want to be blind". That is really not good. It's better to recognize and realize one has done something wrong and doesn't want to be conditioned by that. It's not necessary to immediately have a revolution. There are always solutions and we can always find them, not by fighting or creating problems. So,

Kuntuzangpo means that everything is fine. Fine means firstly that these things we do must be fine, and if the base is all right then we can go ahead in that way. So it is very important that we each know our own responsibility.

For example, most people have families. We always have a responsibility of families. If you are moth-

teach and explain to someone, then you know how to do everything very precisely. For example, the people who are arriving at the third level, I am thinking they may be able to teach the Santi Maha Sangha Base and go ahead with the first level. Of course, the condition of people is different in general. Some people like to teach and have

very concrete. We have many Lamas we can invite to give these initiations and this is sufficient. Then others must learn well and teach. Not only teaching people training in Santi Maha Sangha, but teaching shine, lhagtong, how to do contemplation and rushen, etc. Then Santi Maha Sangha becomes something concrete for the future

ly very sad. We must not construct a society like that. People who have some practice to do can create a possibility to live together somewhere. For that reason we have been planning a project in Merigar to build a house for old people, but it has not yet become concrete. For old people who couldn't buy a personal house, they can live with other old people and a service is created. Also, the young people now can plan a little and prepare a small house. Then one day they can live longer. Also, my idea for the future is that we can create the possibility of changing countries. When we have nothing else to do, like for example when it is Winter here (Tashigar) you can go to Italy, or the United States. Some people think "How will I do that?", but if you don't move then you have no courage to move. If you move a little then you discover it is not really so difficult to move in the world. Always there is some solution, you can find money and you can move. Also, if there is a group of people, we can organize through the Community moving a group of people. In any case, you think a little about your old age. It is not so far away. We want to enjoy the end of our life, then the rest of life we can enjoy together, doing practice and having a nice life, instead of a sad one. If I have the chance I will enjoy with you. This is my aim.

THE DANCE OF VAJRA I would like to give some advice about the Dance of Vajra. The principle of the Dance of Vajra is integrating movement in the state of contemplation. When we are dancing we need a Mandala. There is also a dance without a Mandala, but we have still not developed that. We are dancing with the Mandala, so it is very important you know the meaning of the Mandala of the Dance. It is different from the Mandala used in the practice of higher tantra. In the Dance Mandala there is only color and some lines and that is all. These lines and colors represent our dimension internally. For example, everyone has six chakras, or sometimes we say five chakras. All these chakras are the base our energy manifestation. All our existence, physical body, channels and energy are linked to these chakras. So the chakras are something like an umbrella. There is the main point and then the main point related to the branches and channels; there are many important points related to the secondary branches. This is our condition of the physical body. In the Song of Vajra, each of these sounds governs all these chakras; the main chakras and secondary chakras of the whole physical body. We need to know first the chakra of the head, for example, how that is related to main points with the Song of Vajra. The second chakra, chakra of throat, heart chakra, navel chakra, then chakra of sexual organs, or the base chakra. These chakras are related with the figure of the Mandala of Dance. When you are dancing and you are in a red line, that line represents the heart chakra. Before that line there are two chakras, throat chakra and head chakra. When you are going to the center there is the blue circle, green circle and then the red circle. The fifth and sixth, these chakras have two lines, because the chakra of navel and the bottom chakra have

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The Attitude of Samantabhadra

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu



Rinpoche showing the Mandala superimposed on the world map

C. GALLI

er, father, or whatever, you feel that responsibility. We know very well how many problems arise in a family, it is normal. Maybe when we start a family there are less problems because we have more emotions. But then those emotions are like the very strong color of our clothing; after rainfall and some sunshine, then slowly, slowly the color becomes a little gray. Then we don't feel like we did before. We feel there is not anything still vital, but it's too late because there is already a family. So you couldn't have a revolution immediately. You must harmonize the family condition, otherwise you couldn't do practice or feel peace with yourself. So, it's important we know that the color doesn't always remain the same. Knowing that helps very much, what is the real condition. Otherwise you see another very new shirt, with wonderful colors and think "Oh, this shirt is fantastic!", but after some years also this manifests gray and then you start to notice other shirts. There are infinite shirts, if we are going after shirts. Really, that is our real nature. If we are going with respect and paying respect to each individual and not giving our emotions free reign, then by knowing the conditions of our emotions we can control them automatically. Then your feeling about the gray color is not so bad. Maybe you can change a little color sometimes; renew.

It is very important when we are doing the training of Santi Maha Sangha that firstly we apply ourselves by doing practice and everything in a precise way. Secondly, you learn very well, because if one day you need to

the capacity to explain and do these things. Some people don't like particularly to teach; maybe they prefer to do practice, their aim is to have concrete realization. We must consider these various conditions of people. In any case, you needn't think that the first thing is to become a teacher. It is very bad for someone who is primarily focused on this idea. These people will never have something concrete for serious realization. They always want to be like a crow, saying A, A, A and never stopping. Someone asked me what I meant by this, and I said that these bad practitioners of Dzogchen tried to say A many times without much understanding, only knowing that with Guru Yoga one sounds the A, so they said A many times and became a crow. That's not true, but in the real sense it is not so good to only think of teaching. If you have done the practices very well, you know them very well, then helping others is also useful. But one must do so in a very precise way and then it really has benefit. That is my hope also for the future with the people who are doing Santi Maha Sangha. I am sure some of the people who arrive at the fourth level will be able to do some teaching of the first and second level people. I can't always do that. As far as initiations like Vajrasattva and Shitro are concerned, it is better that we receive them from some good teachers. I don't have much confidence that my students have the capacity to give initiations. To give initiations one not only has to have done the practice of mantra, but it is necessary that the two states of kyedrim and dzogrim are

and makes some kind of guarantee for the continuation of the teachings for the future. Therefore, we need people who are training seriously and precisely. Then we are not only maintaining the transmission, etc., but we benefit ourselves for having concrete realization. Time passes very quickly. We think, "Still we have time to do the different levels," but really we don't know how much time we have and how long we will live. We must do everything more quickly and be aware of time. We will be continuing the next levels of Santi Maha Sangha training here in Tashigar over the next years.

GETTING OLD TOGETHER Many people are thinking they would like to build a small house on the land here in Tashigar. I think it is very good idea and I like it very much. Not only for Tashigar, but for all Gars. The first thing is that we have a possibility to come together and live a longer time. Secondly, after a few years, we all become old and are collecting our pensions. At that time if we have some small places for living, meeting together, the Community people can sometimes eat and drink together in the evening, and reminisce about our times together, how we were, etc. This is really wonderful! In our society I have seen the suffering of old people, even in very wealthy countries like Switzerland where all the material needs are met. Even the people who have a lot of money; old people are very isolated and the young people are waiting for the old people to die and they don't have good relationships. Many of the old people know that the young people are waiting for them to die. It is real-

The Mirror of Devotion

Interview with H. H. Gyalwang Drukpa for The Mirror

by Liz Granger



H. H. Gyalwang Drukpa

L. GRANGER

Tuesday, January 31st, 1996,
Gadeling Merigar, Italy

The Mirror: Your Holiness, do you have a particular connection with Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche?

H. H. Gyalwang Drukpa: This is what I, too, don't really know because we have no connection in external terms. I know him by name and he knows me by name but we haven't had any material level connection. But lately I feel that there is an inner connection, let's put it like this, a spiritual connection or whatever it is. I don't know. It's very much of a mystery for me. And I guess that he also felt that way because lately he wrote to me several times. And the way he writes is so

close, as if we are brothers or as if we come from one home, like a member of the family or something like that. So it moved me a lot. Of course his activities had already moved me a lot before. And especially when he was sick in New York, quite intensively, he wrote to me as if he thought I could really help him to get rid of his sickness. He gave the impression that he thought that I could really help him. Therefore this really moved me a lot. But other than that I can't say that there is anything in terms of connection. What kind of connection do I have with him - I don't know what to say. In other words I don't have a connection, yet I do.

Mirror: You are part of a new generation of Tibetan masters who have been born and educated outside Tibet. Do you feel that this type of 'exile' from Tibet may have an effect on the purity and the continuation of the teachings?

H. H.: Yes and no. Yes in the sense that many of our new generation masters, for example, masters who are anyway outstanding in the West, are unfortunately contaminating the way of their teaching. Maybe in a way they are doing good in terms of serving people accordingly, without sticking to the original old style which is very stubborn and, I would say, conservative, etc., etc. Maybe it's good to change the style a little bit so that new age people can at least accept the teachings of Lord Buddha and the tradition of Buddhism. But in another way I always feel a little unfortunate, a little bit sorry, that sometimes we lose the essence of the teaching, of the wisdom, of the message by doing these sort of things. Something is lost. And not only the exiled masters who have been brought up in India are doing this but also some of the masters who have been brought up in Tibet. I'm not criticizing anybody. I don't want to criticize. They may be doing good as I mentioned, adjusting themselves and their way

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Samantabhadra

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more secondary chakras.

There is a similar explanation of these chakras, the correspondence of chakras and the Mandala, that can be found in some kinds of Chakrasambhava tantras. Some explanations can also be found in Dzogchen upadesha. In any case, there is the correspondence of these chakras with our physical body first, and then we can understand this Mandala we use for the Dance; it represents our dimension, our world. When we are studying geography we can discover which are the dimensions, lines and more important points. When we are dancing we have specific places where we put our feet. That is related with singing the Song of Vajra, the syllables of the Song of Vajra. If we are dancing the Om A Hum or Dance of the Six Spaces, these are condensed altogether, so we can't understand them one by one. When we are going into more detail with the Song of Vajra, we can understand more. In this case you can learn more deeply about this knowledge.

I will show you this map for having a better idea. Here is the geography of the world and how it is combined with the position of the Mandala. In this case, you can understand which country is in which line. That also corresponds to the chakra of the human being and which characteristic correspondence we have. Here is something very important to learn. In the world we have North and South. Our actual condition is North dominating

South. Because the culture of the North, the power and everything influences the South. The South doesn't have its own position. Why did this happen? It is very simple. We can understand also the condition of human being. In general, in our condition, not only human but also animals, male dominates female. That's why we say we need the same rights and same position and we struggle. That is nature. You can observe animals, not only human beings. But human beings have more capacity, knowledge, and understanding, so it is not necessary that humans act like animals. It is not so easy, because there is nature. In the symbol we use, for example, Samantabhadra is sitting like this, Samantabhadri is working. Samantabhadri is like energy, but not like the main body. Also physically man is stronger than woman. Even if we say we are the same, it's not true. There is a natural difference, we must understand that. Also in our world it is just the same: North is like the male aspect in energy, the South has a female energy. If you look in geography it is also demonstrated concretely. In the North there is greater land. There are many nations and people. In the South there is less land, less people and mostly ocean. That is why the South is dominated and there is an invasion of culture. Originally the people of the South had their own culture, but it's been lost. In Australia, for example, we know there are Aboriginal people, but the Western culture is dominant. For example, in all the Southern Hemisphere we use the calendar of

the North. We say the new year is in the Summer. In the real sense the new year starts in the Spring and there are four seasons. We have four very distinct seasons in both the North and South. We have no capacity to present a different calendar in the South. The South has lost this position. With the Mandala you can understand that. You see, in the Mandala, it is the same in the North and the South. In the eighth line of the Mandala there are the white corners. These white corners of the North and South are not pointed together. That means that the nature of male and female is always in union, like Samantabhadra and Samantabhadri in nature.

There are many interesting things to learn with the Mandala. I am still working on developing some things related to the Mandala that I am not ready to present; particularly discovering the main places in the world. In the main places there are also sounds that dominate that place, like in the Song of the Vajra, that is related also to our chakras and potentiality. When we know these places and which kind of sound relates to them, and we work with our existence in the chakras, then we can have an experience instantly. It becomes very important for practice and having realization. But we must do research and work a long time. I am working very hard on this. I am hoping one day we will succeed and people can travel to these places and do practice and have experiences. That is my aim.

Transcribed and edited
by Naomi Zeitz

Dzogchen Community of Australia
1997 NAMGYALGAR RETREAT
Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche

TEACHINGS IN MELBOURNE

Rinpoche will give teachings in Namgyalgar via Melbourne. We are particularly hoping to attract new people to these sessions, so please spread the word to people you think might be interested.

March 21st-23rd, Melbourne

On The Essence of Khandro Nyingthig, or Dzogchen Upadesha.
Friday 7-9 pm Public talk: free. Saturday & Sunday morning 10-12 am \$40 / \$30.
Venue: Clifton Hill Yoga Studio, 129 Queens Parade, Clifton Hill.
Contact Joanne 03 9329 5401

March 15th-25th, Yantra Yoga with Fabio Andrico at Namgyalgar

A 10-day course of afternoon sessions \$25 full or \$20 conc. per day.
To register for the Yoga course please contact the office. (See member discounts)

DANCE COURSES WITH PRIMA MAI AT NAMGYALGAR

March 15th-25th, Vajra Dance for Beginners.

A 10-day course of morning sessions \$25 full \$20 conc. per day. (See member discounts for both courses)

April 8th - 12th, Advanced Vajra Dance.

Full-day course: \$30 full / \$25 conc. per day. Places are limited. To register for the Dance courses please contact the office.

EASTER TEACHING RETREAT AT NAMGYALGAR

March 28th- April 5th

Retreat teachings on Vajrapani. Rinpoche will lead a 9 day retreat at Easter. Yoga will be practiced and the Om-A-Hum Dance will be taught.

Cost: \$50 full, \$40 conc. per day.

Earlybird Discounts:

For Retreat fees paid in full by February 28th, 1997 a 10% discount applies. For Retreat deposits of \$100 paid by February 28th, 1997 there is a \$20 discount on the remaining payment. Various other discounts are offered to Members. (See info on Membership discounts)

SANTI MAHA SANGHA TRAINING AT NAMGYALGAR APRIL & MAY

April 18th - 20th, Base Level Exam

April 21st - 25th, Level 1 Training

May 9th - 11th, Level 1 Exam

May 12th - 16th, Level 2 Training

Cost: Exam - free. Training Retreat: \$150 for 5 days.

In accordance with Rinpoche's wishes all Santi Maha Sangha fees (retreats, texts and practice materials) must be paid in full. Rinpoche encourages SMS students to take all initiations and teachings again. For second-timers, a donation will be requested in lieu of fees. For those who pass, texts & practice materials will be sold during the retreat. (Hubara share cabins can also be booked for the Santi Maha Sangha retreats.) Further information and registration forms can be obtained from the Namgyalgar office: PO Box 14 Central Tilba NSW 2546. Ph/Fax: 044 737 303 Email: namgyalg@act.net.au

NAMGYALGAR ACCOMMODATION & TRANSPORT

People intending to come to Namgyalgar in Australia for the 1997 Easter Retreat should be aware that it is necessary to book accommodation well in advance as Easter is a peak holiday period. Information regarding types of accommodation, costs and real estate phone numbers are available from the Namgyalgar office. Also information on share cabins has been circulated and is obtainable from either Namgyalgar or the other main Gars. There are 18 beds available in these cabins and as they are very popular it is necessary to book with Vicki at the Namgyalgar office ASAP, by February 28th at the very latest! These cabins have been reserved only for singles and couples who are unable to arrange their own share accommodation. Groups of 3 or more people should try to arrange their own accommodation. If you require help with this please contact the Secretary at Namgyalgar. Please also be aware that there is no public transport in the area of Namgyalgar and it is recommended that people try to share cars or hire a car if possible. Hiring is of course cheaper if shared by a group. For those people staying near the Gar in rented accommodation during the Easter Retreat transport will be arranged. Outside the retreat time it is not so easy to travel to the Gar and shops etc., if you don't have your own car. As much as possible people at Namgyalgar will try to help people with transport. Please inquire with the Secretary for further information regarding accommodation and transport. If you are camping at the Gar there is more possibility of help with transport to shops.

NAMKHAIR NORBU RINPOCHE'S SCHEDULE 1997

Mar. 21-23	Weekend teaching Melbourne	Aug. 29	Leave for Lhasa
Mar. 24	Leave for Namgyalgar	Sept. 5	Leave for Raling
Mar. 28-April 5	Namgyalgar Retreat	Sept. 7	Return to Lhasa
April 18-20	SMS Base Level Exam	Sept. 8	Leave for Nepal
April 21-25	SMS First Level Training	Sept. 10*	Leave for Pokara
May 9-11	SMS First Level Exam	Sept. 17	Arrive in Kathmandu
May 12-16	SMS Second Level Training	Sept. 19-21	Weekend teaching in Kathmandu
May 26	Leave for Singapore	Sept. 26**	Leave for Patankot
June 2	Leave for Beijing	Sept. 29	Kushnagar
Nov. 29	Leave from New Delhi to Bangkok	Oct. 2	Bodhgaya
Dec. 1	Leave for Singapore	Oct. 8	Benares
Dec.15	Leave for Sydney	Oct. 13	Rajgar
		Oct. 15	Nalanda
		Oct. 16	Leave for Dharamsala
		Oct. 27	Leave for Tso Pema
		Nov. 3	Leave for New Delhi
		Nov. 7-9	Weekend retreat in New Delhi
TIBET, INDIA, & BOAT RETREAT IN SINGAPORE		Contact: Lama Doboom Tulku Tibet House Cultural Center of HH the Dalai Lama 1 Institutional Area, Lodi Road, New Delhi, 110 003 India	
June 2	Leave for Beijing	Nov. 10	Leave for Goa
June 11-15	Weekend Teaching in Beijing	Nov. 26	Leave for New Delhi
June 17	Leave for Chinghai	Nov. 29	Leave for Bangkok
June 23	Inauguration and opening of the school	Dec. 1	Leave for Singapore
June 25	Leave for Chendu	Dec. 5-12	Boat Retreat from Singapore
June 30	Leave for Kanting (Taisendo)	Contact: Ian Gan, Fax: 65-323-48500	
July 4	Leave for Kanzhi	* This date is an approximation.	
July 7	Leave for Galenting	** Not confirmed.	
Aug. 7	Leave for Jvondazhong		

Interview with H.H. Drukpa

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marvellous, it is a wonderful thing to do because we have to change, time has to be changed, everything has to be changed and Buddhism also has to adjust according to peoples' wishes. I think the Lord Buddha also allowed us to do this, indirectly. So it's OK in a way. But I'm also worried that the teaching, the message will lose some essence. Yes, I'm a little bit worried.

Mirror: I have another question which is slightly connected to what we are talking about now. How do you see the master/student relationship in the West where it is difficult for a student to have a long, close relationship with a teacher. Moreover, Westerners have a different view towards devotion, or rather devotion is not a quality which is easy for a Westerner to develop.

H. H.: I can see a little change from the first time I came to the West in the early 80s. Before there were many students who were either totally blind or extremely academic, too academic, very much up there in the brain and they didn't want to come down. As soon as they tried to come down it was painful for them because they considered this to be a type of faith and they didn't want to go back to their faith thing. But now I do think that Buddhist students have understood a little bit. I can see a little light of the devotion idea coming into the students. So I can see that there is hope to have a good relationship with a master, which is very important. But a good relationship means not only following him and doing whatever he wants you to do or just being very good friends with him. Good boy, good girl, yes, you can be that, but that doesn't mean that you are having a good relationship with a master. You have to have pure devotion, which is the understanding of the state of the guru. The actual state of the guru is ultimate, whatever you are practicing. If you are practicing Dzogchen then you can say Dzogchen is the guru. And the guru is Dzogchen. Inseparable. You have to understand this, very deeply, experientially. Not only mentally. Then that is devotion. You may like the Master, that is liking. I may like you, that's not devotion. You may like me, love me, maybe I love you, but that doesn't mean anything. I love my Master. But that doesn't mean I have devotion to him. So these are the things that people should know in terms of developing their devotion.

Mirror: In a booklet published about your lineage it says that the 9th Gyalwang Drukpa predicted that he would manifest as two tulkus, which he did. In general it is difficult for a Western mind to accept the idea of reincarnation but especially reincarnation in two different forms. How is this possible?

H. H.: This is the reason I'm saying that Western people have a great deal of difficulty to have devotion. This question comes down to devotion. If you cannot accept having two reincarnations at the same time it means you don't have devotion. Buddha Sakyauni said that at his level thousands and millions of reincarnations can manifest at a single time but since we don't know how it functions, we don't believe it. We believe everything we can understand and that is the obstacle for our devotion. Of course we are very limited, our knowledge is very limited, our ability to understand is very limited so we don't believe it. For example if I haven't had a chance to see Rome, even though people may talk about how big and how beautiful Rome is, how big the buildings are and this and that, I don't believe it because I have never seen it. It could be bluff, I don't want to believe it because I've never seen it, my great grandparents have never seen it and neither have my ancestors or any of my family, so I don't believe it.

This is the same thing. The Buddha said he could manifest in many, many different emanations. How can these reincarnations happen? For me it's very difficult to say how it functions. I can understand deeply but I can't express it in mundane words. But, for example, if I put it in a very simple and vague way, it's as if I put three mirrors around me. My face will be three reflections in three mirrors. Actually I have only one face not three but the reflections are three. Why? Because there are three mirrors. So it's the same thing. If we want to talk about this it's like three different devotions or needs which have three faces of reincarnation. One of you needs, for example, one of my forms in terms of liberating or helping you. But this form that I effectuate will not be helpful for another person for some reason so he will need another form of me that will teach differently, act differently, lead him differently, totally different from you. So I will manifest one form for him. His need, his devotion or his purity is the mirror and even though I am only one, I can manifest one reflection in the mirror for him and one for you. Maybe there are hundreds of mirrors and hundreds of reflections are there. In my actual state I am there. I'm not cutting my body into hundreds of pieces. I'm just giving an example. So that's the thing. That's devotion. If a time comes when people don't have any more devotion, this reflection goes back. Since the mirror is not there, where can the reflection be? The reflection goes back. Or the mirror may be completely covered by dirt, so even if it is there, it is of no use in terms of getting reflection so there will be no reflection. It's the same thing. If there is a time when nobody has devotion any more there will be no emanation of Buddha, no emanation of the guru can come. Even if the emanation is there, there will be no benefit.

The 9th Gyalwang Drukpa was mistreated very badly by his students and ministers and managers. He was a great practitioner, a great saint. He lived in a hermitage and he did not give them mundane support so they said that he was useless and he wasn't looking after them. He had a difficult time. So then at the end of his life he said that he wasn't going to come back and that he would rest in his pure state.

Then all his great colleagues and his main disciple as well as the Karmapa all came and requested him to come back very badly. So then he finally said that he would come back but in two forms - one for Dzogchen

of teaching with people in the West, with Western psychology and the Western way of life so that people can accept Buddhist teaching and Tibetan Buddhism. In that case,

practice and one for chagchen (Mahamudra) practice, one form here and one form in eastern Tibet, a Dzogchen practitioner. So this is exactly what happened with the mirror, the chagchen form was needed and the Dzogchen form was needed - two reflections. This is how it came about. So that's all I can explain about how these things come about. But if it is not clear then I don't know what to say. For myself it's not very clear how to put it in mundane words, it's difficult because it's beyond our imagination. We think we are one person and that even reincarnation is not possible. Ordinary people don't even understand or believe in a single reincarnation so how can they believe in thousands of reincarnations at a time. It's very difficult.

Mirror: Your Holiness, do you have any advice for the students of Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche?

H. H.: To have devotion. To develop devotion. That's the most important thing. And I think there is no need for anything other than that. You have to be devotional and, at the same time, if you have devotion, you know how to perform everything accordingly. And then, of course, you will be able to co-ordinate with the people around you. Harmony in the community is very important. Bringing some harmony into the community environment is the best gift that you can give. So if you have devotion you can bring harmony, you can minimize your pride, and everything. If you don't have devotion, your pride gets bigger, you will bring lots of problems into the community and everybody will be disappointed and, in the end, you will also get nowhere. This is not the way to get onto the spiritual path. So follow the master in a devotional way, not in an emotional way.

Mirror: Thank you Holiness.

His Holiness Jigme Pema Wangchen, the Gyalwang Drukpa, is the twelfth incarnated head of the Drukpa Kargyu lineage, one of the main schools within the Kargyu Order which derive from the eleventh century Kargyu patriarch, Gampopa. While searching for a suitable place to establish a monastic order, the first Gyalwang Drukpa, Tsangpa Gyare, arrived at Namgyi-phu where nine dragons flew up into the sky, roaring like thunder. This led to the lineage being known as the Dragon Sect of the Kargyu, or Drukpa Kargyu. Born in 1963 at Tso Pema in India, the lake sacred to Guru Padmasambhava, His Holiness was recognized as the XIIth Gyalwang Drukpa by His Holiness the Dalai Lama and His Holiness the XVIth Karmapa. He grew up at his monastery Thupten Sangag Choeling, Darjeeling, where he was educated by his principle guru, the late Kyabje Thuksey Rinpoche and by many other great masters of his own and the Nyingma traditions. The present Gyalwang Drukpa is responsible for numerous Drukpa Kargyu monasteries in the Himalayas as well as Dharma centers in France, England, Taiwan, Malaysia, America and Australia and he travels continuously teaching at other centers around the world. His principal monastic seat is Thupten Sangag Choeling Monastery in Darjeeling, India. ■

Final Words of H.H. the XIIth Gyalwang Drukpa

At the end of the Christmas retreat Merigar January 2nd, 1997.

I want to say something as a conclusion. I am now writing a fax to Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche to tell him all the good things of these days here in Merigar. I feel that we have made a good connection which I was hoping for and wished to happen for some time now, as Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche said that he was trying to do his best and I am also trying to do my best. But it hasn't happened until now, because the karma was not ripened. Now that we have made a good connection, what we have to do is practice more. Of course usually we practice, all of us are practicing, but now we have to practice more, that is all we have to do. I hope that I can come again and use the formal invitation that Merigar has given me; I would like to be able to use this invitation quite soon, whenever I have time (applause).

The last thing I want to say is, that we all must have the strong notion of impermanence in order to practice the Dharma genuinely, correctly and diligently. All the practices are very much based and dependent on one's own feeling or the sense or notion of impermanence; the understanding of all the phenomena including yourself to be impermanent. Time is passing, not only passing, but flying very quickly. And we are so slow in terms of practice. We all are getting old, we all are proceeding towards the death. And there will be not enough time for us. We all have to be concerned about this in terms of practicing the Dharma. So I wish that we all can practice immediately and correctly according to the Masters, according to the Dharma, and according to the cyclic existence of impermanence. Because the cyclic existence or impermanence is always moving, so you have to also move on with practice. Otherwise if you don't practice, the cyclic existence of impermanence will never wait for you. It will keep on going and going, we can see, we can count how old we are, how many months we have in a year, how many days we have in a month. And we are spending that many hours, many days, many weeks, months and years. Now we are over thirty, over forty, over fifty, over sixty and what have we been accumulating, what have we been doing in terms of what, in terms of spiritual as well as material existence, what we have gained? We have gained nothing. So now what we have to do is that we have to really put something in our heart which means we have to really put ourselves into practice very deeply and try to gain something. That means to try to attain enlightenment within this life. If you can't do this there is not much meaning in life. Even though we may be healthy and wealthy, that doesn't really give you the final result. So it is very, very important that we understand that everything is illusion and we shouldn't really let the illusion to drive us away. Therefore this is my request. Thank you very much! ■

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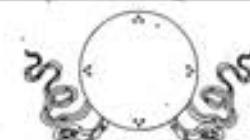
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Non-attachment: The Essence of Practice

Excerpts from a teaching by H.H. the XIIIth Gyalwang Drukpa

Merigar, Friday December 27th.

In preparing to practice Mahamudra, there is, as I mentioned yesterday, the common and uncommon preparation. I've already explained the common preparation, those accumulations and purifications which are common to Mahamudra and also to Dzogpa Chenpo practice. The uncommon practice or preparation is doing calm abiding meditation, shine practice. Without shine practice or without the help of shine one can never be able to realize one's own nature. However that's not necessarily true for everybody because there are some categories of people who have a special ability to realize their own nature without going through the specific practice of shine. Those people are considered to be very fortunate in terms of accumulations and purifications they have already done in previous lives.

The secret of shine is non-attachment. If you are able to practice or to find out how to really sort out the problems that are associated with attachment, then shine shouldn't be any problem.

All disturbances that come up in our emotions arise through attachment and attachment brings all sorts of different emotions. Sometimes it can bring good emotions, good in the sense of being useful. Most of the time it brings nonsense. But anyway it brings ups and downs in our life which are the function of our own mistaken attachment. Many precious holy texts always mention, very repeatedly, that non-attachment is the essence of the meditation.

So let's talk about attachment a little bit, since, anyway, I am very fond of talking about it because we all know that we are very attached to many things. We live with attachment and, unfortunately, we are born with attachment, so it is interesting to talk about it since we live with it. We don't want to talk about something which is not familiar to us because when something is not familiar then it is boring, it's not really interesting. It's more interesting if you talk about something you know.

Attachment is something that we live with, and something that always moves us. Wherever we go, whatever we do, almost hundred percent of our time we are influenced by attachment, no matter if it is a good or bad thing. Whether good or bad, every activity is influenced by attachment. This is interesting to know.

We are attached to the good things as well as the bad things. We are attached to our emotions as well as our physical body. We are attached to time and all phenomena that exist externally. It is not necessary that we are attached to good things, like beautiful, attractive things. Those things which are very awful also provoke our attachment, maybe indirectly or directly.

People think that attachment only arises for attractive or beautiful things that we like or love, but that's

not true. When we hate something or somebody, it is also attachment, and it is stronger than attachment for beautiful things or normal attachment, I would say. Hatred which focuses or concentrates on awful things is also attachment! So therefore there is no difference between good and bad in terms of provoking attachment.

Whatever we do from early morning until late evening when we go to bed, and even in the dream too, is very much influenced by attachment. You can check whether it is true or not. This is really true for me but not necessarily true for you in that sense. So you have to check and investigate whether it is true or not. For most of my life whatever I have done has been very much influenced by my own attachment, no matter what sort of life I have been leading. Knowing that every minute of our life is led by attachment, then we have to try to do our best to free ourselves from attachment and, I think, the best solution to free ourselves from attachment is to realize the function, let's say the process, of attachment: how attachment comes about, how it functions. If we realize that this process is rootless or baseless then we will find out that attachment itself is also Mahamudra. If you could manage to do that then attachment will not function as it used to do and will be so-called non-attachment. This is the typical Mahamudra way of explaining.

If you have a kind of a strong attachment, then you will never have any peace in your life and everything will become too much. You may not be able to enjoy yourself in any place, in any kind of condition. Anything in this life, in this world, may turn out to be very bad, very irritating. For instance, the weather may be too cold and you may not be able to take it. You may make hundreds of complaints about the environment, about friends, about cars, about the food and about that and about this. There will be no end to complaining because you're attached. And then, one day, you will be complaining about yourself, too, about how bad you are, or something like that. So the whole world will be negative. Maybe there will be the possibility to enjoy yourself a little bit such as when you drink alcohol. And when you eat lots of meat you can feel a little bit of enjoyment. That sort of thing. But this also provokes attachment and



L. GRANGER

takes you deeper and deeper into the state of attachment. This drives you crazy! Definitely! So therefore we've got to think about it, yes!

When you become a little bit less attached to things, you become a little bit like an advanced practitioner in terms of Mahamudra practice. Then you become happier and more appreciative; you are satisfied with or appreciate what you have, the friends you are travelling with, the food you are eating and the temperature around you. Everything will be OK, and even though you may not be enjoying things, you will accept them because you are a little bit more advanced in terms of practice.

When you reach the level where there is no attachment at all, then you reach the level called the state of great bliss. In Mahamudra we always say the great bliss, the great emptiness. Right now we don't have great bliss. Drinking is not great bliss and neither is eating. It can be bliss for the time being, but that's relative bliss, it's not great bliss. Any type of mundane bliss is not great bliss and that is not the level that we can refer to as great bliss.

When things are no longer negative for you, everything around you turns out to be perfect, perfect, even though relatively very awful negative things may happen. But a practitioner (who has realized non-attachment) never thinks negatively, is never ever affected by his emotions. There are no negative things around him anymore. This is the result of the practice of non-attachment. That's the time we can say: "OK, everything is blissful. Everything is emptiness. Everything is Mahamudra. Everything is Dzogchen. Everything is Great Perfection". Right now, even if we say: "Everything is Great Perfection", it doesn't make any sense. Nothing is perfection, so how can it be great perfection! So, it's very interesting to go through this

gradually in a very detailed, very sort of theoretical way.

I hope that we can all think about this ourselves because we are the best person to investigate ourselves. Nobody else can investigate or check us. Even if somebody pretended to check us, we wouldn't like it. I wouldn't like if somebody was checking me! I want to have my own privacy. You too have your own privacy; you have a right to have your privacy. But you also have your right

to check yourself. And there shouldn't be any contradiction between you and you. So therefore you have to check which level you are on: whether you are on the level of strong attachment, or a little bit less attachment, or non-attachment.

If you are on a level of very strong attachment then you've got to work hard in order to free yourself from attachment. If you are lucky you may be a little bit

advanced. Very good, congratulations! Then you can work a little bit less, stretch your legs and enjoy yourself. And if you are already in non-attachment then you don't have to do anything! Then you can really be free. I mean you don't have to do anything because you have done everything. That's the Dharma! That's the practice! That's the result of practice, that's the result of Dzogchen, that's the result of Mahamudra teachings: they are finished!

So you have check yourself first, before we talk about it and make a big fuss. You have to check yourself and be sure of where you are. That's a very practical and recommended sort of path.

Of course this sort of investment has to be used for yourself, for your sake, for your improvement, it is not something that you have to use for others. Because if you use it for others, then that means you are misusing it. Then you will be checking others: "He didn't arrive anywhere, that's the reason he is upset. Now he is very angry, that means he is a nobody." That sort of things. That means misusing your method, misusing your precious teaching. The Dharma always mentions very strongly that one has to use it in a proper way which means using it to develop yourself. Don't use it as a needle, use it as a mirror! That is what we say.

Transcribed by L. Loek Jehee.

Edited by Liz Granger ■

The Shang Shung Institute of America

The Shang Shung Institute in America cordially invites members and friends of the Dzogchen Community to attend a planning conference dedicated to the future development of the Institute at Tseg-yalgar in Conway, Massachusetts. The purpose of the conference is to initiate concrete programs in the areas of Tibetan Medicine, translation, Art and the development of a library/archive for research in the field of Tibetan studies with members of the Community whose interest is both in the teachings and the preservation and dissemination of the most vital aspects of Tibetan culture. Part of the agenda of the conference is to

initiate the process of long-range planning.

The conference is scheduled for March 14, 15 and 16, 1997. It will begin Friday evening with a dinner and introductions by the participants. Two sessions are scheduled for Saturday followed by a long-range planning session and brunch on Sunday.

There will be ample opportunity for participants to engage in informal discussions between sessions. If you would like further information, or would like to attend, please contact Lauri Marder at 413-369-4658, e-mail 76453, 441@compu-serve.com. Address: Shang Shung Institute, PO Box 277, Conway, MA 01341 USA.



Lives of the Great Masters



Rangjung Dorje, the Third Karmapa 1284-1339

Elio Guarisco

Rangjung Dorje in an ultimate sense was the indivisibility of bliss and emptiness as the primordial nature of mind. Invoked from the expanse of reality by vajra songs chanted by enlightened dakinis, he manifested in the world as the actual presence of Avalokitesvara. In a conventional sense he became known as the Third Karmapa, the incarnation of the Karma Pakshi, the second Karmapa. Gazing at beings with compassion he entered the world by resurrecting the dead son of an elderly couple from Tolung. People mistook the portents for a bad omen and gouged the child's eyes with a needle. Rangjung Dorje withdrew his mind from the useless body and perceiving the womb of his future mother as a crystal mansion took birth as a son of a yogi and a yogini.

Although he could speak as soon as he was born, he pretended not to be able to. When his parents moved to Dingri in southern Tibet, he saw the rainbow-like image of Padampa Sangye which merged into him. Then his father gave him the transmission of *bzhi byed*, or Chöd. He learned the alphabet by himself without having studied with anyone else and in his dreams he had many pure visions. On a visit to the famous statue of Avalokitesvara at *sKyi-grong*, he was blessed by Avalokitesvara and conceived of working for others.

When he was five, the great adept Ugyenpa said: "Tomorrow my teacher, Karmapa, will be coming!" and arranged a high seat for him. Next morning when the boy came to the residence of Ugyenpa, he climbed onto the seat at once. To test him the great adept said: "Oh child, why are you sitting on the throne of my teacher?" "I am your teacher!" replied the boy, "But now I need your help" and saying so

stepped down from the throne.

Ugyenpa performed the rite for the formation of the awakening mind for him and initiated him into Ghanthapa's system of the Cakrasamvara Tantra, as well as the *Mā-phur* of the Nyingmas. Ugyenpa also taught him the Tantra of Hevajra, the Mahajala, the Kalachakra and that of Vajrapani Subduer of Elemental Spirits, and many secret instructions such as Rechungpa's Six Cycles on the Equal Flavor, Marpa's Six Cycles on Integration and Transference, the Introduction to the Three Kayas, the Eight Great Transmissions, Avalokitesvara Jinasagara, the Doha of Saraha, the Innate Union of Maitripa and so forth.

At the age of seven he was ordained as a novice and acquired mastery of hidden precepts. About that time many masters had visions of Avalokitesvara who related the greatness of the child to them. While residing with his teacher, Mahakala and Ekajati appeared to him and urged him to move on to Tshurphu, the traditional seat of the Karmapas close to Lhasa. Having studied with several teachers there, Ekajati appeared to him at Tshurphu and presented him with a new spring and planted a dry tree that grew green and became very large.

Under numerous teachers he mastered the common and uncommon doctrines of the New Schools such as the Six Doctrines of Niguma, Naropa's consort and the Great Perfection system of the Ancient School. Wherever he went, the local gods would put on a great show of welcome.

He is known to have had a recollection of a previous life that was matched only by the life of the Buddha. Once he saw Vimalamitra vanish in the middle of his eye-

brows, whereupon the import of the Innermost Essence (*sNying thig*) teachings were fully revealed to him. To teach others how to attend the master in accordance with the way of Secret Mantra, he studied the complete esoteric instructions on the Innermost Essence under the awareness-holder Kumaradza. From Padmasambhava too he received esoteric instruction on the Innermost Essence in a vision. These were teachings that had a lasting and definitive effect on him. He taught his disciples to be adept in the Great Perfection From his own mind sprung the instruction known as the Innermost Essence of the Karmapa.

After a long series of visions, he composed the Inner Profound Reality (that has an autocommentary to it), one of his masterpieces, an invaluable exegesis on the principles of the Tantra that bridges the traditional Kagyupa view with that of the Great Perfection. Such work reflects an amazing knowledge and experiential realization of an infinite number of Tantras and secret instructions translated into a direct revelation of the mind's nature as the pervader of all the universe.

To describe the importance of this work one may mention that Kongtrul Lodro Taye heavily relied on it in his writings, and in dealing with the Tantra, always referred to it as the final and leading authority surpassing the many views of other Tibetan Lamas. Among others he also authored a treatise on astrology illuminating the system of Kalachakra, after a vision of the whole universe contained in his body. Rangjung Dorje travelled extensively through all regions of Tibet teaching and establishing monasteries and places of practice. Among his students there were famous masters, such as Longchenpa.

When he was invited to China, at that time under Mongol dominion, he gave initiation to the emperor and empress. On his return to Tibet he retired to Chimpu above Samye; there, after he had made a copy of the Buddhist Canon, he performed the rite of consecration and on that occasion had the vision of many bodhisattvas reciting these scriptures.

He passed away during his next visit to China, where he appeared seated in the mandala of the moon to the emperor and his retinue who were filled with devotion.

Sources: *Go Lotsawa's Blue Annals* (Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 1979); *Dudjom Rinpoche's The Nyingma School of Tibetan Buddhism* (Wisdom Publications, Boston, 1991); *Karma Thintle's History of the Sixteen Karmapas of Tibet* (Prajna Press, Boulder Colorado, 1980); *personal reading of Rangjung Dorje's own works*. ■

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BOOK REVIEWS

THE BON RELIGION OF TIBET The Iconography of a Living Tradition Per Kvaerne

Serindia Publications, London 1995

156 pages, 74 color plates

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"To practicing Bonpos ... Bon simply means the true religion of Tibet." Snellgrove, *The Nine Ways of Bon*.

Bon, the original and authentic religion of the Tibetan people, was already firmly established in the Land of Snows before the formal introduction of Buddhism in the seventh century. Although its adherents were gradually reduced to a minority, Bon has nevertheless continued to flourish in many areas up to the present day in Tibet, and in 1995 Lopen Tenzin Namdak Rinpoche, the foremost Bon Dzogchen teacher now justly well-known in the West, and in the Dzogchen Community in particular, told the reviewer of this book that, according to Chinese sources after the Geluggas and Nyingmapas, Bon now has the third largest following within Tibet itself of the Tibetan religious traditions. There is currently a renaissance of Bon, both in Tibet and within the Bon communities in exile in India and Nepal, and in recent years there has been an increasing interest in this religious tradition and its sacred art and iconography.

In this book, subtitled "The Iconography of a Living Tradition", a timely volume on the art of Bon, the iconography of this religion is presented through seventy-four superb color plates of thangkas, miniatures and bronzes, dating from the late fourteenth to the mid-twentieth centuries, with detailed descriptions of the main and minor figures. With few exceptions these illustrations and the concomitant descriptions are hitherto unpublished. The author has used excerpts from ritual and biographical texts, many of which are translated here for the first time, to identify the peaceful, tutelary, protector and local deities and dakinis and Bon siddhas and lamas. (Interested readers can read Professor Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche's "Drung, Deu and Bon" for several other examples of such invocations and mythical descriptions from the mang of the Bon tradition).

In his scholarly Introduction Per Kvaerne carefully distinguishes between the three significations 'Bon' has come to assume in the context of Western scholarship: 1. the preBuddhist religion of Tibet that was gradually suppressed by the Buddhists in the 8th and 9th cen-

turies; 2. the Bon that emerged in the 10th and 11th centuries, that has been described as a form of unorthodox Buddhism (one might as well dismiss Buddhism and Jainism as plagiarized Hinduism, because all three traditions worship the goddess Sarasvati!) but which may be more justly regarded as a distinct religion in terms of features such as religious authority, legitimation and history; 3. the 'Bon' that subsumes "a vast and amorphous body of popular beliefs", including divination, the cult of local deities and conceptions of the la or 'soul', which however have been more aptly defined by R.A. Stein as "the nameless religion". The second sense of the term, in which the living tradition of Bon is often characterized by western scholars as 'shamanism' and 'animism', is as mistaken and misleading as the obviously inaccurate third description. Moreover, the unfavorable description, ascribed to 'developed' Bon by Western scholars such as Hoffmann and eagerly accepted by others, as a kind of simulation and perversion of Buddhism, is based not on first-hand research but on (the unfortunately abundant) polemical writings by Tibetan Buddhist critics of Bon. In fact, not until the publication of D. Snellgrove's "Nine Ways of Bon" in 1967 was there a clear and unprejudiced exploration and understanding of Bon in the West. Moreover, since that pioneering work several studies have been published that have definitively refuted the view of Bon religious texts (e.g., the biographies of Tonpa Shenrab) as mere plagiarizations of Buddhist texts: Prof. Kvaerne appositely mentions research (by Anne-Marie Blondeau) demonstrating a case (one of several, it would appear) of a Bonpo text copied by Buddhist authors. As Kvaerne explains, the relationship between Bon and Buddhism has inevitably been one of mutual influence and certainly could not have been one of 'one-way' plagiarism.

As Prof. Kvaerne further explains, while at first glance many features of religious practice and worship, in terms of rituals, metaphysical doctrine and monastic discipline (for example, circumambulation, chanting mantras and engraving them on rocks, turning prayer wheels, etc.) appear the same, on closer scrutiny differences appear, such as the counter-clockwise ritual movement in Bon (in circumambulation and in turning the prayer-wheel); in like manner, while the cult of deities may at first appear indistinguishable in Bon and Buddhism, although they belong to the same range of divine categories, the deities of the two traditions are different, with different names, mythical origins, attributes, etc. Thus, while recognizing that, for example, the ritual and other religious practices and the meditational and metaphysical traditions of the two Tibetan religions are similar to the point of virtual identity, Kvaerne holds that the "concepts of sacred history and sources of religious authority are, however, radically different and justify the claim of the Bonpos to constitute an entirely dis-

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Book Review

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tinct religious community."

The Introduction concludes with an erudite summary of the question of the existence of a Zhangzhung language and a brief history of Bon, based on Bon historical sources. Turning to the marvellous illustrations, these are mainly of thangkas and bronze statues.

The first chapter reproduces depictions of peaceful deities, who being enlightened have transcended this samsaric world of cyclical birth and death. However, the distinction between 'enlightened' and 'worldly' deities does not correspond to a division between divine and human beings, for humans, women as well as men, can attain enlightenment, just as transcendent enlightened beings can manifest in human form. The deities represented here include Satrig Ersang, the 'Mother' wisdom goddess; Shenlha Wokar, the purifying white light bonku 'God of wisdom'; the procreator Sangpo Bumtri; Tonpa Shenrab Miwoche, 'Teacher Supreme Priest, Great Man'; the Loving Lady Sherab Chamma; the All-Good supreme deity bonku Kuntu Zangpo in diverse forms; and many others.

Chapter Two has the wrathful tutelary deities or yidams, around whom the main ritual and meditational practices of the Bon tantras revolve, such as Magyu Sangchog Tartug the chief deity of the 'Mother Tantras'; Trowo Tsochog Khagying, 'Wrathful One, Supreme Lord Towering in the Sky', a yidam of the greatest importance in the Bon Tantric ritual tradition; Welse Ngampa, the 'Fierce Piercing Deity'; and Welchen Gekho, 'All-Piercing Gekho', and Meri, 'Fire Mountain', two yidams closely connected with the sacred land Zhangzhung, where Bon prospered before spreading to Tibet. Concerning the latter two tutelary deities, Kvaerne observe that, while the "epithets and characteristics of the two deities overlap to such an extent that it is not always easy to determine which one is referred to, their iconographic attributes are quite distinct, so that one may immediately recognize the deity in question when examining a bronze or thangka."

Chapter Three focuses on Protectors and local deities, an important category of gods in the Bon pantheon, including Sipe Gyalmo, 'Queen of the World', the foremost Protector of Bon. This is followed by a lengthy description, but unfortunately no individual illustration, of Nyipangse, the main guardian of the Dzogpachenpo Zhangzhung Nyangyud ('Great Perfection Oral Transmission of Zhangzhung') cycle of meditational teachings and practices transmitted by the Sages of Zhangzhung, and by Tapihritsa to Nangzher Lopo, who first put them to writing and who first compelled Nyipangse to become a Protector of Bon. (Unfortunately nor is there a thangka of Tapihritsa, some of whose teachings to Nangzher Lopo can be found in "Wonders of the Natural Mind" by Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche). Nyipangse lives on Mount Kailash and is subordinated to yidam Welchen Gekho. Readers who wish to see a clear depiction of

the Protector can consult a modern thangka of Zhangzhung Meri, where Nyipangse is depicted as a white guardian riding a white horse and wielding a white crystal staff; in this thangka he is specifically associated with yidam Meri. The next thangka is of the protector Drakpa Senge, with an interesting account, taken from S. Karmay, of how this Bon Protector came to be named after the first Shamar ('Red Hat') Incarnation of the Karmapa Kagyu tradition.

Chapter Four, dedicated to Siddhas, Lamas and Dakinis, includes thangkas and bronzes of the celebrated sage and 'treasure-concealer' Drenpa Namkha, deemed by one Bon tradition to be the father of Maha Guru Padmasambhava; Takla Mebar, the disciple of Tonpa Sherab who has qualities of both siddha and yidam; a tsakli (wooden tablet) of Nyachen Lishu Taring, who was able to extend his lifespan by magical means; an exquisite tsakli of the eighth-century human dakini Chosa Bonmo; and a thangka of the twentieth century lama Namkha Lodro.

Chapter Five presents Narrative Thangkas, with a fine illustration of the biography of the great fifteenth century scholar Nyame Sherab Gyaltsen, founder of Menri monastery, and several plates reproducing thangkas and details of thangkas from a set depicting the life of Tonpa Shenrab (unfortunately, the captions of plates 53 and 54 have been reversed).

Chapter Six has only one plate, a reproduction of the Bon 'Wheel of Existence', also a standard subject in Buddhist iconography, which gives the author the opportunity to examine at great length and in great detail, and to draw fine distinctions (such as in his collation of the Bon and Buddhist 'twelve links in the chain of dependent origination') between the Bon and Buddhist traditions. As he says, "The Bonpo version...provides a good example of the way in which Bon assimilates elements which are present in Tibetan culture as a whole, while retaining a considerable degree of freedom utilizing these elements according to its own religious concepts."

The translations that accompany the depictions of the deities are highly readable and enjoyable, evoking all the vivacity and power of the invocations and descriptions. The beautiful thangkas are impressively reproduced in the finely colored illustrations, as are the delicate bronzes and tsaklis, so that every intricate aspect is clearly and easily discernible, and Prof. Kvaerne's comprehensive and thorough descriptions of the illustrations enhance our appreciation of them, bringing each small detail into fascinating relief.

Per Kvaerne's dedication to the study and maintenance of Bon as a living tradition, and his love of this tradition, are evident throughout the book. He is to be thanked and congratulated for his work on this timely volume, which will be appreciated not only by those with an interest in Tibetan art, but above all by all those of us with an interest in the Bon religion and within our hearts the wish to see it continue and flourish in these difficult times for Tibet, and the wish to ensure that the reference in the subtitle of this book to "a Living Tradition" remains true in

the centuries to come.

Per Kvaerne is Professor of History of Religions and Tibetology at the University of Oslo, Norway; and a member of the Norwegian Academy of Science and Letters. He has written numerous books and articles of Tibetan religion, and on Bon in particular.

Andy Lukianowicz ■

TRAVELLER IN SPACE In Search of Female Identity in Tibetan Buddhism by June Campbell

The Athlone Press, London 1996

Ms. Campbell has done an excellent job of amassing her material, organizing it for the benefit of the interested reader and modestly keeping her own experience outside of the dimension of discussion, at least on the level of direct narrative. Her work is a complement to, and indeed a necessity for those who follow, studies concerning the image, representation and 'use' of the female in Tibetan Buddhist iconography, myth, magic and practice. "Traveller in Space" can amply enlarge the view and informative area of other works, Anne Klein's "Meeting the Great Bliss Queen", reviewed in The Mirror, Tsultrim Allione's "Women of Wisdom", the ground breaking book in the field, and Miranda Shaw's "Passionate Enlightenment".

There are, however, definite differences in perspective. The above three books treat the 'teachings' and the 'teacher' with the respect that comes through faith. This faith can not be invented or qualified since it is for each of us to develop, and its roots cannot be, by definition, in the rational or even directly accessible area of the mind.

Ms. Campbell was the secret consort of a high-ranking meditation teacher and one feels in the book the trauma and pain that this engendered. To her very great credit, Ms. Campbell does not delineate this model, but it has obviously created a need for her to analyze, and liberate in her own perspective, as well as qualify for the Western practitioner and for the feminist movement in the West, the position of the female in 'secret' Tibet, and the representation which, according to her, contained and made possible the continuation of this secret and indeed externally powerless role.

She refers to the male hierarchy (analogous to the class of priests in the West), to the usurping of ordinary material care by the Tulku system, which itself assumes the 'mothering' role in the psychic, physical and intellectual development of the young tulku, to the fragility of lineages which have sometimes originated with female Tantric teachers and to a female deity in China, which according to her, is the authentic antecedent of compassionate Buddha, Avalokiteshvara.

Ms. Campbell has done an astonishing research on these and other topics and her material is presented with lucidity and discernment. Etymologically, the book is very rich in terminology, reference and explanation. One can only hope that we in the West profit from the research that Ms. Campbell and others have done and learn indeed to rebalance the gender equation, and to open it to the great varieties of

Jürgen C. Aschoff

Annotated Bibliography of Tibetan Medicine (1789-1995)

Garuda Verlag, Dietikon/Switzerland and Fabri Verlag,
Ulm/Germany

1996, XVIII + 426 Pages, cloth, ISBN 9802975 9 4; SFr. 126.-

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sexual experience and identity which exist for human beings and have always existed.

But there are certain points I would challenge in Ms. Campbell's approach. The Tibetans themselves say that these 'teachings' should be interplanetary. To subject them to our poor human sensibility does not do justice to them, nor will it appease our hunger for methods which go beyond the psychoanalytic into an absolute, not only relative, liberation.

According to Rene Guenon (La Regne du Quantite et la Signe du Temps), the industrial revolution produced the first human civilization which did not have a metaphysical system at its center. It is no wonder that at the end of this cycle, in which we now live, many of the brightest and most sensitive young people went East to search for this metaphysical equivalent. They went to Japan, India and Tibet.

We recognize the 'feudal' nature of the culture that developed in Tibet, but culture, history, politics, even sexual politics, in whose domain I fiercely address the subjugation of women and call for redress on that and many issues, are only garments and sadly, in Ms. Campbell's rendition of the subject matter, one felt the essence or sub-

stance to be equated with and discarded with the garment. This reviewer has great need of that substance. There is a great need of it in our Western cultures. Perhaps the Tibetans can give us a drop of the nectar. As I am still standing here, with my mouth open, I don't feel qualified to manifest an objective view, and until that state is 'realized', mental apparatus will not untie the knots which bind us to the relative one.

It is, perhaps, in consideration of the serious student of feminism, that Ms. Campbell, does not mix her marbles and keeps the metaphysical and methodological benefits of the 'teaching' and 'the teacher' outside her discourse. It is a daring step.

For the rest, the book will be a great addition to the work already accomplished in this field, and Ms. Campbell has handled her subject matter with integrity and vision. An analysis such as hers demands an openness which all too frequently is lacking in those who rigidly cling to a 'belief' system or 'group dynamic' keeping their compassion for themselves. This openness, in itself, is a spiritual exercise and Tibetans as a rule, however 'feudal', are not in the habit of preaching a closed mind.

Louise Landes-Levi ■

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Gamthog is a village of farmers, nomads and tradesmen. All the houses are built in traditional style in wood and earth with the store-rooms and stables on the ground floor and living space on the upper floor. One arrives at the village along a dirt road which flanks the Dri Chu. The village is at the bottom of the valley. Raising one's eyes and looking in the direction of Derge, immediately above the village one can see a mountain on which the village of Geu is located where, about 59 years ago, Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche was born. Opposite the village of Geu there is a narrow valley which rises up towards the famous mountain of Senghe Namdrak, a place sacred to Padmasambhava where the uncle of Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche, Togden Urgyen Tenzin, a great practitioner of Dzogchen who left no body behind at the end of his life, meditated for many years.

Once we had decided to carry out an on-the-spot inspection of Gamthog, we had to convince the authorities that the land at Jakardo was not suitable for the project and that Gamthog offered a greater guarantee for the success of the program. After interminable discussions, consultations, inspections, and meetings, the local authorities offered ASIA four hectares of land with some buildings which could be used for the completion of the school and the hospital. In the meantime, Tullio had returned to Italy and his place had been taken by Tony Laurent.

While we were there, we went to Khamdogar, the village of Rigzin Chang Chub Dorje. Unfortunately this was a critical and very difficult moment for his community but in spite of all the difficulties the practitioners there were trying to develop the activities begun in the period of their Master. The monastery and the retreat houses of the monks had been mainly completed, the restructuring of the principal temple was finished and the road from the village of Samdrobshang to Khamdogar was completed. However, in spite of all their efforts, many things were still lacking. A printing shop has to be built in order to publish the texts of the Master which at the moment are only on wood blocks, a small generator must be constructed to bring electricity to the village and a small school and hospital of traditional medicine must be built where the last experts of the medical system revealed by Rigzin Chang Chub Dorje can transmit their knowledge to the young doctors of the village and those who work in the hospital at Gamthog. The village committee presented a fairly articulated project to ASIA but unfortunately because of the lack of financing, this time we couldn't contribute very much. In order to continue the projects at Khamdogar we need to collect at least \$25,000us before the end of this year. Returning to Khamdogar we carried out several inspections of the villages of the county even going to the areas inhabited by nomads in order to study the possibility of assistance. In August Tony

continued his trip to Amdo and I returned to Italy.

A short time later Giorgio and Phuntsok opened a permanent office for ASIA (with lots of lines for telephones and fax which never work) in Jomda, the capital of the county having the same name. Then they returned to Lhasa to get their permission for residence and work and their Chinese driving licenses. Once the various bureaucratic things were sorted out, they returned to Chamdo where they signed a contract for cutting the wood to start the construction of the hospital as well as a collaboration agreement between the prefecture and ASIA. The months passed quickly and in spite of many difficulties and thanks to the continual diligence of Giorgio and Phuntsok the work went ahead well. In the

built. The place is really marvelous and it's not difficult to imagine what it means to spend a few years in retreat in such a place. "Lucky those who can put into practice the precious teachings of the Masters in the silence and solitude of the sacred mountains of Tibet!" While we were there the new tulku of Togden was introduced to us, a little monk who gazed with his dark eyes wide with wonder at these big white gorillas jumping around in the snow. At the end of our mission after traveling several times between Chamdo, Jomda, Gamthog and Chengdu to solve the endless problems that continuously came up, we went to Chamdo to board our place to Chendu. However as soon as we arrived we were told that they had canceled the flight for three months and so since at Derge Dzong they

returned to Italy while Phuntsok and Giorgio returned to Lhasa after completing the last works in Jomda. At the moment of writing this article Giorgio has returned to Italy for a month after which he will return to Lhasa to pick up Phuntsok and return to Jomda to resume the works that will continue until the end of 1999.

Here are the activities undertaken with the various ASIA projects:

THE GAMTHOG PROJECT The local government has given us a four room house in Jomda to be used as living quarters and an office for ASIA. In the office we have installed an international telephone line, a fax and a computer and printer. For this year we are planning to buy a photocopier to make the work a little easier. In the house as regular residents are Phuntsok, Kunga



The Temple of Senghe Namdrak (where Togden Urgyen Tenzin, Rinpoche's uncle, spent most of his life in retreat).

few pauses from working for ASIA, Phuntsok untiringly saw hundreds of patients a day offering both her work and the medicine. In the future a fund should be set up to give the opportunity to Phuntsok to buy the medicine necessary for the infinite number of patients that come to her for cures. Meanwhile Giorgio who found that dri's milk curdles better than cow's milk set up a small cheese factory and produced the first and the best dri's cheese in the world which was very much appreciated by us but not by the Tibetans who looked amazed while we ate it joyfully as we whispered, "you keep your tsampa and we'll eat our cheese".

With the arrival of the first snow at the end of November Tony and I went to Gamthog to solve some technical and bureaucratic problems that had arisen. One morning while we were there in spite of the snow and the intense cold we left to make a circumambulation of Mt. Senghe Namdrak. We went up to the place where Togden Rinpoche used to live at about 5000m and saw what is left of his retreat house on top of which they have built another retreat house where Sala Rinpoche meditated for seven years. At the moment the house is occupied by the son of Nyima Tsering, the grandson of Lama Sala, who has decided to live in retreat on this mountain for the rest of his life. Right at the top of the mountain at a place indicated by Togden Rinpoche several retreat houses, a college for practice and residences for the monks have been

didn't give us the passes to cross Sichuan, we left Jomda with ASIA's jeep to reach Amdo. The team was composed of Tashi, our driver, Kunga Dorje, the brother of Jamyang Tsering, a Kenpo from Simda Gonpa and Tony and myself.

The road was a track of snow and ice passing through the village of Ayu Kandro. This village is located close to a river that flows by the side of a mountain shaped like a triangle. On a side of this mountain a small monastery has been built where the tulku of Ayu Kandro lives. From there we continued our journey through Padma Shan, birthplace of Drubchen Karma Namgyal, then we went through Zigar Gonpa, the monastery of Lama Wandor, reaching Simda Gonpa and passing through Surmang, where the monastery of Trungpa Rinpoche is. The main temple is in ruins. They told us that the new tulku of Trungpa had been found recently in Sichuan. From there we continued our journey passing through Yuxu then we crossed the upland plains of Qinghai where we almost felt like we were dying of cold and where we saw from afar for the first time the famous Tibetan antelopes grazing. Perhaps the last living specimens which have survived the ruthless hunting. We also understood after getting almost frozen why Tibet is called the "Land of Snows". After days of hard travel we arrived at Qabcha and from there to Xining and then Dangche from where at the end of the month of December we

Dorje, the brother of Jamyang Tsering, Tsepa, a girlfriend of Phuntsok, the driver Tashi and Giorgio. We have signed an agreement with the prefecture of Chamdo and from them we have an official document in which the prefecture acknowledges that the school and the hospital are officially part of the educational and health system of the prefecture. As a result of this the cost of supporting the teachers will be borne by the local authorities. We have created a committee to oversee the project at the levels of the prefecture, the county and the village. The members of the prefecture of Chamdo try to do their best while at the county level things are more difficult. At the village level after several meetings with the chiefs of the villages of the xian and the chu, in the end we singled out a few people who had the intention to collaborate seriously with us and we began working with them. At the present moment the Jomda office is closed. The project activities will resume after Losar when Giorgio and Phuntsok return.

THE HOSPITAL The hospital will be built in the following way: the main building is about 1500 square meters and will house a casualty department, consulting rooms, laboratories for analysis, an x-ray department, a children's ward and a ward for infectious diseases. It will be built partly in concrete and partly in bricks and wood and the work will be executed by a local company. In the original project the x-ray department was not included but we

thought it would be better to include it now and buy the equipment later under a new smaller micro-project. The kitchen, the refectory, some offices and storerooms will be built in wood, mud and bricks. The contract will be taken care of by the village. The surface to be built on is about 260 sq.m. The dormitories of the medical personnel will be located in the rooms of the old hospital not in use at the moment and ASIA together with the village will undertake the renovation of these old buildings, replacing the tin roofs and building a second floor in wood as in the traditional Tibetan houses of the village. In all there will be 1760 sq.m to be built on.

In the month of October we signed a contract with a Tibetan construction company of Chamdo. This contract is about the construction of 800 sq.m at the cost of 885 yuan per square meter. The money that we received from the Italian government will cover less than 900 sq.m of construction and we have to build on 860 more square meters; out of these 860 sq.m we are thinking of building 260 sq.m together with the village in order to save some money. The remaining 600 sq.m will have to be built with a company. This means that we have to find \$70,000us for the completion of the hospital. Of these \$70,000us, \$50,000us must be found before September 1997, the rest during 1998.

In February it is our intention to sign a second contract with the same company for the remaining 600 sq.m, so that the company can begin construction of the entire hospital (1500 sq.m) in April, leaving out the part that will be built by the village and the renovation of the old hospital which will be postponed until 1998. In this way, we can try to complete the construction of the main building of the hospital within September 1997. As soon as the hospital is completed, we can begin purchasing the equipment and arranging for the coming of two Western doctors as planned in the project approved by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The final choice of the doctor, the obstetrician and the analyst will be made in the coming September in two interviews, one in Rome at ASIA and one in Milan at the COSV. Those selected will then have to follow a training course in Milan before leaving for Tibet.

We are aware that it is very risky to sign a contract without knowing where the money will come from but because the situation in Chamdo and Derge is very difficult and we have created a lot of expectations in the local people, we have decided to go on with the hope that the collaboration of everybody interested in the future of Tibet will allow us to find the necessary resources. The work on the hospital began in October but the company only managed to excavate the foundations of the hospital because they had to stop due to the cold. During this time the villages in the area cut 700 cubic meters of wood for the hospital and school. The county authorized the cutting of the wood and then sold the wood to us without applying the government taxes. The villagers of the eighteen villages that refer to Gamthog transported the wood up to the village where it

continued on next page

will be sawn so that it can be used for the construction of the two buildings as well as for the furniture of the school and health center.

THE SCHOOL. We are a little late with the school. During our last mission we carried out a very precise survey of the land and the old buildings offered to ASIA by the local administration. Tony and Tullio are preparing the new drawings for the school which will be sent to the construction department in Chamdo for the preparation of the blueprints in Chinese, after which we will have to arrange for a tender and then sign a contract with a company to begin work in the spring.

The project is for the construction of ten school rooms on the model of Dangche. The school-rooms are for the didactic activities of the children while the offices for the teachers and the principal will be adapted from the old buildings which are to be renovated. The school will be a primary school with classes from the 1st to the 6th level. The first two classes will share the same classroom and will be only for children of Gamthog and a few neighboring villages, while the 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th classes will have two classrooms each because they will receive all the children of the villages having schools only up to the third year. The dormitories for the teachers, the children, the kitchens and the bathrooms will be built partly in the traditional village way using wood and mud.

For the school the situation is not easy, either. The Italian government gave us only \$75,000us. To complete the school we need another \$60,000us for a total of \$135,000us. Our idea is to sign the contract in February with the construction company for the 10 classrooms in concrete so that we can complete the classrooms together with the hospital before October 1997. The remaining part of the school, that is the bathrooms, the kitchens, the refectory and dormitory will be built in 1998. Anyway to complete the classrooms before October 1997 we need at least \$40,000us of the \$60,000us that are lacking.

To sum up, to complete the main building of the hospital and the main building of the school before October 1997, we have to find \$90,000us.

MICROPROJECTS In this plan we have to build not only the school and the hospital but we have to execute small projects as well to develop the economical, social and cultural conditions of the population of the village of Gamthog. For the economical and social projects we are setting up a "rotating" fund. How does this fund work? The village committee elected by the assembly of the village selects projects following the suggestions of the people meant to help the needy. Once the project and the people interested in carrying it out have been selected, the committee gives a loan to this group of people without interest or with a very low interest rate. The group receiving the money allocated for the project, undertakes to give it back to the committee within a certain period of time. At that moment, the people become owners of the equipment and animals purchased for the project and the committee gets back the money to finance another project.

During this time we set up a committee in the village with the people who seemed more trustworthy.

In Chengdu we bought a truck that we gave for use to a young Tibetan in the village who has undertaken to give us back all the money plus a small amount of interest in about eight months. We agreed with the company which will build the hospital that this truck will carry out all the transportation of the concrete and iron bars from Chengdu to Gamthog so that the truck driver will have some work guaranteed to accelerate the process of getting the money back.

Then we decided to buy a saw to cut the wood needed for the construction of the hospital and school. This saw will be given for use to six individuals who will repay us in about two years. Concerning the

sufficient to have \$40,000us.

GALENTENG While we were there in December, we signed a collaboration agreement with Derge Dzong to build a primary school from the 1st to the 6th class and a small hospital at the xian level, in the village of Galenteng, residence of the famous master Jamyang Kyentse, Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche's uncle. In Galenteng there is a lot of work to do, the monastery, the temple and the house of Jamyang Kyentse need urgent renovation. The people of the village are eager to start working but unfortunately for this project, too, we have no funds at all. Some of the works need to be done before Rinpoche's visit, planned for this summer. An advance to initiate the project will have to be deposited with the village in the spring. To



The Village of Gamthog. (The village of Geu, Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche's birthplace, is on the mountain in the background.)

cultural projects, the money given will not be returned. So we decided to give two of the eight million we have at our disposal to Simda Gonpa to pay a Khempo disciple of Jigme Phuntsok to go to Simda for one year to complete the classes for the young Khempas of the monastery. Then we made a small donation to the monastery of Senghe Namdrak. We asked the Gonpa of Jakardo to present a small project that we will try to finance.

We are also investigating as part of these cultural projects, one for the publication of a series of episodes of the Gesar epic which an old local man recites by heart. The project includes the transcription of these tales and their publication.

Another project that we are studying is about the creation of a small factory of traditional medicine in Gamthog. The village has given ASIA a big barn used in the past as a storeroom for cereals. It is a space of about 800 sq.m to be completely renovated. The structure is ideal for a factory of traditional medicine. This factory could give work to the women of the village who would gather the medicinal plants and to many others who would work in the preparation and packaging of the medicines. The quality control would be done by the doctors of the hospitals of Gamthog, Khamdogar and Simda Gonpa, under the supervision of Phuntsok. With the revenues from the sale of the medicines it would be possible to finance the development of the health center in Gamthog and the start of many other microprojects. Naturally to initiate this activity we have to find the funds. In the initial phase it will be

begin this project we need at least \$20,000us that have to be added to those above mentioned.

DANGCHE At Dangche things are going fairly well. Up to now we have finished the construction of 12 classrooms, 20 rooms for the teachers, 22 rooms for the children, the kitchen, the refectory, the watchman's rooms, the room for the fire and boiler, the storerooms and three big bathrooms. All this work has been completed and paid for. We have signed new contracts in order to construct the main building of the school which will be on two floors to be used for village meetings and for gatherings and performances of the children, a new bathroom, the floors for the school, planting of trees and gardening and the main gate of the school. All this will have to be completed before the 20th of June, the date fixed by Rinpoche for the inauguration.

To finish the works in Dangche within the first week of June we have to find \$30,000us which, added to those needed for Gamthog, bring our debt to \$120,000us. This amount does not include the funds needed for Khamdogar, Galenteng and the medicine factory in Dangche. The village committee has become very active and they have understood very well that they have to develop the microprojects to improve the living conditions in the village and to find the money to maintain the school. They are preparing several economic projects which will be presented to ASIA this summer during Rinpoche's visit.

On the part of the provincial government, the prefecture and the county, there is a lot of support and

acknowledgment of our project. The prefecture has undertaken together with us to supply all the equipment necessary for the school, to select the teachers and pay their salaries. They told us that this school is considered the most important school for the minorities in all Qinghai. The province of Qinghai, the Office for the Minorities of Qinghai and the prefecture of Qabcha have decided to invite Rinpoche officially and have organized a series of conferences on Tibetan culture and medicine at the University of Xining. During the meetings with the local representative of IFAD they underlined their interest in including ASIA in the construction of 5 out of 48 schools for Tibetans planned in their project. We have received several requests by local counties and many people insist that ASIA

3) to organize shows, conferences, slide projections and screening of films on Tibet; 4) to give information on the various activities of ASIA through newspaper articles, interviews, documentaries; 5) to offer the medical equipment needed to complete the hospital in Gamthog (x-ray machines, delivery room, operating room, pediatrics, analyses etc.). If anybody is able to supply this kind of equipment we can provide them with a very detailed list. Since this is a government project, we need a letter of intent from the would-be donors in which they declare that they undertake to supply the equipment free of charge, but not including the cost of transportation to the final destination which will be taken care of by ASIA; 6) to collaborate in identifying foundations, public and private institutions, individual sponsors, interested in supporting the activity of our association; 7) to take part in the drafting and presentation of the projects to the financing institutions; 8) to take part in the daily activities of the ASIA office; 9) donations; 10) interest free loans. Address and bank accounts
A.S.I.A. (Associazione per la Solidarietà Internazionale in Asia)
Via S. Erasmo 12, 00184 Rome, Italy. Tel: 0039-6-77200880; fax 0039-6-77205944
Email: mc8125@mcLink.it
Web page: www.mcLink.it/com/makros/asia
Bank: Monte dei Paschi di Siena; no. 3893.50; cab:72160; abi:01030; swift code:pascitma, Arcidosso, 58031 GR, Italy
Postal account: no.89549000

This is the end of Part One. Part Two, Sponsorship, will be continued in next issue. ■

Where Stars Fell

continued from page 1

the powerful practice of Chöd every evening. The retreat had a strong manifestation of harmony and joy inside and out.

The New Year was welcomed in by a great feast and festival with lots of salutations, songs and dances well into the night in typical exuberant and warm Argentine fashion, with performances of traditional folk dance and, of course, the tango.

Often heard through the air during the afternoons were the cries and laughter coming from the swimming pool, another dispensary of the teachings, as Rinpoche played hour after hour with the willing developing the Tashigame of madly diving after small balls passed from person to person or one could opt for watching the jumping deities as performed by generous disciples. All this activity was unfairly taunting the dedicated students preparing for the base level Santi Maha Sangha exam that was given one week after the retreat ended. Nineteen participants attended the training; as well as finally having the possibility to participate in the 'swimming pool teachings' as an adjunct. There were three younger participants who sat for the base level exam of Santi Maha Sangha for children Tashigar. Lucky and auspicious. Full and lush and warm of spirit. Thank you everyone! May you and the teachings continue to flourish! ■



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

Choegyal Namkhai Norbu

The most important thing we can do to help maintain the good health of our precious master, Choegyal Namkhai Norbu, is to keep our samaya as pure as possible and to correct all errors by performing Ganapuja with our Vajra Brothers and Sisters.

GLOBAL TIMETABLE:

Anniversary of Padmasambhava:
Sunday 15th of June 1997

TIME CHART, 8:00 AM ODDIYANA JUNE 14, 15

Saturday, 14 June, 1997

17:00 Honolulu, Aleutian Islands
18:00
19:00 Fairbanks*, Nome*, Anchorage*
20:00 San Francisco*, LA*, Vancouver*, Seattle*
21:00 Salt Lake City*, Pagosa Springs*, Mexico City, Edmonton*, Phoenix*, Denver*
22:00 Quito, Lima, Kingston, Havana, Nassau, Chicago*, Dallas*
23:00 Caracas, Washington DC*, Barbados, Asuncion, Tanti, Santiago, Caracas, New York*, Montreal*, Ottawa*, Detroit*, Atlanta*, Toronto*,

Sunday, 15 June, 1997

00:00 Buenos Aires, Bermuda*
01:00
02:00 Rio de Janeiro, San Paulo, Capo Verde
03:00 GMT, London, Reykjavic, Tanger 04:00 Dublin*, Glasgow*
05:00 Rome*, Paris*, Madrid*, Berlin*, Warsaw*, Oslo*, Prague*, Vienna*, Copenhagen*,

06:00 Amsterdam*, Stockholm*, Geneva*, Salzburg*, Slovenia*, Slovakia*, Schallding, Belgrade*, Bosnia Hercegovina*, Lisbon*, Brussels*, Budapest*, Johannesburg, Istanbul, Sofia, Bucharest
06:30 Moscow, Nairobi, Tashkent, Kuwait City, Cairo*, Helsinki*, Jerusalem*, Athens*, Beirut*, Vilnius*
07:00 Teheran
07:30 Mauritius, Bagdad*
08:00 Kabul
08:30 Islamabad, ODDIYANA
08:45 New Delhi, Bombay, Calcutta
09:00 Kathmandu 09:00 Bhutan, Kyrgyzstan*
09:30 Rangoon 10:00 Bangkok, Saigon, Jakarta, Kazakhstan*
11:00 Beijing, Singapore, Ulan Bator, Lhasa, Hong Kong, Manila, Taiwan, Perth, Shanghai, Lake Manasarovar, Kuala Lumpur
12:00 Tokyo, Seoul, Ulan Ude*
12:30 Uluru (NT), Darwin, Adelaide 13:00 Vladivostok, Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne, Tasmania
13:30 14:00 Kamchatka
15:00 Fiji, Wellington
16:00

* means that the shown time has been adjusted due to local day-light saving time/summer time.

This information came from <http://www.stud.unit.no/USER/BIN/steffent/verdensur.pl> and <http://tycho.usno.navy.mil/tzones.html>.



1st Month, 25th day Tue. 4th March 1997 This is the anniversary of the lady Master Ayu Kadro, so it is good to do the Agar Lama'i Nalgyor and since this is a Dakini day in general it is a good day to reinforce our energy. Try to do a Ganapuja with the transformation into the Dakini Simhamuka.

1st Month, 29th day Sat. 8th March 1997 DARK MOON (There is no 30th day this month). This is a good day to do Namchos Shitroi Nalgyor, the practice of the Peaceful and Wrathful Manifestations, either collectively or personally.

2nd Month, 6th day Fri. 14th March 1997 This is an important day for the practice of Ekajati, so try to do a Long or Medium Tun in the usual way, reciting the heart mantra of Ekajati as many times as possible.

2nd Month, 10th day Tue. 18th March 1997 This is a special day of Guru Padmasambhava, so try to perform a Ganapuja collectively, but if that is not possible do the Long-life practice Universal Wisdom Union.

2nd Month, 12th day Thur. 20th March 1997 This is the anniversary of Jetsun Dragpa Gyaltsen (1147-1216), one of the first great Masters of the Sakya tradition, so try to do the Guruyoga Agar Lama'i Nalgyor, the Guruyoga of the White A.

2nd Month, 15th day Sun. 23rd March 1997 FULL MOON. This is one of the best days for Long-life practices and in particular the practice of Union of Primordial Essences. The best time for this practice is from 7 to 8 o'clock in the morning.

2nd Month, 20th day Sat. 29th March 1997 This is the anniversary of the great Dzogchen Master Do Gyaltsen Yeshe Dorje (born 1800), a disciple of the first Do Drub Chen Rinpoche and a master of Nyagla Padma Duddul. It is therefore a good day to do Agar Lama'i Nalgyor, the Guruyoga with the White A.

2nd Month, 25th day Wed. 2nd April 1997 This is a Dakini day so try to do a Ganapuja with your Vajra Brothers and Sisters.

2nd Month, 30th day Mon. 7th April 1997 DARK MOON. On this day, which is the birthday of the great Terton Loter Wangpo, try to do the Agar Lama'i Nalgyor, Guruyoga of the White A.

3rd Month 3rd day Thur. 10th April 1997 On this anniversary of Karma Pakshi, a great Master of the Karma Kagyud and a Dzogchen practitioner, it is beneficial to practise the Agar Lama'i Nalgyor collectively if possible but otherwise alone.

3rd Month, 4th day Fri. 11th April 1997 This is an important day for the practice of Ekajati, so try to do a Long or Medium Tun in the usual way, reciting the heart mantra of Ekajati as many times as possible.

3rd Month, 10th day Thu. 17th April 1997 This is a special day of

Guru Padmasambhava so try to do the Long-life practice "Universal Wisdom Union" early in the morning or at sunset. If you have the possibility it is beneficial to combine this with a practice of Ganapuja collectively.

3rd month, 15th day Tue. 22nd April 1997 FULL MOON. This is one of the best days for Long-life practices, and in particular for the practice of the "Union of Primordial Essences". It is best to do it early in the morning if you can. This is also the anniversary of the day when Buddha Sakyamuni first gave the teaching of Kalachakra so it is good to do a Ganapuja or Long Tun in the evening.

3rd Month, 25th day Fri. 2nd May 1997 This is a Dakini day as well as the anniversary of the fifth Dalai Lama, a great Terton and practitioner of Dzogchen, so it is a good day to practise Agar Lama'i Nalgyor, Guru Yoga with White A in the morning and Ganapuja with an intensive practice of Ekajati in the evening.

3rd Month, 30th day Tue. 6th May 1997 DARK MOON. This is a particularly good day for practising the Purification of the Six Lokas. As it is also the anniversary of the great Terton and Dzogchen Master Sangyas Lingpa, try to do the Agar Lama'i Nalgyor.

4th Month, 6th & 8th days Mon. 12th May & Wed. 14th May 1997 These are important days for the practice of Ekajati, so try to do a Long or Medium Tun in the usual way, reciting the heart mantra of Ekajati as many times as possible.

4th month, 7th day Tue. 13th May 1997 This is the anniversary of the birth of Buddha Shakyamuni, an important day for all Buddhists, so try to do a Ganapuja with your Vajra brothers and sisters.

4th Month, 10th day Fri. 16th and Sat 17th May 1997 This month the 10th day is doubled so one can choose which day to celebrate the special day of Guru Padmasambhava. If you can, try to do a Ganapuja, otherwise you can do the Long-life practice "Universal Wisdom Union".

4th Month, 15th day Thu. 22nd May 1997 FULL MOON. This is the anniversary of the Parinirvana of Buddha Sakyamuni, as well as an important day for the Long-life practice "Cycle of Life's Vajra". Therefore try to do this practice early in the morning, and in the afternoon or evening do a Ganapuja.

4th Month, 25th day Sat. 31st May 1997 Dakini day. This is the anniversary of Ngor Chen (a great Master of the Shakyapa tradition and initiator of the Ngor lineage), therefore it is a good day to do the Guruyoga Agar Lama'i Nalgyor, collectively if possible or otherwise alone.

chub Dorje, the main Master of Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche. He discovered the Terma "Tsedrub Gongdus" which two of his disciples, Ayu Khadro and Changchub Dorje, transmitted to Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche. Therefore you should try to do this Long-life practice, "Tsedrub Gongdus", "Union of Primordial Essences". The time to do it is the early morning. Later in the day or in the evening you can do the Guruyoga of the White A, Agar Lama'i Nalgyor.

5th Month, 1st day Fri. 6th June 1997 This is the anniversary of mChog-gyur gLing-pa (1829-1870) a Nyingmapa Master of Dzogchen, one of the most important Rimed masters of the XIX Century. Try to do a practice of Agar Lama'i Nalgyor.

5th Month, 10th day Sun. 15th June 1997 Though many masters affirm that the date of the anniversary of the 'birth' of Padmasambhava is the tenth day of the sixth month of the Tibetan calendar, the great master Jig-med Ling-pa confirms that the tenth day



of the fifth month according to the Tibetan calendar is the anniversary of the birth of Padmasambhava. This year, when it is 8.00 am in Oddiyana, on Sun. 15th June, we Dzogchen practitioners all over the world will perform the practice of Guruyoga with Tundrin or Tungyas, according to our opportunities, and those who have the possibility can also add Ganapuja.

SEE THE UNIVERSAL TIMETABLE
5th Month, 14th day Thu. 19th June 1997 This is an important day for the practice of Ekajati, so try to do a Long or Medium Tun in the usual way, reciting the heart mantra of Ekajati as many times as possible.

5th Month, 15th day Fri. 20th June 1997 FULL MOON. This is a special day for the Long-life practice of Amitayus, so you can do the Long-life practice "Union of Primordial Essences" early in the morning. If you cannot do it at that time, it is still good to do it later in the day. It is also the 'Dzam-gling spyi-bsang (Lit. smoke puja of the world in general) so if you know how to do it, you can do the Sanqod (bsang-mchod) in the morning.

5th Month, 24th day Sun. 29th June 1997 There is no 25th day

SPECIAL PRACTICE CALENDAR

this month so we celebrate Dakini day on the 24th. This is an important day for the practice of Ekajati, so try to do a Long or Medium Tun in the usual way, reciting the heart mantra of Ekajati as many times as possible. If you have the possibility it is beneficial to add the Ganapuja.

5th Month, 30th day Fri. 4th July 1997 DARK MOON. This is a day for purification practices. It is best to do the Purification of the Six Lokas either collectively or alone, preferably in the early morning. Otherwise you can do a Medium or Short Tun.

THIS YEAR THE FIFTH MONTH IS DOUBLE IN THE TIBETAN CALENDAR

Double 5th Month, 1st day Sat.

5th July 1997 This is the anniversary of mChog-gyur gLing-pa (1829-1870) a Nyingmapa Master of Dzogchen, one of the most important Rimed masters of the XIX Century. Try to do a practice of Akar Lama'i Nalgyor.

Double 5th Month, 10th day Tue.

15th July 1997 This is a special day of Padmasambhava so it is

it is beneficial to add the Ganapuja.

Double 5th Month, 30th day Sun. 3rd Aug. 1997 DARK MOON.

This is a day for purification practices. It is best to do the Purification of the Six Lokas either collectively or alone, preferably in the early morning. Otherwise you can do a Medium or Short Tun.

6th Month, 4th day Thu. 7th Aug. 1997

This is the anniversary of the Dharmachakra (the first turning of the Wheel of the Dharma): the first time that Buddha Shakyamuni gave the teaching of the Four Noble Truths to his disciples at Samath, after his illumination. To honor the Lord Buddha on this special day you can do a Ganapuja with your Vajra brothers and sisters.

6th Month, 10th day Wed 13th Aug. 1997

This is a special day of Padmasambhava and also the anniversary of Yeshe Tsogyal the main consort and disciple of Padmasambhava so if you have the possibility, it is beneficial to do a Ganapuja together with your Vajra Brothers and Sisters, if not you can practise Guruyoga with Padmasambhava and the Long-life practice "Universal Wisdom Union".

6th Month, 14th day Sun. 17th Aug. 1997

This is the anniversary of the third Karmapa, Rangjung Dorje (1284-1339), a famous master of Dzogchen Upadesa. On this day it is good to do Agar Lama'i Nalgyor, Guruyoga with the White A.

6th Month, 15th day Mon. 18th Aug. 1997 FULL MOON.

This is the anniversary of Gampopa, the main disciple of Milarepa. Therefore it is an excellent day to do Agar Lama'i Nalgyor, Guruyoga with the White A. It is also a good day to do the Long-life practice of Amitayus, "Union of Primordial Essences".

6th Month, 25th day Wed. 27th Aug. 1997

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

6th Month, 30th day Mon 1st Sept. 1997 DARK MOON.

This is a very important day to do purification practices, especially the "Purification of the Six Lokas". If you have the chance, you can also do a Short, Medium or Long Tun.

7th Month, 9th day Thu. 11th Sept. 1997

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

7th Month, 10th day Fri. 12th Sept. 1997

This is the anniversary of Jomo Menmo (1248-1283), a very famous woman Terton, reincarnation of Yeshe Tsogyal. She

was the consort of the great Terton Guru Chowang. It is also a very special day of Guru Padmasambhava. Therefore it is an ideal day to do Agar Lama'i Nalgyor in the morning and a Ganapuja and Long-life practice associated with Padmasambhava, "Universal Wisdom Union" later in the day.

7th Month, 15th day Tue. 16th Sept. 1997 FULL MOON.

This is the anniversary of Tsarchen Losal Gyatso and Padma Karpo, a famous 17th century Drugpa Kargyupa Master. Therefore it is an excellent day to practise Agar Lama'i Nalgyor, the Guruyoga with the White A early in the morning if possible, or later in the evening when you are free. It is also an excellent day for the Long-life practice of the Dakini Mandarava, with a Ganapuja if you have the possibility.

7th Month 19th day Sat. 20th Sept. 1997

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

7th Month, 25th day Fri. 26th Sept. 1997

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

7th Month, 30th day Wed. 1st Oct. 1997 DARK MOON.

This day is ideal for purification practices. Try to do either the "Purification of the Six Lokas" or the "Namchos Shitroi Nalgyor", the Yoga of the Peaceful and Wrathful Manifestations, either collectively or on your own.

8th Month, 10th day Sat. 11th Oct. 1997

This is a very special day of Guru Padmasambhava, therefore do a Ganapuja with the Guruyoga and the Long-life practice of Guru Padmasambhava "Universal Wisdom Union" collectively. Otherwise you can do a Medium Tun on your own.

8th Month, 15th day Thu 16th Oct. 1997 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, but if you cannot it is still good if you can do it later in the day or evening.

8th Month, 19th day Sun. 19th Oct. 1997

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

8th Month, 25th day Sat. 25th Oct. 1997

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 Agar Lama'i Nalgyor, the Guruyoga with the White A. If you can do it in the morning, that is best. Then, if you have the time, you can do a Medium or Long Tun later in the day, with an intense practice of Simhamuka, or a Ganapuja, if you have the possibility.

This month the 27th day is doubled.

8th Month, 27th day Mon. 27th Oct. and Tues. 28th Oct. 1997

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

8th Month, 30th day Fri. 31st Oct. 1997 DARK MOON.

This day is excellent for practising the "Purification of the Six Lokas". Otherwise you can do the Medium or Long Tun.

9th Month, 3rd day Mon. 3rd Nov. 1997

This is the anniversary of Rigzin 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 Agar Lama'i Nalgyor, the Guruyoga with the White A.

9th Month, 9th day Sun. 9th Nov. 1997

There is no 10th day in this month so we celebrate the day of Guru Padmasambhava on the 9th day. This is the anniversary of the 16th Gyalwang Karmapa and also the anniversary of Terton Tsogyal, a previous reincarnation of Sogyal Rinpoche and discoverer of many Termas. It is therefore a good day to do the Long-life practice of Guru Padmasambhava "Universal Wisdom Union", which is included in the Medium or Long Tun. You can do this in the usual way or, if you have the possibility, you can do a Ganapuja.

9th Month, 15th day Fri. 14th Nov. 1997 FULL MOON.

This is a good day to do the Long-life practice of Amitayus, "Union of Primordial Essences", either collectively or personally according

to your possibilities, early in the morning and in the evening a Ganapuja.

9th Month, 22nd day Fri. 21st Nov. 1997

This day is the important celebration of Buddha Shakyamuni's descent to earth from the realms of the Divinities. It is called "Lha bab dus chen", the Great Time of the Descent of the Divinities. It is an ideal day to do a Ganapuja with your Vajra brothers and sisters. If there are none nearby, you can do a Short or Medium Tun on your own.

9th Month, 25th day Mon. 24th Nov. 1997

This is a Dakini day and the anniversary of the very important Dzogchen master Adzam Drugpa (1842-1924). He was a disciple of Jamyang Kyentse Wangpo and a master of some of Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche's masters, including Changchub Dorje and Ayu Kadro. He was also a previous incarnation of Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche. It is therefore a very important day to practise Agar Lama'i Nalgyor, the Guruyoga with the White A, according to your possibilities.

9th Month, 30th day Sat. 29th Nov. 1997 DARK MOON.

This is a good day to do "Namchos Shitroi Nalgyor", the Yoga of the Peaceful and Wrathful Manifestations, in the morning. It is also an important day for the practice of Ekajati, so try to do a Long or Medium Tun in the usual way, reciting the heart mantra of Ekajati as many times as possible. The best time for this practice is around eight o'clock in the evening.

10th Month, 10th day Tue. 9th Dec. 1997

This is a special day of Guru Padmasambhava, therefore do a Ganapuja with the Guruyoga and the Long-life practice of Guru Padmasambhava "Universal Wisdom Union" collectively. Otherwise you can do a Medium Tun on your own.

10th Month 11th day Wed. 10th Dec. 1997

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

We'll continue the special practices in the next issue.

The Mirror



beneficial to do a Ganapuja together with your Vajra Brothers and Sisters, if not you can practise Guruyoga with Padmasambhava and the Long-life practice "Universal Wisdom Union".

Double 5th Month, 14th day Sat. 19th July 1997

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

Double 5th Month, 15th day Sun. 20th July 1997 FULL MOON.

This is a special day for the Long-life practice of Amitayus, so you can do the Long-life practice "Union of Primordial Essences" early in the morning. If you cannot do it at that time, it is still good to do it later in the day. It is also the 'Dzam-gling spyi-bsang (Lit. smoke puja of the world in general) so if you know how to do it, you can do the Sanqod (bsang-mchod) in the morning.

Double 5th Month, 25th day Tue. 29th July 1997

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



Preliminary explanations

Astrology is one of the ten minor Tibetan arts. There are two types of astrology, *Kartsi*, regarding lunar astrology and *Jungsí*. Astrology is a handbook to use in daily life and it is the core of the Tibetan tradition. It regards the cosmology and movement of planets according to the Kalachakra tantra. Since ancient times Tibetan scholars have examined the movement of planets and from this movement they have deduced the trends and events for each year. So this is a very special unique method. One of the first Tibetan calendars was the Sakyapa calendar, calculated hundreds of years ago. After that there was the Minling calendar of the Nyingmapa and after that the calendar created by the Tibetan Medical and Astrological College near Lhasa. This same college currently produces many different types of calendars, both long and short. This brief prognosis has been extracted for those who have no time or capacity to read the long explanations.

General explanation about the Fire Ox year

In Sanskrit 1997 is called "Ishwara", in Chinese it is called Hing Chu and in Tibetan we call it "me-mo-lang", which is the Female Fire Ox. In particular the life element of this year is in earth, the body and the fortune elements of the year are in water and the power or capacity of the year is in fire. The planetary configuration of the year involves nine planets in the center of which there are three mewa. This is the year of three elements.

Although there will be many unfortunate signs this year, scholars and educated people will have opportunities for advancement. It will also be a positive year for businessmen permitting them the possibility to develop their affairs. There will be a few illnesses but children born this year will be very healthy. In general all sentient beings will be happy and it will be a good year for doing spiritual practice although generally there will be some negative obstacles. Rainfall will be abundant, livestock will increase, insects that damage the crops will be few, trees growing in the mountains will thrive. There are signs that in particular around Lhasa and to the south and the east of the city there will be earthquakes, very strong winds and storms.

The Chinese Ox Prognostic

This method of divination called the "Chinese Ox Prognostic" is a

way to determine yearly events using the metaphor of an ox, a shepherd and a dragon. In Tibet it is widely used by local farmers and nomads, however, it is well-known that this prognosis gives useful advice on the nature of a particular year which is relevant to everybody on our planet. It is clear, makes use of simple words and is easy to understand.

This year flowers, plants and cereals will grow abundantly and well. There will also be a similar growth in economic wealth. In general people will be happy. Since the second, the fifth, the eighth and the eleventh Tibetan months of the year are very inauspicious, they will bring diseases linked to the "hot" nature. While it will be a prosperous and healthy year for children, in general adults will encounter some problems and old people may meet even greater difficulties.

Particular aspects according to one's birth year.

Those who are born in the year of the Ox which is the animal of this year may meet obstacles this year. These people should avoid negative situations such as visiting sick people and should avoid undertaking construction work. They should carry out virtuous actions and dedicate themselves to long-life practice, inviting the life force "la" with pujas, and also call up wealth through pujas.

Those born in the year of the Sheep are in a position which is opposite to that of the Ox, which is also not a favorable position. They should carry out activities such as repairing roads, making "tsa tsa" (clay forms made from moulds) and doing rites for honoring the guardians.

Those born in the year of the Bird and the year of the Snake should not travel long distances. They should eat well and make pujas for the protectors.

Those born in the year of the Dog and the year of the Dragon should try to save the lives of other sentient beings.

Those born in the year of the Pig and the year of the Dragon should not undertake construction work.

Particulars of the months and

days of the Fire Ox year

Note: the Empty Vase signifies misfortune so whenever one does auspicious ceremonies it is better not to face in the direction of the Empty Vase.

A "black month" or a "black day" means that these periods are not positive for starting any important projects.

The first Tibetan month is a black month. Its predominant elements are Earth-Air. The 21st day of the 1st month (February 28th) is a black day. From the 19th of the 1st month (February 26th) to the end of the month the Empty Vase is in the West.

The predominant elements of the 2nd month are Fire-Water. The 8th day of the 2nd month (March 16th) is a black day. From the 20th of the 2nd month (March 29th) to the end of the month the Empty Vase is in the East.

The predominant elements of the 3rd month are Fire-Water. The 16th day of the 3rd month (April 23rd) is a black day. From the 20th of the 3rd month (April 27th) to the end of the month the Empty Vase is in the East.

The predominant elements of the 4th month are Fire-Air. The 24th day of the 4th month (May 30th) is a black day. From the 21st of the 4th month (May 28th) to the end of the month the Empty Vase is in the South.

This year the 5th Tibetan month is a double month. The predominant element of the first 5th month is Water. From the 22nd day of the first 5th month (June 27th) to the end of the month the Empty Vase is in the West. From the 29th day of the first 5th month (July 3rd) the week that follows is made up of Pig days and it is not good for medical cures, using river water and having a bath in the sea.

The predominant elements of the second 5th month are Fire-Water. The 9th day of the second 5th month (July 14th) is a black day. From the 24th day of the second 5th month (July 28th) to the end of the month the Empty Vase is in the North.

The predominant elements of the 6th month are Fire-Water. The 18th day of the 6th month (August 21st) is a black day. From the 25th day of the 6th month (August 27th) to the

end of the month the Empty Vase is in the East.

The predominant elements of the 7th month are Fire-Water. The 27th day of the 7th month (September 28th) is a black day. From the 26th day of the 7th month (September 27th) to the end of the month the Empty Vase is in the South.

The predominant element of the 8th month is Fire. The 10th day of the 8th month (October 11th) is a black day. From the 27th day of the 8th month (October 27th) to the end of the month the Empty Vase is in the West.

The predominant elements of the 9th month are Earth-Fire. The 20th day of the 9th month (November 19th) is a black day. From the 27th day of the 9th month (November 26th) to the end of the month the Empty Vase is in the North.

The predominant elements of the 10th month are Earth-Water. The 30th day of the 10th month (December 29th) is a black day. From the 28th day of the 10th month (December 27th) to the end of the month the Empty Vase is in the East.

The predominant elements of the 11th month are Earth-Water. The 7th day of the 11th month (January 5th, 1998) is a black day. From the 28th day of the 11th month (January 26th, 1998) to the end of the month the Empty Vase is in the South.

The predominant elements of the 12th month are Earth-Water. The 14th day of the 12th month (February 10th, 1998) is a black day. From the 30th day of the 12th month (February 26th, 1998) to the end of the month the Empty Vase is in the West.

Brief general information

This is general information which does not change from year to year.

The *la* indicates an aspect of the vital force of the person. The day of *la* is the most favorable day for undertaking any type of activity.

The term *sog* means "life" and is the vital spark which has been present in the individual since the moment of conception. The day of *sog* is also favorable but less important than the day of the *la*.

Xed means opposition and the day of the *xed* is a negative day on

which one should avoid embarking on a journey and all positive activities such as building a house, etc.

The "empty" or unfavorable days of every Tibetan month

Tib. date 1,11,21 Unfavorable for inviting guests 2,12,22 Unfavorable for business. 3,13,23 Unfavorable days for children to be born. 4,14,24 Unfavorable for waging war 5,15,25 Unfavorable for friends or talking about friends 6,16,26 Unfavorable for building a house 7,17,27 Unfavorable for getting married 8,18,28 Unfavorable for carrying out a funeral 9,19,29 unfavorable for celebrating the anniversary of the dead 10,20,30 Unfavorable days in general in which one should take care.

TABLE OF INDIVIDUAL DAYS

BIRTH YEAR	DAY OF SOG
Mouse	Tues.
Ox	Wed.
Tiger	Sat.
Hare	Sat.
Dragon	Wed.
Snake	Fri.
Horse	Fri.
Sheep	Mon.
Monkey	Thur.
Bird	Thur.
Dog	Wed.
Pig	Tue.
DAY OF LA	DAY OF XED
Wed.	Sat.
Sat.	Thur.
Thur.	Fri.
Thur.	Fri.
Sun.	Thur.
Tues.	Wed.
Tues.	Wed.
Fri.	Thur.
Fri.	Tues.
Fri.	Tues.
Mon.	Thur.
Wed.	Sat.

Favorable days and dates of the Tibetan month

1. Wednesday, Thursday and Friday are favorable for studying as well as the 18th and 22nd days of every month. 2. Sunday, Monday and Thursday are favorable for medical cure. 3. Sunday, Monday, Wednesday and Friday are favorable for auspicious ceremonies. 4. Wednesday, Thursday and Friday are favorable for building houses as well as the 3rd, 7th, 13th and 15th days of every Tibetan month. 5. Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday are favorable for moving to a new house as well as the 3rd, 7th, 11th and 15th days of every Tibetan month. 6. Monday, Thursday and Friday are favorable for arranging a marriage. 7. Monday, Wednesday and Friday are favorable for starting travelling as well as the 1st, 7th, 13th, 19th and 25th days of every Tibetan month. 8. Monday, Wednesday and Friday are favorable for starting or considering a business as well as the 4th, 10th, 16th and 28th days of every Tibetan month.

These days and dates should be considered in relationship to the days that are favorable and unfavorable for the birth year in question.

Compiled by
Migmar & Norbu of Lhasa
Translation by Geshe Gedun
Tharchin Edited by Liz Granger
Any errors or misrepresentations
are the fault of the editor
and translator. ■

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with Prima Mai and Adriana Dal Borgo

September 6-12 1997

Participants must know well both the male and female parts of the Dance of the Six Spaces and the Dance of the Three Vajras. Candidates must send a written request along with their photograph to the secretary of Merigar before July 31st. Admission to the course is subject to the evaluation of the two official teachers. Candidates not admitted to the course will be notified. The course will start on September 6th at 10am.



SOUTH AMERICA

In Peru with the Master

by Gainfranco Brero and Charo Verastegui

In Lima I had the good fortune of being Rinpoche's translator. My knowledge of Dzogchen is limited, and sometimes I would say one thing for another, but I felt protected by a kind of other consciousness which allows you to enter that which is most unusual in the simplest way. So, there we were, Rinpoche and myself, in one flux, myself having no time to think, his words passing through me and flowing increasingly for two and a half hours everyday. Rinpoche talked about different forms of the teachings, the different capacities, introducing Dzogchen's deep wisdom to people who had never heard of him, but were there for some reason to listen to the words of the teacher.

It was those very words that led Charo and myself to Tashigar to find out more about what we had felt during Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche's two visits to our country, in 1993 and 1997. The world acquired a new dimension and I

could see things differently.

We learned about Dzogchen, about the importance of Community (I believe we had never quite understood that before) and its necessity and strength; and about how developing community implies developing ourselves. But above all, we felt how unique opportunities are, and that this time is very important. I think Rinpoche's illness made us more aware of the fragility of our existence, and the enormous blessing of having him around and to be able to benefit from his teachings, his sense of humor, and his incredible ability to reach each and every one of us in such a sharp and clear way.

I always have the feeling that all his teachings turn around the same thing: that there is a center and that everything else stems from that same place, and that all those turns are a pale reflection of that intense glow which is "being here".

THE SPANISH MIRROR

EL ESPEJO, the Spanish version of The Mirror, will be produced by the Community of Tashigar. The primary responsables are Laura Yoffe, Daniel Simonelli, Griselda Galmez and Cris Galli.



His Holiness Bokar Rinpoche and Khenpo Rinpoche inaugurate Stupa.

The First Big Stupa of Latin America

Inaugurated in San Paulo, Brazil

The first big Stupa of Latin America was inaugurated on August 12th, 1996 by His Holiness Bokar Rinpoche and Khenpo Rinpoche at the Kagyu Dak Shang Choling Jardim do Dharma Center in Cotia, 35 kilometers from San Paulo, Brazil.

The Stupa was built thanks to the efforts of Angela and Rogue Severino, owners of the land, and the practitioners of The Center for the Diffusion of Vajrayana Buddhism, under the guidance and instruction of Lama Trinle Drugpa who resided at the Center for over two years.

Also, the Center can accommodate practitioners of all traditions with dormitories and a large Gonpa. We hope that all practitioners of the Community, whether transiting or residing in Brazil, will come to visit.

Muriello Colajcomo, a longtime student of Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche living in Brazil, notified us of this event and existence of the Stupa itself. Muriello is presently finishing the interior painting of the Stupa.

Newly Formed Publishing Committee of Tashigar

January 1997

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Lhundrubgar by the Caribbean

Mayda Hovevar and Carmen T. Rivas

In February 1993, there was a retreat conducted by Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche in Caracas, and a member of the Community donated a piece of land about ninety miles east of Caracas and some nine miles from the coast of the Caribbean sea, in the midst of a tropical jungle with the villages populated mostly by black people descending from Africans who were brought to the area to work in the cocoa plantations. Rinpoche gladly accepted this land where nature lavishes itself generously and almost uncontrollably—leading Rinpoche to name it Lhundrubgar: the Gar where everything is self-perfected and spontaneously, naturally given. It was Rinpoche himself who made the general plan for the distribution of space and the location of buildings.

When we visited the place in order to begin developing the Gar, we were frightened by what seemed to be very wild conditions: an infinite number of hungry mosquitoes, gigantic black and hairy spiders the mere look of which paralyzed us, water everywhere including the house's floor, people's luggage and cars, the paths and our own sweating bodies, suffocated by the heat. However,

there was no water in some conspicuous places such as the toilets and the kitchen.

The first task we undertook was that of rebuilding the small house that came with the land. Immediately we set to build a thatched Mandala, a dance mandala inside the typical Venezuelan Indian round shaped building called "churata", a gigantic kiosk. This churata was built in the midst of lush vegetation and by the Limon (lemon) river—where everyday at dusk we would swim and frolic. The churata turned out to be such a powerful place for practice that we came to call it the Gonpa.

We also had to obtain drinking water and so wells were dug, pumps were bought, and at the end we had no choice but to ask the fire department to sell us water from the truck. No one wanted to become a Geko, until finally a lady volunteered to live on the spot for a year. She was unable to stay for more than three months, as it was so difficult to carry water from the river (which is 200 yards from the house), and the place was so damp and dangerous that in the end she became ill.

Finally, the long awaited visit by Rinpoche was about to happen. We had been discussing whether

to hold the retreat at the Gar and make Rinpoche and all of those who would attend the retreat face the difficult conditions prevailing in the place, or else hold it in a more comfortable place. We chose to hold it at the Gar, since then everyone, including Rinpoche, would be able to directly experience the prevalent conditions, and so the decision of whether the place should be developed or not would come naturally. Over a year before the retreat took place, we drove 700 miles from Merida, together with members of the Caracas Community, began building the churata bare handed—though, as since we all had to go back to our jobs, the work, particularly the roof, was finished by a contractor with the help of the local people. The old house was repaired and enlarged. In order for the retreat to be held, the toilets, showers and the dormitory—all made out of bamboo and other locally obtained materials—as well as two water tanks and wood planked paths throughout the jungle had to be constructed.

Some sixty-five people attended, most of whom we had never seen before. Their awe stricken, terrorized faces rapidly showed expressions of relaxation and contentment thanks to the blessings of the Master. Seeing that Rinpoche, Rosa and Fabio were feeling at home in the midst of the gigantic pool of mud, happily walking around with their rubber boots on, we relaxed and came to terms with

the circumstances.

The retreat was just wonderful. We managed to keep the mosquitoes at bay and no hairy black spiders came to terrorize us. We even received Yantra Yoga classes from Fabio Andrico. However, due to reasons we could not understand, there was never drinking water in the cisterns—though plenty of it flowed everywhere else...

At the end of the retreat, during

the gakyil meeting, Rinpoche advised us to try and find another land for the main Gar of Venezuela, and as much as possible to try and harness Lhundrubgar into production, so as to turn it into a source of income for the Community. And there is no doubt that our experience in preparing the Gar and the retreat helped us to further appreciate the value of collaboration between the members of the Community. ■

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Good News from Africa

December 22, 1996

Dear Friends in the Dzogchen Community,

It has been a bit more than a month now since we arrived in Mozambique, Africa. After a long preparation time of learning tropical medicine, obstetrics, as well as the Portuguese language, we finally arrived in this beautiful country of tropical vegetation, endless beaches (2500km of coastline) on the Indian Ocean, and friendly people. But, this is only one side of the coin. Considered to be the poorest country in the world, Mozambique is just recovering from nearly thirty years of war. A generation has grown up which has never experienced peace. So, along with the economic crisis, Mozambique had to face the difficulty of establishing new social rules and ethics. The infrastructure is quickly getting better, with the help of the international community, roads are being built, and a new tele-

phone satellite system that may enable us to even have email in the future.

Since South Africa is very near, there is a supply of all sorts of goods as long as one has the means. South African businessmen invest a great deal here, especially in farming and tourism. With its unspoiled beaches, coral reefs, crystal clear water and rare species of animals (birds, reptiles, underwater fauna and wildlife), Mozambique has a great potential of development. The corruption of state management and the heat born phlegmatic condition of the people make this process a little slow.

We are living in a nice little house on the hospital grounds of Mozambique's oldest missionary hospital established by the Methodist church. The hospital was then nationalized and now faces everyday lack of means, too much chaos, and an overwhelming number of patients which is too much for the overworked and underpaid staff. Situated near the beautiful bay and peninsula of Inhambane, every day's natural spectacle of changing colors of the tropical sky over the

blue green water of the bay, makes us forget our many difficulties and discouragements.

My work in the hospital is challenging. I am soon to become the sole person in charge of maternity and gynecology. On duty, I will be responsible for all surgical emergencies as well. This gives me a bit of apprehension once in a while, but happily there are two colleagues who are willing to help with difficult cases. I am very grateful to have the possibility to live and learn under these difficult but stimulating circumstances. Many of the pathologies I have seen here I have known only out of books. The midwives who work with me are patient teachers on my way to learn how to work in a compassionate but unsentimental way. It is not easy for a European to deal with dying mothers and babies everyday, especially seeing that the cause of their suffering and passing away often could have been prevented by very simple means. But for people who have lived for many years with the fundamental logic of war, the truth of death and suffering as being part of life in samsara is very much the simple everyday experience of everyone. For me, their way of facing the reality can only be explained by a profound spirituality which penetrates all parts of the people's lives here. Officially they are Christians and Muslims, but it seems that the original African religions never lost their influence or power. Rinpoche's teachings about the existence of different beings sharing this planet with us and the understanding of the basic Buddhist principles as to the preciousness of human life take on a new, vivid quality here.

The principles of the Dzogchen teachings are a great help here in exploring and understanding better the new world we are confronted with. And the Dzogchen Community is very far away. For the next three years there is a lot of work. It may be difficult to go on retreats and visit Gars, since we are more or less 10,000km away from everyone. So, we invite all friends in the Community to keep in touch with us, by writing or visiting. From Europe cheap flights are available with Air France (via Paris) and British Airways (via Johannesburg). From Maputo you can arrive in 5 to 7 hours by car or bus, along the newly constructed national road. In Maputo you can rent a car from Hertz or Avis. If you inform us early enough we may be able to meet you at the airport.

Beautiful beaches with barely any people, snorkeling and diving facilities at one of the world's biggest coral reefs, interesting animals and the fascination of the mysterious African wilderness awaits you here.

From February on we will live in a bigger place with a little guest house in the garden and the possibility to offer accommodation for up to four people. On the hospital grounds there are also cheap accommodations and there is camping in the vicinity, as well as several hotels and restaurants.

So we wish you all a happy New Year in 1997 and we hope to hear from you soon!

From,
Christiane and Salvatore Fiorito

The Kharkov Community (Ukraine)

The Kharkov Dzogchen Community (Ukraine) was formed "not from zero", but on the basis of several people, who were interested in a spiritual Path, and in particular with Buddhism. Some of them had received an initiation into different Buddhist practices and they had some meditation experience. But they also wanted to enter more quickly into inner real nature of the mind directly and to realize oneself through state of "rigpa", integrating into external life in the state "as it is". In order to overcome their own ignorance and incorrect dualistic vision they started to find new possibilities and impulses.

In 1991 Fabio Andrico visited Kharkov and we had wonderful seminars of Yantra Yoga. In 1992 Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche came to Russia for the first time. He gave us the initiation to the Dzogchen teaching through direct introduction and many different concrete methods and practices.

We received the living energy of Norbu Rinpoche's transmission. We want to remain always in the stream of the flow of the Dzogchen teaching. We are very happy to have received the transmission and possibilities to realize oneself through inner methods of Dzogchen. We wanted to continue develop the mind in direction of clarity and purity. We want to help other people to broaden their limit-

ed views. We attended the all retreats of Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche, and read many of his books. We were happy to spend some days together with Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche in St. Petersburg and in Moscow (1994 and 1996). Due to the presence of new boundaries between Russia and the Ukraine and the absence of a material base in the form of money, we were unable to remain for the Santi Maha Sangha exam this year in Moscow.

We feel that in the future our external conditions will become worse. We wish to draw your attention to our problems, which are obstacles for our spiritual development in relation to the program of Santi Maha Sangha. We are expecting your representatives to arrive to Kharkov to examine us. Please inform us about this opportunity as soon as is possible.

We are looking forward to take part in all further retreats with the great Master and teacher Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche!

Sincerely yours,

Kharkov's Dzogchen Community members.

Email: karling@alan.kharkov.ua

I listen the Silence of Universe Mind, In it I shall get the refuge's kind. I shall drink, drain nectar and I am filling in The Divine felicitous Vessel-human being. The Life is river, Pure Clear Light That draws me far and far as magic Life's tide. I hold the Truth's secret richness, And spring wind carries out my sadness...

V. Batsula
The free translation of
L.A. Kharkov, Ukraine. ■

Passages

A very dear dharma brother, Brian Beresford, died in London on January 20th at 12.48 pm. Members of the Dzogchen Community, including his partner Judith Allan, sang the Song of the Vajra to him for thirty six hours before he died in hospital from liver failure.

Brian had been a student of Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche for sixteen years and before that had studied with many masters. Brian translated and edited a number of rare Buddhist manuscripts and became the first Western editor of the Translation Bureau of the Dalai Lama.

More recently, it was Brian who translated and compiled The Dzogchen Ritual Practices by Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche. His latest publication was the Western Tibet section of The Tibet Travel Handbook (Trade and Travel), and his translation of Advice from a Spiritual Friend by Geshe Rabten and Geshe Dhargay has just been republished by Wisdom.

Brian was also a professional photographer who traveled extensively throughout Asia, helped to establish the Meridian Trust, a Buddhist Film and Video Archive, and acted as official photographer for His Holiness the Dalai Lama during the 1980s.

Brian was in hospital for four days. Judy was with him constantly, and many of the community came to give support, each of us practicing quietly, when Judy began to sing the Song of the Vajra. I joined her, and for the next thirty six hours one or more members of the community quietly kept the Song of the Vajra going.

We made a tagdrol of Korwa Tongtrug for Brian and included relics from the Dzogchen lineage which Rinpoche had given to Judy many years ago. Shortly before Brian sank into a coma His Holiness sent a message that he would do



Brian Beresford

Phowa for him. We heard that many other lamas were doing pujas for him and a message was sent to Norbu Rinpoche whose reply came back just after Brian had died. Brian showed none of the signs of death that the doctors had anticipated. Judy and several members of the Community came back right away and practiced Xitro for him as his body lay untouched. During the ceremony his body was a column of light. I came back as soon as I could and Judy, Julia and I did another hour and a half of the Song of the Vajra sitting by his body. Then we placed a white A over his heart and left.

Celia Wright



Goran Cavajda

L. MARDER

Goran Cavajda (Cavke), born in 1962, died on Feb. 15th, 1997, in Australia. He was a member of the Dzogchen Community since 1993, has attended teachings and practiced Dzogchen. Goran was a locally famous rock star, as well as a good actor. He will be deeply missed. ■

Namgyalgar Emerges from Hibernation

After a seemingly endless period of short, sunny, tranquil days and long cold firelit nights, Namgyalgar has roused from a relative slumber. In tune with the natural cycle, the energy surrounding the Victorious gar has moved into an action packed phase of diligent work efforts, joyous practice gatherings and various retreatants retreating. The renewed energy brought by the elemental cycle is further boosted by the culturally implemented phenomena of the Christmas/ New Year's break, bringing a huge influx of people to the area. Tourists flock the streets of nearby towns. The quiet town of Central Tilba becomes a showcase of the latest technology in cameras and cars.

From the beach to the mountain, the place comes alive. The holiday season provides people with enough space and time from their working lives to come and visit the area and Namgyalgar. Community members arrive from the cities, just dropping through after three years away or down for the weekend to paint Rinpoche's house, Namgyalgar, 'the Buddhist place', has become part of the scene in the area. The locals have accepted and welcomed us, helping us happily when the chance arises.

A recently acquired red postie scooter has further enhanced our public image in a town where the legend of the postie bike expedition to Ayers Rock is still held in reverence. Well recognized is our gekos Michel, the Frenchman on his little machine cruising along the highway, on his way to the village for a little coffee. Of course, at the base of this increased energy is the underlying feeling we all have of the imminent arrival of Rinpoche and Rosa. This in itself is enough to set everyone's adrenalin pumping. Retreat plans are underway and seem smooth enough so far. Minds are thinking red in anticipation of the Mandarava initiation and teachings due at Losar. The office is humming with enquiries from near and far. Gradually the eucalypt forest sight is morphing as structures move, dissolve and appear.

Life under the steady gaze of the Gulaga mountain is set to be as exciting and intensive as the winds that blow around her base. Along with this increase of movement however there is an overall calmness pervading, echoing the space that can be found on Namgyalgar though the winds rock her. During the next few months we hope to welcome new comers and reunite with past connections. May approaching travellers arrive safely and upon touchdown find a safe haven in which to absorb, open and truly relax at Namgyalgar. ■

Retreat in China

Voyage organized by the Dzogchen Community Switzerland

On occasion of the retreat Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche is giving in Beijing from June 6th to 10th 1997 we made arrangements with two different carriers who will give us special conditions for this journey.

British Airways Different options are available from the airports below to London, from London to Beijing with all participants on the same aircraft. Possible departures/arrivals from/to: Roma-Beijing-Roma 1240 Swiss Francs (about Lit.1.400.000) Milano-Beijing-Milano 1240 Swiss Francs Vienna-Beijing-Vienna 1290 Swiss Francs London-Beijing-London 1240 Swiss Francs Geneva-Beijing-Geneva 1240 Swiss Francs Zurich-Beijing-Zurich 1240 Swiss Francs Frankfurt-Beijing-Frankfurt 1480 Swiss Francs Departure is on June 2nd 1997 for all cities mentioned. Return for the main part of the group is on June 12th 1997 to the respective city of departure. It is possible to postpone the return flight for people who want to go to Tibet or stay longer in China on their own. British Airways has two flights a week, the return flight can be booked for a later date.

Swissair Roma-Beijing-Roma 1.060.000 Italian lire Milano-Beijing-Milano 1.060.000 Italian lire Transit to change aircraft in Zurich, stopover probably somewhere in the Middle East to fill up the tanks. Departure is on June 2nd 1997 for both cities mentioned. Return for the main part of the group is on June 11th 1997 to the respective city of departure. It is possible to postpone the return flight for people who want to go to Tibet or stay longer in China. Maximum stay however is one month, flights are on Mondays and Wednesdays. We also made arrangements for accommodation. We can book single, double and triple rooms for the nine nights between June 2nd and 12th (or 11th as per flight) according to personal choice and habits. There is the choice of a comfortable hotel, a middle class hotel and a budget hotel. It is recommended to book a hotel room together with the flight because it depends very much on good luck to find a convenient room without booking previously.

Choice of Hotels Budget Hotel approximately Lit.35.000-40.000 per person per day.

Qianmen Hotel, middle class, outside the old city southern wall, double room approx. Lit.72.000 per person per day. Single room approx. Lit.110.000.

Swissotel, first class with all amenities, near underground station with good connection to city center. Double room Lit.88.000 per person per day, single room Lit.135.000.

Palace Hotel, deluxe, swimming pool, saunas, various restaurants, etc., double room

Easter Retreat at Merigar

LOBPON TENZIN NAMDAK

will give teachings from March 28 - April 3 1997 We are happy to announce the return to Merigar of Lobpon Tenzin Namdak, one of the most important contemporary Bonpo masters and a great scholar of the Bon tradition. The Lobpon is the principle master of the Bonpo monastery of sMan-ri and one of the founders of the Bonpo community and monastery at Dolanji in India. Tenzin Namdak is a master of the lineage of the Dzogchen tradition of the Zhang Zhung Snyan Rgyud, an uninterrupted oral tradition which has passed from master to disciple since ancient times dating back to before the birth of the Kingdom of Tibet.

The retreat will start on Friday March 28 at 10. The cost of the retreat is Lit.300.000 with discounts for members.

MERIGAR PROGRAM 1997

February 22 & 23 Retreat of Karma Yoga and Purification of the Six Lokas

At 9 and 18.30 there will be practice. During the day Karma Yoga to make the tsa tsa for the stupa and other jobs.

February 28-March 2 Course of Dance of the Three Vajras

Led by Stoffelina Verdonk

The course will start on the 28th at 17.00.

Cost of the course is Lit.100.000 with 30% for all members. Since places on the Mandala are limited, one should book in advance with 30% on account before February 15.

March 15 & 16 Practice retreat of the Twenty-five Tige of the Universe

Two sessions a day at 10 and 16.

Cost of the retreat is Lit.60.000 with discounts for members.

April 19 & 20 Practice retreat of Dance of the Three Vajras (without an instructor)

Two sessions a day at 9 and 15.

One should already know the steps of the Dance. The cost of the retreat is Lit.60.000 with discounts for members. Since places on the Mandala are limited, one should book in advance with 30% on account before April 10.

April 25-27 Practice retreat of the complete Dance of the Vajra (without an instructor)

The retreat will start on Friday at 9. One should already know the steps of the Dance. The cost of the retreat is Lit.90.000 with discounts for members. Since places on the Mandala are limited, one should book in advance with 30% on account before April 15.

May 1-4 Yantra Yoga Course

For teachers of 1st level and advanced practitioners. Held by Laura Evangelisti. The course will start on Thursday May 1 at 10. The cost of the course is Lit.140.000 with a discount of 30% for all members. It is necessary to book in advance with 30% on account before April 20.

One of the sessions of the course will be specially dedicated to discussing all the problems linked to the document of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu and the organization of local courses.

Lit.122.000 per person per day, single room Lit.244.000.

We have received a confirmation that there is a possibility of cheaper accommodation in simple hotels with multiple beds (for a cost of a few dollars a day) but in this case however one cannot book in advance and transfer from and to airport will not be included.

This voyage is organized by the Dzogchen Community Switzerland as a free service for people who want to follow the retreat of Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche in Beijing. We kindly ask everyone who wants to book this voyage to contact us as soon as possible specifying the following data: name, first name, date of birth, nationality (type of passport), preferred arrangement (BA or Swissair), preferred type of hotel (budget, middle, deluxe etc.), return date if different from above mentioned. Send this information to: Dzogchen Community Switzerland Haus Fontana 12 CH-3920 Zermatt, Switzerland or fax to 0041 27 967 01 85 attention

Dzogchen Community or phone to 0041 27 967 38 26 or 967 4641.

It is necessary to send your inscription before March 15th at the latest. Once in possession of your choice of booking (carrier, hotel and dates) we will inform you where to send your account (approx. Lit.300.000). Full payment shall be made 6 weeks prior to departure date. A cancellation insurance is compulsory. The Dzogchen Community Switzerland will forward your inscription directly to the Tour Operator who will send you a confirmation of your booking, and your ticket after full prepayment. The visa can be obtained through the Tour Operator who will send you the confirmation or directly at the Chinese consulate of your country or residence with the booking confirmation. It may take two months or more to obtain a visa, depending in which country you reside, so an early booking is advisable, passport must be valid at least 6 months after your return date. ■

TARA MANDALA PROGRAM 1997

All retreats take place at Tara Mandala unless otherwise indicated. For further information about registration and prices for these retreats please contact Tara Mandala, P.O. Box 3040, Pagosa Springs, CO 81147-3040, Phone: (970) 264-6277, Fax: (970) 264-6169, E-mail: TaraMandala@compuserve.com.

June 9 - 13: Chöd Retreat at Esalen Institute

Big Sur, California, with Tsultrim Allione

For description of Chöd retreat, see August 1 - 7 below.

To register, contact Esalen Institute, Highway 1, Big Sur, CA 93920-9616, 408-667-3000.

June 12-15, Radiant Stillness: The Dawn of Compassion

with Anne Carolyn Klein, PhD

"First tighten with tightness, then loosen with looseness; the essence of the view is here." —Machig Labdron

Stillness the mind and opening the heart are skills central to the meditative art of Buddhism. This retreat draws from the mind-training tradition of Jamgon Kongtrul and from earlier Tibetan traditions.

Anne Carolyn Klein, Ph.D., has studied, translated, and practiced Buddhist teachings in the US and Asia since 1970. She is Co-director of Dawn Mountain, a Tibetan temple, community center, and research institute in Houston, Texas.

June 20- June 22: Summer Solstice Gathering

and Stone People's Lodges. With Ute Elder Grandmother Bertha Grove, who teaches spontaneously with Spirit. The weekend will include stone people's lodges (sweat lodges), council circles and time for group and private discussions.

July 5 - 12: Family Retreat and Vision Quest for Teenagers

Tsultrim Allione, Jeffrey McIntyre, Miriam Hawley, Jeff White "Horse" Hubbell and Sparky Shooting Star

We will offer an opportunity for a rite of passage and vision quest in the Native American tradition. This is for teenagers (and people in their twenties) and will be guided by Jeff White "Horse" Hubbell and Sparky Shooting Star, who will also spend time with the younger children.

Sparky Shooting Star is of Cherokee descent and follows the Sacred Pipe on the Sundance Trail. "Horse" Hubbell is a Sundancer under Ceremonial and Traditional Lakota Chief Leonard Crow Dog. The retreat will also be staffed by Tsultrim Allione, Jeffrey McIntyre, MEd., an LMFT Vajrayana practitioner and father of 3, and Miriam Hawley, student of Thich Nhat Hahn, and coauthor of Our Bodies Ourselves.

July 18, pm - July 27: Retreat with The Kusali Devi

The Kusali Devi is a spontaneously realized, divinely authorized yogini. She is recognized within the Newari culture of Nepal as a Deoma or 'Divine Woman'. She transmits mainly the mother goddess Ajima or 'Ancient Mother', and also Tara, Five Yoginis, Ajima's children and the Wrathful Goddess.

August 1 - August 7 Chöd Retreat with Tsultrim Allione

Chöd is a wonderful practice for these times. It helps us to understand the root of our pain and gives us a way to resolve our deepest shadows and hardest addictions. It is a meditation that has been practiced in Tibet for centuries, both for healing and to cut through ego-clinging. Those with transmission may come Sunday evening to join the retreat on Monday.

Tsultrim Allione is author of Women of Wisdom and founder of Tara Mandala. She has been a student of Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche for 17 years.

August 12 - August 17 Mandarava with Tsultrim Allione

The Long Life Practice of the Immortal Dakini, is a gongter, a 'mind treasure' of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu. Those who have previously received transmission may come on Sunday night to join the retreat Monday morning.

August 22-31 Tsoknyi Rinpoche's Dzogchen Retreat

The Dzogchen teachings lie at the heart of Tibetan Buddhism. They must be transmitted through direct introduction from a realized teacher, who points out the true nature of being through mind-to-mind transmission, symbol and explanation. This retreat is designed for those who have already had "pointing-out" instructions from any Dzogchen teacher and who wish to receive further teachings from a qualified master. Tsoknyi Rinpoche is the son of Tulku Urgyen, a Dzogchen and Mahamudra master. He is also the reincarnation of a great yogi and Drukpa Kargyu master who founded the largest yogini retreat center in Tibet. Rinpoche resides in Nepal, overseeing his monastery and nunnery there and his yogini center in Tibet.

September 9 - 11 Training in Bodhicitta: Three Practices for the Paramita of Meditation

During this retreat we will concentrate on three practices that train us in developing awareness of the suffering of others, relieving the suffering of others, and developing loving kindness. These meditations are an essential foundation for all practice, and are required for Base Level Santi Maha Sangha.

September 12 - 16 Trenpa Nyershang (Dranpa Nyerpa Zappa): Four Exercises of Relaxed Presence through Observation

Dranpa means to remember or be mindful of; nyerpa zappa means to relax. This practice is an essential foundation for developing Prajna, the perfection of wisdom, and is required for Base Level Santi Maha Sangha.

September 9 - 16 Khorde Rushan

This practice involves separating the discursive mind from the nature of mind itself; thus one is able to distinguish between samsara and nirvana. The retreat includes outer, inner and secret rushan.

September 22 - 26 Cultivating Right Relationship through Meditation

with Tsultrim Allione at Omega Institute, Rhinebeck, NY 914-266-4444

During this retreat, we will explore the Four Immeasurables: Lovingkindness, Compassion, Sympathetic Joy, and Equanimity and discuss what these meditations have to do with our relationships. ■

The Base Level Exam of Elais Capriles

THE SANTI MAHA SANGHA BASE LEVEL EXAM OF
ELIAS CAPRILES OF VENEZUELA

TASHIGAR, JANUARY, 1997



Santi Maha Sangha Level One

N. ZETZ

Jim Valby asking Question # 304: What is the fundamental principle of the wave of the Vajra? What is its purpose?

Elias: The wave of the Vajra is done to correct all the things that were done wrong in the practice of Yantra Yoga. To correct the errors that were done wrong doing the practice of Yantra Yoga.

Jim Valby: What errors?

E: If you have done some movement incorrectly and it affects the energy then it will be corrected by applying the Vajra wave. Yantra, I don't know anything about Yantra. I don't practice it. The only thing I know how to do in Yantra is how to break my knee. (laughter)

Rinpoche: How many movements are contained in the Vajra wave?

E: This is explained in the book and I don't have the book so...

Rinpoche: OK

E: I have bad luck with this first question! Question # 273: What is the meaning of the level of 'the great accumulation of the wheel of letters'?

E: Yes, well, there are two accumulations according to the Mahayana, which are the accumulation of wisdom and the accumulation of merit. In this case this is the highest bhumi of the Vajrayana. In Dzogchen according to the *rig pa rang grol* tantra and also according to the *shes bya kun khyab* there are three more bhumis which are: the bhumi of great bliss, the bhumi of Vajradhara and the bhumi of supreme jnana. But in the tantric way, the highest level is the level of the chakra of letters. Then, there is this explanation about the two accumulations, and within each level, it's said it's not like in the Mahayana where every new bhumi is a new paramita, here it is the same realization which is deepened, is made more profound. Then on this level it says that there arises simultaneously and spontaneously and effortlessly the primordial wisdom, *yeshe*, and the wheel, mandala of the symbolic attributes, which is the Rupakaya; the Dharmakaya and Rupakaya arise simultaneously and the explanation of the name has two meanings because akshara is a word that means on the one side letter and on the other there is a translation of the commentary, the *dri med'od* to

the Kalachakra, in which it says the Manjushri Nama Sangirti was translated as immutable, changeless, this word akshara, so it has two meanings. One would be like it is the final result of the *rang byung dorje* of the Mahayoga, in which it is immutable because it is dorje. On the other level it would mean that the primordial potential of every individual is explained as sound, light and rays, and this sound manifests itself as letters and this is like saying that all the Rupakaya we have, we can understand the Rupakaya's base as path and as result also, also this Rupakaya manifests spontaneously, is illusory, like the nature of the letters which are substanceless, insubstantial; the Rupakaya arises through the power of these letters. This is more or less the idea which are illusory, then there is an explanation not only the Rupakaya because, for example, Rongzompa says that there are two kinds of letters which are the *yeshe*, which is already Dharmakaya, and of the attributes which would be the Rupakaya, the attributes he divides into name and form and then form he divides into magical apparition and symbols for communicating the teachings. And there is also another commentary which is mentioned in Kongtrul in which there is only the last classification of only the magical emanation and for communicating the teachings. I imagine that this magical emanation is the Rupakaya and basic fruit and result and the other one probably is like the use of letters by the teacher on how to realize the fruit. I imagine it to be like that. More or less this is what I have to say.

Rinpoche: OK

J: Maybe it is enough.

E: (laughter). Q: # 147: What is the fundamental principle of the theoretical vision of the vehicle of the Bodhisattvas?

E: Yes, from the ultimate standpoint it is said that there is no substance to any entity, to any phenomena, of samsara or nirvana. From the relative standpoint it is said that nonetheless all phenomena manifests as an illusion, not exactly as an illusion, but like an illusion, but having the capacity in actuality to act, to produce effects. Then there is the practice that the Bodhisattvas do consisting of the ten or six paramitas, according to

the interpretation, of which the most important is the prajna paramita which is the way to realize the insubstantiality of everything which is the absolute truth. Then one goes through all the bhumis and on the final bhumi, which is the eleventh bhumi of light, or the fifth path of the Bodhisattva which is no more learning, then Buddhahood is achieved according to this system. I could go more into it if you like. Rinpoche: What do you think?

Jim: Maybe he could go more into something else.

Rinpoche: OK. Q: # 171: What are the 'nine vehicles'?

E: The 'nine vehicles' of the Nyingmapas, not only used by the Nyingmapas, but brought into Tibet by the ones who are now called the Nyingmapas, are the three vehicles of the cause, which were taught by Nirmanakaya Shakyamuni, which are Kriya, Ubhaya and Yoga. But in the Dzogchen texts it is said that, Rinpoche says normally that, instead of that there is taught first of all, the mundane vehicle, then the Hinayana vehicle, which contains the Sravakayana, and Pratyekabuddhayana, and then the Mahayana vehicle, which is the Bodhisattva yana. Then there are the three vehicles which were taught of the outer tantra, which were taught by the Sambogakaya Vajrasattva, and they are Kriya, Ubhaya and Yoga. Oh, I think I made a mistake before instead of saying Sravakayana, Pratyekabuddhayana, and Bodhisattvayana. Then there are these three vehicles of the inner tantra which are Mahayoga, Anuyoga and Atiyoga, which were taught by the Dharmakaya Samantabhadra. Then there are also some books, for example the Manjushri Nama Sangirti which say the Kriya tantra was taught by Nirmanakaya Shakyamuni, this is a Sarmapa interpretation, at the river Nairanjana, and then the Ubhaya tantras at the Puntso Park and then the Yoga tantra at the flaming fire mountain, the mountain of *meri barwa*. Then there is also an interpretation of the Sarmapa according to which Shakyamuni himself taught the Kalachakra, manifested himself as Kalachakra. And there is also another Sarmapa interpretation according to which Shakyamuni went to Oddiyana to teach King Indrabodhi, the Guhyasamaja tantra. But according to the Nyingma teachings, to the old teachings, what is important is not whether the teachings come from Shakyamuni or not, what is important is whether it comes from the enlightened ones, and from the wisdom mind, so the criteria to be able to tell which teaching is correct, which is a true teaching and which teaching is not a true teaching...

Rinpoche: Why do the Nyingmapas say that?

E: Because first of all the most important Nyingmapa teachings don't come from Shakyamuni. Other sects would say they are not valid, if they wanted to. Then also, like whatever was taught by Shakyamuni is not the highest vehicle, which is the one the Nyingmapas considered to be the most important one, so if we say that only these teachings coming from Shakyamuni are valid then whatever is superior is not valid, and then that would mean that it would be better to become a non Buddhist, and then practice the Dzogchen of the Bon or something like that, if all that would be allowed to be taught would be only the sutras. Then the criteria would be whether a teaching is provisional or ultimate, whether it is based on the wisdom mind or the mind, whether it is based on the individual or the doctrine, and whether it is based on the ultimate meaning or on the doctrine. That would be the criteria to tell if the teaching is correct or incorrect.

Jim: What is the relationship with Anuttara tantra?

E: Of the inner tantra of the Nyingmapa? This is quite complex. According to Ju Mipham, who was a disciple of Patrul Rinpoche, who originally was a Gelugpa, so maybe he wanted to make the Dzogchen teachings palatable to the Gelugpa so he said that the father tantras were the same as Mahayoga and the mother tantras were the same as the Anuyoga and the non dual tantras were the same as the Atiyoga. It might be very good to say so some people would be able to hear this and so they could practice these teachings, but actually if we go to the real meaning, this would be absolutely incorrect, because there are among the Mahayoga tantras father tantras, like Guhyasamaja, there are mother tantras like Chakrasamvara, there are non dual chakras like Kalachakra, and the principle of the archetypal and paradigmatic tantras of the Mahayoga, which is, for example, Guhyagarbha, is similar in principle to the non dual tantras. So, to say that the Mahayoga is the same as the father tantras is absurd. Of course there is an emphasis on the skillful means over wisdom, there is an emphasis also in the development stage, and there is an emphasis also on the inseparability of clarity and emptiness, rather than the inseparability of pleasure and emptiness. But this doesn't mean at all that it is the same, because the sense of these two is very different. For example, the senses which are referred to in the Anuyoga tantras lay more emphasis on sensation, the importance is the sensation of being the deity rather than the detail of the clarity, and this is a method which is absolutely absent in the Anuttarayoga tantra. So the main difference between the Mahayoga and the Anuyoga besides the difference they share between the father tantras and mother tantras, they share the difference that the mother tantras like the Anuyoga tantras lay the emphasis on prajna, on pleasure and emptiness, and on the development stage, in some sense, but that is not the same principle in the same way in which the mother tantras are in this way more based on feeling also. It's a different meaning. And in regard to the non dual tantras, the relation between the non dual tantra and Dzogchen or Atiyana Dzogchen, Atiyogatantrayana, is absolutely different. There is absolutely no sense in saying such a thing because the non dual tantras are based on transformation and have two stages and Atiyoga is not based on transformation but on self liberation and doesn't have two stages. We can either say that there are not two stages or we can say the two stages are simultaneous, but we can never say there are two consecutive stages. So that would be absolutely wrong.

Rinpoche: Good, good. Q: # 120: How do we apply the essence of perseverance internally?

E: The essence of perseverance internally. The point is to always have impermanence as a whip, that always reminds us that if we don't practice with a lot of perseverance continuously but we lay down and forget about the practice, then we won't be able to reach the ultimate fruit and so we have to use whichever way we can to keep this consciousness of impermanence in daily life in order to apply this.

Rinpoche: Good. Q: #40: How do we practice the *gal stong*, the *blo sbyong* of *gal stong*? The mind training of clarity and emptiness, the seventh mind training?

E: Clarity and emptiness. Q: #40: How do we train our mind in *gal stong mi rtog pa*, to go beyond thinking?

Rinpoche: *bde stong mi rtog pa*, *gal stong mi rtog pa*.

E: I don't remember that question.

Rinpoche: Do you remember *blo sbyong*, mind training? There are seven mind trainings.

E: Yes, but I remember them differently.

Rinpoche: The last of the seven mind trainings. It has three parts, very important practices. With experience of clarity and emptiness and sensation.

E: OK. OK.

Rinpoche: This is clarity. How do you apply it?

E: First of all we imagine that all our external vision dissolves in light...

Rinpoche: Dissolves everything?

E: Yes, and melts with the blueness of the sky. Then we inhale this blueness....

Rinpoche: What does inhaling mean?

E: We imagine that when we breathe in....

Rinpoche: What does that mean?

E: What does it mean?

Rinpoche: Yes, what does it mean when we are inhaling the blueness?

E: Well, it means that we are inhaling this clarity of the whole universe all of our external vision is coming inside of us as pure clarity and emptiness with nothing else.

Rinpoche: And that means integration, no? Integrating everything? Not remaining in dualism.

E: Exactly.

Rinpoche: Then?



Rinpoche and Elias

J. VALBY

E: And then we do parlung. Then we pull up the lower pranas and then we push down the upper pranas, and we keep always a little air there and a little pressure there, and in this way, well also Longchenpa says, it's a secondary training as something not very essential but just for circumstances, that if we have a cold illness we can imagine this air to be hot, and on the contrary also, if we have a hot illness we can imagine it to be very fresh and also by doing this we can also heal the organism.

Rinpoche: And when we are remaining holding this, what happens?

E: We can experience the inseparability of clarity and emptiness.

Rinpoche: We can have experience, no?

E: Yes, of course.

Rinpoche: At the end, what do you do?

E: At the end we relax in non conceptual wisdom.

Rinpoche: We don't use *phat*, sometimes maybe? (Laughter)

E: Maybe to make it more powerful? (Laughter) Because *phat* is also clarity and emptiness.

Rinpoche: OK Question: # 80: Why is said that the master is the sole foundation of refuge?

E: Well, it is said that before the master appeared there was living someone by the name of Buddha. Everything comes from the master and that has many meanings because in Dzogchen the master is the one who has found the state of rigpa. And then this is the primordial master from whom all teachings come. Whichever teaching doesn't come from that master is not a teaching. It is just a fabrication of mind, so that would not be a real teaching in the sense in which we classify the real teaching before. Also whichever transmission we receive, we receive from a master, a master as a person in the world. We don't receive teachings from the Buddha, so maybe the Buddha was most important for his disciples, and is also very important for us in regard to sutra teachings, but in order to receive the Vajra teachings we have to receive them from a master and only in that way we can have a lineage, a lineage in all senses; in the outer sense which is that all people will say, "Oh we have a lineage," also in a true sense which you have in the state of rigpa, so all that comes from the master.

Jim Valby: "I take refuge in the sangha", is there some conflict here? I always thought the master was the sole foundation?

E: There is no conflict in

Dzogchen because the master in Dzogchen has three aspects; that would be the fruit, but if we explain the master in terms of the path, we say that he has *tawa*, *gampa* and *chodpa*. Of course the master is a realized being and then the *chodpa* would be rather *trinlay* ('*phrin las*). It is also explained that the teacher is the source of the teaching of the sutra and the dharma is whatever he

teaches and the sangha are the people who help also in the practice. In the Vajrayana it is said that the teachings come from the Master, the methods that he teaches are the *dewas* and our helpers in the practice are the guardians, *dakinis* and also the Vajra brothers and sisters. But in Dzogchen the teacher is *tawa*, the practice or methods he teaches is *gampa* and whatever helps us to carry it along in everyday life is *chodpa*. And all those three are embodied in the master. So there is absolutely no conflict because when we say the sangha, the sangha is the master, because he is the *chodpa* of the master in Dzogchen.

Rinpoche: So what is the difference in this point between sutra and Dzogchen or tantra?

E: In sutra there is no Vajra master. In sutra you depend on the teachings of the Buddha. Then in the Hinayana you have the elder, who has no authority over the disciples but he just instructs.

Rinpoche: Only helping.

E: In Mahayana you have the kalyanamitra or spiritual friend, who is also not in a position of authority. But the Vajra master in the Vajrayana if he tells the disciple to jump through the window the disciple should jump through the window, and whichever wisdom the disciple will get will be from the state of the master, and also the Buddha Shakyamuni, and also like....

Rinpoche: Then the teacher becomes something like a military chief.

E: In Dzogchen it's almost in a way like that, but in a way it is not like that because we depend on our own wisdom. So it's different.

Rinpoche: OK Q: # 225 : What is the meaning of 'vajra samaya ja'?

E: The meaning here is that we are reminding the masters, and the yidams and all deities and all the enlightened beings of their promise to give wisdom and to help us, according to the Vajrayana and Dzogchen, not according to the Sutrayana. So we do this mudra which is the mudra of our samaya and is also the mudra, I imagine, that we are promising we will keep our samaya, but also we are asking the deities to keep their samaya, and help us on the path and give their wisdom.

Rinpoche: Communicating.

E: Yes.

Rinpoche: In which way can we communicate samaya?

E: There are many ways to communicate but here we are doing this practice of visualization according to the Mahayoga and so

we are receiving the lights and so we receive the lights and that is the symbolic manifestation of the wisdom of the master.

Rinpoche: Communicating with mudra?

E: Yes, communicating with mudra, with visualization and with mantra.

Rinpoche: OK. Q: # 148 : What are the ten perfections and what do they mean?

E: OK, the ten paramitas are *dana paramita*, *shila paramita*, *shanti paramita*, *virya paramita*, *dhyana paramita*, *prajna paramita*, *upaya paramita*, *bala paramita*, *pranidhana paramita*, and finally the *jnana paramita*. And their meanings. Well, there are always relative paramitas and ultimate paramitas. Relative paramitas are a training we do with dualistic mind, in order to somehow soften our ego and have some conceptual understanding of reality, how it is according to Buddhism. But ultimately the paramitas manifest after the first bhumi, each one in one bhumi, and these are ultimate paramitas and in this sense it means that we already have insight into the nature of reality. And so, as we develop on the path after the first bhumi, each of the paramitas becomes more perfect in each of the bhumis, until we reach the tenth bhumi, which is the *jnana paramita*, becomes more perfected and then we are ready to naturally and spontaneously, according to the Mahayana, go into the eleventh paramita of light, which is the fifth path of the bodhisattva, which is of no more learning. Now, the meanings. Do I have to explain the meanings of each one?

Rinpoche: No, the meaning of paramita.

E: It means to go onto the other shore.

Rinpoche: But why?

E: They say that one shore is constituted by samsara and the other shore is constituted by nirvana. Normally the people in samsara don't even know there is another shore. They think that samsara is the only reality and they don't know this is samsara and they don't know that this is an illusion, and this is an inversion, but everyone believes just as he sees is just as it is. But then we have to know that this is an illusion and there is a possibility of overcoming the illusions and reaching the other shore of nirvana and then when we have this understanding then we can practice the path in order to realize ourselves. Ultimately we have to realize that there is not another shore beyond, because if we keep believing that until the very last moment we won't reach the other shore. The other shore is non dual wisdom and there are not two shores in non dual wisdom.

Jim Valby: What is the relationship between a Dzogchen practitioner and the practice of the ten paramitas?

E: Well, in the Dzogchen practitioner all the paramitas arise spontaneously. They are not applied intentionally, like now I'm going to train in *dana paramita* and then I go around giving money to everyone.

Rinpoche: So Dzogchen practitioners, they don't give?

E: No, we can give all over the

world, maybe we can give more money. We can give our *lus gces* (precious body). But we don't practice this intentionally. They arise spontaneously as a result of one's wisdom.

Rinpoche: OK, the last one. Q: # 207 : What is the real meaning of application or *drupa*? Oh, this is really very important!

Jim: This is Padmasambhava explaining Dzogchen using Mahayoga words.

Rinpoche: *Drukpa chenpo*.

E: OK, OK, OK. Now I know. This is from the *man ngag lta ba'i phreng ba* of Padmasambhava in which he explains the Dzogchen teachings according to Mahayoga. First Padmasambhava explains the four *togpa* and then the three characteristics then these four stages, which are all methods of the Mahayoga and are all related one with the other. Then the third stage of *drupa*, well there is, I mean *drupa*, there is a translation, 'sadhana', so I understood *druppa*, which means accomplishing siddha....

Rinpoche: Yes.

E: ...so I don't know the etymological sense of meaning but it is explained that the great mother is space. When we see space as one of the five mothers, it is *Dhatvishvari*, *dbyings phyug ma*, but when we see it in the more general sense it is *Samantabhadri* which is *Dharmadhatu*. The *Dharmadhatu* is the object aspect of the *Dharmata*, the subject aspect is the *Dharmakaya*, and both of them are aspects of the single *Dharmata*. Then it is said that the great mother, which is *Samantabhadri*, we can say *Dhatvishvari* has the active function of existence. There are many

people in the West, including myself, who have explained that *upaya* is the active and *prajna* is passive. In the *man ngag lta ba'i phreng ba* there is a refutation of this duality, of this interpretation, so it is explained that the great mother has the active function of existence and that she manifests as the four great mothers who are earth, water, fire and air and in turn are the four mothers who are: Buddha- Locana, Mamaki, Pandaravasi, Samayatar.

Rinpoche: Good, no? We consider.

Elias Capriles was born in 1948 in Caracas, Venezuela. He became interested in Zen Buddhism at an early age. He lived in India and Nepal for ten years where he met and received teachings from many great masters, including Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche who he met in 1977 in Kathmandu, Nepal and was very impressed with him. From 1976 to 1982, Elias spent most of his time in retreat in Nepal. He then returned to Venezuela and invited Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche, who made his first visit there in 1986. Ever since, Elias has been involved in the Community and has been studying the teachings of Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche. He regards these teachings as the teachings of our time. ■



THE MIRROR ADVICE ON THE PRESENCE OF AWARENESS

BY NAMKHAJ NORBU

TRANSLATED FROM TIBETAN
INTO ITALIAN
AND EDITED BY
ADRIANO CLEMENTE.
TRANSLATED FROM ITALIAN BY
ANDREW LUKIANOWICZ

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Relatively Speaking

by Cheh Goh

A series about methods of communication within the Dzogchen Community.

The Running of Businesses in an Organization

INTRODUCTION It is all too easy to make a generalized statement to classify our world, even if the exceptions to such classification invariably proves the typing inappropriate. For example, we often believe that there are two main opposing types of people: the spiritual verses the materialistic, the emotional verses the logical, the impressionable verses the analytical and so on. In the same way, we believe there are two main opposing types of organizations: hierarchical verses flat, democratic verses dictatorial and so on. The reality, however, is that careless typing is not only often unhelpful, it could lead to inflexibility and the failure of the organization to achieve its goals. That is why I believe that it is absolutely indispensable that we must think of an organization in terms of its purpose, and tailor the process and running of businesses within accordingly in order to run it well. For that, some basic principles must be observed.

THE AIM OF AN ORGANIZATION Every organization has its ultimate goal. For example, a commercial concern wants to make money, where a charitable institution wants to provide a service for the good of mankind.

We can, therefore, broadly regard an organization's chief aim as either to maximize its profit or not. In the context of our community, it is plainly obvious that we are a non-profit making spiritual organization, so the people in the community are bound by the common aim of ultimate realization of the natural condition.

Given that we don't consider money making our prime business, does it mean that we will run our organization very differently from, say the Fiat car factory, or Penguin Books? I will argue that, while there exist differences between ourselves and commercial businesses, some fundamental principles of efficient and effective working of organization remain the same, and we will be very foolish to be blind to such principles. This is why.

A commercial organization achieves its aim of making lots of money through, simplistically speaking, selling things to people who want them. The money the organization spends in producing these things must be reduced to the minimum in order to maximize the profit, which is their ultimate aim. A non-profit making organization like ours aims to achieve different things. In our case we want to preserve the Dzogchen Teachings for generations to come. Within this broad trust, we have constituent efforts in translating texts and scriptures from Tibetan language to Western languages, publishing teaching transcripts, and practice

materials for members of the community, preserving Tibetan culture and so forth. The cost of getting translation done, teaching transcription published and so on must, just like in a commercial organization, be minimized in order to achieve the most, because we exist in samsara and hence are always short of money, effort and time. From this point of view, there is no difference in principle in the mechanics of running all organizations. The difference is the adaptation according to the aim of the organization, but largely this is a matter of being aware of our circumstances, something that is, in fact, the most important part of the teachings we try to preserve.

SQUANDERING THE RELATIVE EXISTENCE Somebody once related an incident to me about an exchange between a gakyil member and a helper. I have forgotten most details, other than that apparently a lot of money has been spent redoing certain thing which was basically acceptable. The gakyil member declared, upon hearing the comment that money should not be wasted in that way, that "we must feel free, we don't want to be limited by money, we want to be expansive." I still remember the shock I registered, given that that community was in really bad debt at that time. Why? Because I think it is contrary to the correct way of running an organization, and comments like this are "dharma lingo plus hand waving". Also, when I read news related to the financial dire strait of some of the Community's related organizations, and how the person responsible would declare that "we must not run our organization like a commercial company", I feel sorry. Again, it is using elegant words to conceal a very undesirable outcome.

Let me elaborate. Everything is impermanent as the Buddha has taught. We already know that in the relative samsaric world we never have enough to accomplish what we want to do. It is one thing feeling free, expansive and going beyond money in spirit, it is another when the actual money, effort and time spent is that of the accumulation of the sacrifice of many members of the community. Many people make great sacrifice in their own personal situation in order to give to the Community, it will be criminal if the organization representing the Community mis-manage this contribution which is impermanent. If the same contribution can accomplish twice as much, then we can all make use of the extra money, effort and time to do some practice for our enlightenment!

Similarly, when we say that our Community is not a commercial concern, that is true with regard to the aim. It does not mean that because we are a charitable organization, we can waste money, be careless, be inattentive and make a

big mess half the time. If we look around at the accomplishments in the Community, such as the successful organization of the many retreats in the major Gars, the building of the Gonpa in Merigar and the successful visit of the Dalai Lama, they must all be pulled together with excellent organization at the critical moment. If an organizer just wastes money, effort and time through inefficiency, or pays herself a nice salary for doing the job, I will not be surprised to see a terrible outcome.

EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE ORGANIZATION What I have pointed out is about the need to be efficient. Of course, another important thing in running an organization is effectiveness. It is no good that an organization fixates on saving every last penny such that nothing gets done until it is five years too late. Suppose we want to help Tibetans in this winter with extra food and clothing, it is ludicrous to try to send supplies on horse back from Italy now, if horses are the cheapest means of transport. Everything has its appropriate time and place, so efficiency and effectiveness must go together. We can learn a lot from commercial organizations in balancing the requirements of efficiency and effectiveness.

In the commercial world, there is a potent concept called "the customers". Unless you sell the customers what they want, when they want it, and have a way to pay for it, you are not going to make any money. So all the efforts in the marketing and sales organizations, and the stringent pressure on production line to deliver the goods, are nothing but to exchange a product with the available money from the customers' pocket. Suppose I want to produce something very cheaply, but very slowly, then my product may be too late for my customers and I might end up selling nothing. Alternatively, I can put in more people to do the thing more quickly but less cheaply, yet by selling my product in time for the customers, I may make a profit.

A non-profit organization also has its customers. In the Community, the customers are largely ourselves and the people we try to help. If there is a teaching being delivered by a master, and the accompanying materials are not ready in time till five months later, then the organizer is not meeting the requirements of the customers. From this point of view, we can immediately understand how to find the appropriate balance between effectiveness and efficiency. Indeed, this should have been rather obvious given that we regard ourselves to be on the Mahayana path. Every time we do a practice we motivate our Bodhisattva intention to bring benefits for the liberation of all beings. On a lesser scale, we try our best to help other people. Is it not immediately obvious that we must do so appropri-

ately, timely, and effectively so that the maximum benefit can accrue from our effort?

THE HUMAN FACTOR Management theories for organizations come and go, but the most endearing and satisfactory way of running any organization remains the ones that put people in front of everything else. The customers are people. The members in the organization are people. Nothing will happen without people. To be effective and efficient is not contradicting the desire to make people's life better. It is straight forward to see that caring for our customers is important. The way to do it is just like what the teachings say, "Put yourself in the others' shoes, and treat others the way you would like yourself treated." In this way we are creating benefit for others - our customers - according to their condition.

What about the people in the organization providing the services? If they do not have the right tools to do a job, it is impossible to expect effectiveness or efficiency from that organization. If they don't feel that they are cared for or supported, there will be no enthusiasm. So, in addition to only contemplating on the Four Immeasurables, take action and care for each other! Talking about being kind and good to other people in the Community ought to be totally redundant, as I should be able to take for granted that we, as members of a community where the Mahayana principle is fundamental to our behavior, are used to doing so. To mention this is to point out that in fact such behavior is in perfect harmony with a hard-nosed, well-run organization. The most consistently successful commercial companies in the world are run with tremendous support for their employees, in terms of helping them do a job properly and caring for their well being.

A REMARKABLE EXAMPLE I was very moved last summer when participating in the teaching retreat in Merigar. There were six or seven hundred participants in the July retreat, and a large number of whom requested a copy of the teaching tapes. In the past, I can remember how a set of tapes ordered in a retreat would arrive many months later by post, and occasionally not according to the ordering instruction. However, this time round I actually saw complete sets of tapes being handed out according to the orders after the Ganapuja at the end of the retreat. This type of efficiency is, I dare say, more than a match for the best commercial services! And the secret? The international team of Italians, British, Australian, Lithuanians and so on were able to organize themselves appropriately, ready with all the blank tapes and dived into action using two good tape copying machines. They selflessly put in their best effort for the retreatants and the collaboration was a stunning success. The best part of it is the confirmation of my belief that it is possible to run a charitable organization superbly in such a fashion.

OTHER ISSUES There are many other concepts in improving an organization, be it an office of one secretary or a company of many thousands. For example, "helping

others to help ourselves" is often considered as a simple but very useful step. For example, if I need something done by the secretary in the office before the end of the week, instead of being forgetful for five working days and give him the task at 5:30 Friday afternoon, it would have been better to remember it and give him plenty of time to do it properly. I have witnessed in some occasions in which people treat the secretary of a Gar worse than they would be with their dog, creating totally unnecessary pressure and demands on the secretary. My boss would have been fired if he did that to me, and yet it happened in our community. Suppose we have a moment to remember our Bodhisattva commitment, I think that would have been very beneficial. Is it not just a case of "treat others the way you want yourself treated"?

Also, there is the concept of continuous learning. The idea is that the customers will be better served if the people in the organization continue to improve themselves to do a better job. Is this not exactly the same as one of the characteristic behaviors of a Bodhisattva: always learning and never feel proud and satisfied?

Total quality control is another buzz word. The way to do it is to be able to measure customers satisfaction and improve it in the feedback cycle. Translated from the jargon, it is a way to make the customers happier whenever possible, especially in view of changes. On a more mundane level, we can say that the key is to be totally aware of the circumstances. Unless we are aware of what is going on around us, we will not be able to do our best for others. Again, is it not straight from our teacher's mouth about how a practitioner of Dzogchen should behave?

SUMMARY Many volumes of books have been written about the mechanics of running an organization well. It will be preposterous for me to pretend that I will begin to cover such vast subject in this short article. However, my main aim is to point out that,

* All organizations are the same. Run it well, and we can achieve the purpose for which the organization exists. Otherwise it only causes frustration and disruption, even if it is supposedly a spiritual community.

* The principle of running a spiritual organization well is in perfect harmony with the principle of our community and the teaching. We must not disguise our short comings in the name of being "spiritual".

* Put the Bodhisattva attitude in practice and support it with the keen attention of the Ati self-awareness, and we should be able to achieve much more with our organization and leave ourselves more time to pursue spiritual activities.

My all benefit from well run organizations!

Born and bred in Singapore, Cheh had a very traditional Chinese Buddhist background. He works in the research laboratory of an international company. Cheh has been a student of Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche for approximately ten years, and has been tipped for nomination as the outstanding bachan rooky of the year, 1996. ■



C. GALLI

How I Met the Teachings

An Interview with Piers Ciappara

January 1997, Tashigar, Argentina

The Mirror: Piers, can you tell us a bit about how you encountered the teachings of Dzogchen and what happened in your life that led you there?

Piers: I was traveling many years in India, I had started traveling when I was twenty years old, and after some years in India I met my Yoga teacher. He was a Hatha Yoga teacher and was half Russian and half Japanese. I had been living in India for many years and went back and forth to Holland; my Yoga teacher would come in the summer times to Holland and give retreats there. Then I went back to India and we did a retreat there of the purification of the elements; this teacher was very influenced by Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche, and told me to go and see Rinpoche in Holland. I had read *The Crystal and the Way of Light*. A year later I had heard that Rinpoche had gone to Tibet and was giving a retreat at the Vajra Hotel in Kathmandu, so I went. At that time I knew very little about Tibetan Buddhism. I was very influenced by how dynamic the Yantra Yoga was and the mantras of working with the elements and channels and chakras, and at that time I didn't know anything about the other practices, but I knew something about tantra and sutra from traveling in India. Dzogchen brought it all together for me.

M: So you were still primarily practicing Hatha Yoga? And did you do any other forms of practice, of meditation?

P: Yes, primarily Hatha Yoga. I was also initiated into Transcendental Meditation in London when I was twenty, so I had had some experiences in meditation before. Then one thing led to another and my life changed and I met some new girls and kept traveling around and I've been a nomad since then, some fourteen years now.

M: Where are some of the places that you went?

P: India, Nepal, Bangladesh, Thailand, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Bolivia, the States, Brazil, Chile, Uruguay, Ecuador...many places. Until two years ago I've been traveling and traveling. I would stay in Holland in the summers and travel in the winter. Then I met my wife Karen in Holland. She is Argentinian. I started to read more about Buddhism after I met Norbu Rinpoche. I read the stories of Marpa and Naropa and made a pilgrimage to Rewalswar (Tso Pema) where there is a lake of Padmasambhava and Mandharava. I went to a cave of Padmasam-

bhava and was sitting in front of enormous statue of Padmasambhava and I was alone there and he was covered in white scarves and one of the scarves came floating down in front of me. It was a very strong experience for me. Still I felt quite far from the practices; I still didn't know a lot about the practice and kept doing the Short Tun and kept the A in my heart. Apart from that I didn't practice regularly.

M: And how did you meet Norbu Rinpoche again?

P: I never had a chance, financially or any other way, to see Norbu Rinpoche again after that first meeting, but always kept the teaching in my heart. Then four years ago I came to Argentina with my wife and our youngest daughter was born. Before coming here we were living in Japan and then in the States and moving here and there. When Karen became pregnant we were trying to decide where to live, and we decided to be with her family. So we came to Argentina. I think at that time they were just opening Tashigar, but I had no knowledge of it at all. When Karen was first pregnant we were staying in Antigua, an island in the Caribbean, at that time Norbu Rinpoche came to Venezuela around 1991, and I had heard from a friend he was going to South America and I thought that was interesting and it was a very strong time in my life, having my first child, and at this time I had a strong dream. I believe that I had this dream when Rinpoche was flying over to Venezuela. The dream was that I was asleep in my house and Rinpoche came into my bedroom and I sat up and said "Hello" and then went back to sleep. When I woke up in the morning I thought "Oh no! My Master came to visit me and I didn't pay any respect!". I felt really guilty and felt it was a wasted opportunity. Then three or four weeks passed and I had another dream and he came in my bedroom again and I made a full prostration and I apologized for the previous dream and he didn't say anything, he just laughed. It was a very vivid dream and normally I don't dream so much. I remembered it very strongly. Then we came to Argentina and stayed for a year and a half and went traveling again to India and Indonesia, came back to Argentina, and I had a heavy story on the coast of Argentina and went to prison for three months. It was a good opportunity to practice. When I came out we had no money and no where to go. And my wife said "Oh, my family has a house in

Tanti" (the town near Tashigar). There was no other choice but to come to Tanti at that time. We came here and it was very beautiful and quiet and after the experience in prison it was very nice. Still I didn't know about Tashigar. Then last summer we went to Uruguay and we met this girl on the beach, by coincidence or not by coincidence, and she told us she had a Lama by the name of Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche. I had heard that Rinpoche had a center in Argentina, but didn't know where. Then she said its in Cordoba. And I asked where in Cordoba and she said in Durazno, and that's five kilometers away from our house. So we rushed back from Uruguay and came straight here. It was a very emotional experience to come here.

M: Then you heard that Rinpoche would be coming?

P: This was the first time I'd heard that he was sick. Everyone's prayers were answered that he is now healthy. It was fantastic when I saw him again at this retreat. It was about nine years from the first time I met him. This has shown me how everything is synchronicity. Meeting my wife on the other side of the planet, and she just happened to live here, and it has brought my whole family to the Dharma.

M: So now what are you doing?

P: We've just started a company called Nomad Productions. We make parties on the beach and I'm the disc jockey. I've been a disc jockey for six or seven years. I was influenced by the parties in Goa in India. Dancing on the beach under the stars, with feet on the earth. It's the best disco in the world, without walls or limits. There are three partners in the company so I thought it would be really nice to use the gakyil as our symbol. Instead of using body, voice and mind we use the movement, the music and the mind. I'm in charge of the music, the other person is charge of the art and the dance, and the third person is in charge of the administration and the mind stuff. We started off as more or less a joke, but now we've taken our roles seriously, and it's really working well. Our philosophy is that we use the state of trance that happens in the dance as a way of losing the ego. I find this dancing a spiritual happening for me and I really enter in the trance. In the Hindu tradition there is Nataraj, Lord of the Dance. I really felt I entered into the spirit of the dance and lost my ego, it really changed my life and I want to share that with other people.

M: Thank you Piers! ■

Coming Full Circle

The Last Day of the Santi Maha Sangha Teachings in Tashigar

by Naomi Zeitz

At the end of the last day of the teachings of the first level training of Santi Maha Sangha, Rinpoche very movingly spoke of the need to begin to plan for our old age and retirement; how we as a Community can help each other live out the last stages of our lives without the isolation or loneliness so prevalent in these times. (see transcription page 2)

Rinpoche referred to a tradition originated in Tibet where Communities from outside the Gars build communal houses which all the practitioners associated with that Community could have access to, for example, if Tseggyalgar were to build a house in Tashigar then all the North Americans affiliated with Tseggyalgar would be free to use that house.

It was then spontaneously decided to go and plant a Pehuen or long life tree (from the family of the Arucaria trees) that was given to Rinpoche by Jorge Stokiner of Cordoba. The Pehuen tree is particular to the South of Argentina and Rinpoche named it a long life tree because it lives some 2500 years. It is the longest living tree in existence now and only 1500 specimens are sold each year and the remainder cultivated used for reforestation. There was once a tree in China, now extinct, that lived approximately the same amount of time as the Pehuen. The Pehuen tree dates back around 100 million years and has withstood all the disasters that have transpired since. This young one is now about 6" high and has 3 branches. It was planted near to the main house in a semi-shaded location, as it doesn't



Rinpoche and the Pehuen tree

C. GALLI

thrive in very strong sunlight. Rinpoche did a practice for the health and vigor of the small tree and to appease any beings disturbed by the planting. Rinpoche said, "We hope this tree is still alive in 2000 years. Even if we are not still alive, sometimes we pass by and see if the tree is."

After moving to the Gonpa, we participated in a very abundant Ganapuja that included a *serkyem* offering. Gifts were given. An open Gakyil meeting was held, with an animated discussion about the future of the building of residences for both Rinpoche and practitioners. Plans were made for the reconstruction and renovation of the Gonpa and a new gekos, Hugo Berbotto, was selected.

Coming full circle, satiated of stomach and heart, warm feelings and fond farewells intermingled with the vision for the future of Tashigar as a strong place of practice for the Dzogchen Community of Argentina, as well as the world wide Community. ■

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Avalokitesvara in Flesh Appears on the Indian Plains

by Elio Guarisco

Only seven years ago Salugara (in West Bengal) was a tiny village of wooden barracks lined up along the main motorable road constantly crossed at high speed by big trucks on their way to Sikkim, Bhutan, Assam, Nagaland, Mizoram and other states of the north-east of India. The wooden barracks more numerous than the beds they contained were more properly bars where cheap and watered-down rum was lavishly served to truck drivers and military men from the nearby camp. In the small houses behind the barracks Salugara revealed a quality of life even thicker than the smell of urine sprayed by drunkards on the hot sand which permeated the small hallways. Everyone dreamt of leaving; only the smiles and the generous bosoms of some local beauties with faultless white teeth, violet lips and big eyes made the environment liveable.

Due to some auspicious connections, an old lama resembling a Buddha or a bodhisattva on the tenth level, surviving his old age through the force of enlightened intentions, came there. Sitting motionless on a cot with his mind lost in the space of emptiness and compassion, he looked at a gigantic stupa being built on his wishes. Watching every movement of the shovels and shifting of bricks, he followed the work like one who has not even a moment to waste and like a father protected the mind of those who surrounded him. Within the precincts of the work just a few meters away from the busy road, through the stillness of the mind of the old lama the land was transformed into an inconceivable pure land. Samsara and nirvana, awareness and distraction were so close in Salugara as to be differentiated by a space no bigger than the tip of a hair.

As soon as the big stupa towered over the area, Salugara changed its face and from a tiny village of barracks rapidly grew into a suburb of three-story cement houses where buying the once valueless land became a hard enterprise.

Nobody now seems to be aware that everything here has sprung up with the Stupa, from the inconceivable strength of the benevolent intention of the old lama. The only reminiscence of that is the young incarnation of Kalu Rinpoche who, far bigger than the boys of his age, tightly holds onto the Dalai Lama's hands as he leads him around.

It is here at Salugara, a point of passage from the plains of Bengal to the Buddhist north-east of India, that H. H. the Dalai Lama, surrounded by a tight security of paramilitary forces, conferred the initiation of Kalachakra, preceded by introductory teachings, from the 17th to the 26th of December 1996.

That an insignificant place like Salugara became the theatre for this event is not a mere coincidence, in fact the area situated in Bengal is

the place where Luipa and most of the other eighty-four tantric adepts lived. It was probably the gateway through which Buddhism in its Theravadin and Mahayanic form reached Indochinese countries such as Burma, Cambodia and Thailand. It is close to Pataliputra (nearby present day Patna) and also the arena first of all of the deeds of the Buddha and later of those great tantric adepts such as Naropa, Dhombipa etc. It is also not far from the remains of Jagadala monastery in present day Bangladesh, founded by King Ramapala (1077-1120) where the great masters Vibhutchandra and Danashila lived, and the last monastic institution to be disintegrated under the Muslim onslaught.

For the occasion of the Kalachakra, in all the distant paddy-fields of Salugara a huge tendopolis grew extending for miles and miles and in between the tents an enormous business of all kinds flourished with endless shops and people sitting on the ground exhibiting their merchandise.

Two hundred and fifty thousand people; Tibetans settled in India, Tibetans newly arrived from Tibet, Ladhakis, Nepalis of different castes and tribes from India and Nepal, Bhutanese, Assamese and Monpa from Tawang in Arunachal Pradesh gathered for the event coming from different Himalayan regions. Two or three hundred Westerners, including a few from the Dzogchen Community were also present.

The Dalai Lama, under the slogan "Kalachakra Initiation for World Peace" is largely teaching his cherished message of love and compassion (as he himself admits: "For me the Kalachakra initiation is a chance to give teachings on compassion. Most people would not come if I advertised just teachings on the gradual path. So I use this means to teach the basic principles and a good heart.") Thus he started the introductory teachings saying: "I consider the teachings preceding the initiation more important than the initiation itself", and when introducing the Kalachakra tantric system and performing the actual initiation he mainly skipped the translation.

His Holiness gave three days of introductory teachings based on the second part of the 'Stages of Meditation' intertwined with Togme Zangpo's 'Thirty-Seven Guidelines for the Bodhisattva'. The first text was written by Kamalashila, a renowned Indian scholar of the Svatantrika-Madhyamika system and the main pupil of Shantarakshita, the first abbot of Samye monastery. H. H. himself received the teaching-transmission of the text from Sangye Tenzin, the late abbot of the Sakya monastery at Ghoom (Darjeeling) who in turn had received it from a Dzogchen Lama from Kham who taught it sitting



His Holiness The Dalai Lama

YESHE NAMKHAI

on the throne which Shantarakshita himself used while preaching at Samye monastery. The text first establishes the proof of the existence of the awakened state and then sketches the stages to awakening from the point of view of the Mahayana Sutras, from the bodhicitta to the contemplation that realizes the unreality of all phenomena.

The second text from which the Dalai Lama taught is a favorite of his and was composed by Togme Zangpo, a Tibetan lama honored with the title of Bodhisattva Togme Zangpo, an outstanding scholar and practitioner and a contemporary of Buton, the compiler of the Tibetan Buddhist Canon. H. H. himself received the transmission of this teaching from various masters including the famous bodhisattva from the Kunu region of India, Tenzing Gyaltzen. The text in beautiful poetry outlines both the training in relation to the relative bodhicitta as well as the training related to the ultimate bodhicitta or understanding of ultimate reality.

The huge crowd made a serious attempt to fathom the words of the Dalai Lama through the tedious process involving the translation of his words into two and then eventually three languages: English, Nepali and Bhutanese. His Holiness evidently well experienced in teaching big crowds gave his explanations in a direct and concise manner, conforming to the general level or receptivity of the people. At times, however, the Gelugpa oriented technical terminology that he employed to explain the philosophical points must have sounded Latin to a large part of the uncultured audience.

Touching moment were those in which he took distance from the words of the books and expressed in his own characteristic and touching way words of advice that pierced the heart of those present revealing himself as the actual presence of Avalokitesvara, the bodhisattva of compassion. This culminated in his leading the ceremony for the formation of the awakened mind, in accordance with the Maitreya-Asanga tradition, where one commits oneself to become a Buddha for the sake of all.

In the Himalayan regions where the inner path taught by the Buddha has flourished for more than two thousand years, at a time in which it is waning like a flame in a strong wind and teaching is reduced to a mere belief in which seeking worldly favors from local gods is replacing the original quest for the goal of full

awakening, the Dalai Lama is an impeccable source of refuge. Fearlessly and compassionately, gifted with the talent of a reformer His Holiness is setting straight the true principle of the teachings that lies in assuming in oneself the responsibility of one's own spiritual welfare and therefore the welfare of all society. "We are our own lord. I myself do not place the slightest hope in any deity or any god," he said. He commented that on a visit to a monastery in Ladakh he noticed that the protector chamber was very well kept, shining with luster and replete with offerings and piles of money while the Buddha statue in the main temple had just a flickering butter lamp in front of it and lay there in the dust. He urged the people to not just call themselves Buddhist but to learn and put into practice the meaning of the teaching.

On a clear morning, the Dalai Lama reiterated his stand against the performance of the rites to Shugden, a three hundred year or so old cult that never gained a fully recognized status even within the Gelugpa school with which it has been closely associated but remained a topic of dispute. The Dalai Lama has already in the past, though in much softer terms, discouraged the cult of Shugden, but since some people are strongly trying to revive the cult of Shugden with instrumental purposes, the terms he used at Salugara had a much more definitive tone. He asked the people who continue to perform rites to Shugden not to come to his initiations or teachings that involve a relationship based on strict bond, though permitted them to attend his general teachings. He explained that after a careful and long examination he had come to the certainty that the cult of Shugden is to be discouraged on the basis mainly of three reasons: 1) this cult is gaining in small circles an importance that undermines the Buddhist principle that one must rely on one's effort and actions in shaping one's future; 2) it favors a sectarian attitude that hinders the harmony between the various Tibetan schools which the Dalai Lama has been pursuing for a long time. In fact, in his talks he always advises studying the teachings and doctrines of other schools, for a Gelugpa to study the Nyingmapa teachings and so forth. 3) Historically the practice of this cult has been suppressed by the heads of Tibet such as the Fifth Dalai Lama, as is clear in his writings. And as it is written in the recently published biography of Pabonka, the thirteenth Dalai Lama

His Holiness the Dalai Lama in France and L.A. in 1997

His Holiness the Dalai Lama will be in France Saturday April 26th until Wednesday April 30th in the Rhone-Alpes region. These teachings, sponsored by the Dachang Rime Congregation and the Karma Ling Institute, are entitled 'Spirituality and Its Place in Present Day Society'. For details contact: Guesar (Congregation Dachang Rime), Hameau de St. Huguon-73110, Arvillard, France.

His Holiness in Los Angeles, California, USA in June 1997:

June 5-7 Commentary: The Precious Garland

June 8 Empowerment: Shakyamuni Buddha Empowerment

June 6, 1997, 6:30 pm Public Address: A Vision for a New Millennium

All events sponsored by Thubten Dhargye Ling, Venerable Geshe Tsulim Gyeltsen, Director

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had Pabonka Rinpoche (the master of the two tutors of the present Dalai Lama and a renowned practitioner of Shugden) promise him to discard the cult of Shugden towards the end of his life.

At the conclusion of the initiation, as is customary, the Dalai Lama conferred the long life empowerment of White Tara and concluded with words of advice for mutual harmony and continued: "The real blessing is gained as we put into practice the teaching and realize its import, not from the hand of a lama. Once a master in Amdo was approached by someone who insisted on having an audience with him. Upon the refusal of the master the person asked him at least to give him his hand in blessing. "How can I give a blessing with this hand that has the nature of suffering? What I can do is to teach you the dharma then it is up to you to put it into practice!" By receiving many blessings on your head," said the Dalai Lama, "you may become like an owl that has a flat head, but it is not sure whether you will receive a real blessing. I myself am trying to implement the teaching to better myself, what I have taught you will serve the same purpose if you pay heed to it. You cannot ask someone, a god or a deity, to remove your problems. That can't be done. Even a Buddha cannot do that."

The bodhisattva left the scene in an unpretentious manner bowing silently to the crowd, leaving the clear impression that if there is any vestige of happiness and goodness in this world it may well be due to his compassionate presence among us.

What remains in the hot and hazy plains are two twin symbols facing each other across a few hundred miles of paddy fields: a beautiful palace-like residence (where the Kalachakra mandala was housed and from where H. H. preached) and a great stupa with a golden crescent moon and a sphere on the top built by the old Kalu Rinpoche. ■