

THE MIRROR

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What would you expect to see in China? I expected many Mao suited workers everywhere and thousands of bicycles, because those are the images which were in my mind of China, apparently not updated for many years. In fact, China is a country in rapid transition, full of style-conscious, hard-working, fit people not so different from any Western country. I only saw a few Mao suits, and three of those were on some elderly pilgrims, prostrating in front of a stupa. The bicycle seems to be holding its own, even in fairly heavy traffic.

Several Dzogchen community members visited China this summer from America, France, Germany, Italy, Russia, Switzerland, Finland and Spain, meeting in Beijing in the airport. If it were not for diligent efforts of communication from some people who did not even come, we would not have been able to find each other in the vastness of Beijing, with few signs in Western characters (with the exception of the marquees of 17 MacDonalds and a few Pizza Huts) to guide us.

By the time most of us arrived, Choegyal Namkhai Norbu had already given talks at the Institute of Minorities, the Chinese Academy of Science, and the Institute of Natural History, and was ready to move on to the countryside for a rest. The site for this "retreat" from the city was a

A Trip to China and the Dedication of the School

by Lauri Marder



Children of Dangehe

photo by L. Marder

small resort area a few hours' drive away, called Panshan, which attracts tourists who enjoy its peaceful atmosphere, and ample facilities for conferences and recreation. There is also a temple with a congregation of Chinese Buddhists, whose practice seems simple and earnest. Those who adjourned to this refuge with Rinpoche found time to climb mountains, eat a lot of fruit, look around, and plan how we would

spend our time before the inauguration of the school in Dangehe.

The overall quiet of Panshan was interrupted frequently by distant blasts of dynamite, especially at night. This is a consistent aspect of Chinese modernization, the blasting away of tons and tons of rock, presumably for road construction and building materials. During this trip to China we were halted on the road on a few occasions by flagmen,

whose frantic signaling in each case only briefly preceded an explosion and the succeeding clouds of smoke and hurtling rocks and chips.

The vast country of China has so many different sides: its modernization; its natural diversity and beauty; its sometimes obscured or obliterated past and many things which one cannot see, aspects of culture which do not advertise themselves, but which are at the heart of Chinese life. We could only see anyway, what we had the vision to see.

Some of us went to Wu Tai Shan, a seven-hour train ride from Beijing. This town, centered in a verdant valley surrounded by high hills each with its own hermitages and temples, has had an almost two-thousand year history as a center of pilgrimage for Buddhists. It has special connections to Vimalamitra and Manjusri, and Nyagla Pema Dundul, and there are several temples of Tibetan Buddhist worship, Chinese, and Mongolian. It is also a place where pilgrims from Amdo gather, in the colorful clothing of that region, in such strong contrast to the conservative modern dress of the Han Chinese. The bustling town, full of coal smoke and noise, is a hub in a big wheel of sacred spots, and several people of our group expressed a wish to someday return here to wander to the more isolated caves and retreats.

On our return to Beijing, we visited Tian'anmen Square and did some shopping, but our hours of arrival and departure did not allow any stops at the Forbidden City, appropriately enough.

The city of Xining, in the west of China, is referred to in the "Rough Guide to China" in alarming terms. This, the capitol of the province of Qinghai, (Amdo) is indeed surrounded by factories and full of smoke and noise, but it is a lively place, full of people of many ethnic

origins—Han Chinese, Tibetan, Mongol, Hui, Salar, Tu, and Kazakh. It is also an important node on the network of routes, most particularly the one leading into Tibet.

Close outside the town is the Monastery of Kumbum (called Ta'er Si by the Chinese), a fabulously well-endowed temple complex, and one unique in its historical origins as the flagship of all Gelugpa monasteries, the birthplace of Tsongkapa. A large group of us visited this together with Rinpoche, and were given a very nice tour, and bought many souvenirs in the gift shop before making our way to the busses again.

From this point on, the trip took on a somewhat enchanted quality. Travelling always upwards, into the green pastured mountains, then into deserts with vast rock formations heaving themselves up out of the ground, and on into oasis-like villages in the middle of the arid valleys between tall mountains, with few large towns, the life of the city became a memory, and we began to wonder about what lay ahead.

In the city of Guide, as well as on some stops along the road, officials

continued on page 6

Palden Ling

The Polish Community Buys Land

Only a few days after the April retreat of Yantra Yoga with Laura Evangelisti and The Dance of the Six Spaces with Adriana dal Borgo, the Polish Community happily purchased a house and almost nine hectares of land. For a couple of years our attempts at buying a house remained unsuccessful. Finally the dream came true. Our center, named Palden



Polish Community Land

Ling by Rinpoche, is on the hillside above the village Lysa Gora, 150 km south-east of Crakow in a beautiful mountainous landscape. The two-story house made of bricks has five rooms, kitchen and bathroom. There is power, water, and heating but all facilities and the building need extensive renovations because it has been unattended for a few years. We are doing our best to make Palden Ling a convenient place of teachings and practice. The place is really breathtaking. It has

all qualities we lack in the cities: clear sky above, open space around, calm and quiet, and rich vegetation. Natural forests of the nearby Magura National Park shelter animals rare in Europe such as bears, eagles, wolves, and lynx. This region has also very tragic history. The 20th century brought much suffering to people living in the area. It is dotted with the cemeteries of both World Wars. One of the most tragic episodes of the World War II took place there taking almost one hun-

dred thousand lives.

Anyone wishing to contact the Polish Community can write to the address below.

We want to thank all whose financial support accelerated the fulfillment of our wishes and efforts to establish a Dzogchen center in Poland. Special thanks to the German Community, the Tsegylgar gakyil, Naomi, Jim, and Joe from

Tsegylgar, those who participated in auction in Merigar, among them Mario Maglietti and Costantino Albini. We also thank all who celebrated this marvelous event by sending good words and gifts.

Polish Dzogchen Community
P.O. Box 331 30-950
Crakow 61 Poland or e-mail to:
wahniew @ fj. agh.edu.pl

See Community News Section for more news from Poland and around the world.

CONTENTS

Dzogchen Longde, Tantra of Space <i>Chögyal Namkhai Norbu</i>	2
Press Conference with His Holiness <i>the Dalai Lama</i>	3
Continuing Your Meditation <i>Sey Rinpoche</i>	4
Lives of the Great Masters <i>Manjushrimitra</i> <i>Alexis Merritt</i>	5
Book Reviews.....	5
Thirty Pieces of Advice from the Heart <i>Gyalwa Longchenpa</i>	6
The Return of the White Buffalo Calf Woman <i>Mary Elizabeth Thunder</i>	7
A Preliminary Archaeological Survey of gNam mtsho and dang ra g.yu mtsho <i>John Bellezza</i>	8
The Rime Tradition <i>Giuseppe Barozzi</i>	9
Indisputable Truth Seminars 97 <i>Interview with Chökyi Nyima</i>	10
Community News.....	11-12
Editorials.....	13
Shang Shung Editions.....	15
Windhorse.....	16
Relatively Speaking.....	17
by Cheri Goh	
Sweeping the Yard.....	20
John Shone	

SPECIAL FEATURE:

Continuing Your Meditation

by Ven. Ngawang Gelek
Namgyal (Sey Rinpoche)

PAGE 4

The Dzogchen Teaching was originally taught by Guru Padmasambhava when it started in Tibet. Guru Padmasambhava's main teacher was Sri Singha. Guru Padmasambhava received mainly Dzogchen Upadesha teachings from Sri Singha. Historically, Guru Padmasambhava had eight manifestations. When we are learning this history of the eight manifestations it's a little difficult to understand. As I understand it, Guru Padmasambhava had different periods of different manifestations, for example, once he was called Loden Chogsed, once Nyimai Odzer, once Senge Dradog, something like this. For many centuries it was like this, because it is said that eight years after the *paranirvana* of Buddha Shakyamuni was the birth of Guru Padmasambhava. Guru Padmasambhava was also the student of Sri Singha, the King of Tibet. In Tibetan history they consider that Guru Padmasambhava lived many thousands of years. I am not really sure about that, for me he has been like different emanations in different times. The last one is the Guru Padmasambhava who arrived in Tibet. In any case, in history one of the emanations of Guru Padmasambhava had met and received transmissions of Dzogchen teachings from Garab Dorje. So it is considered that Guru Padmasambhava is also a student of Garab Dorje, not only Sri Singha. From Garab Dorje to Sri Singha there were many lineages and many years passed.

When Guru Padmasambhava arrived in Tibet he mainly transmitted Dzogchen Upadesha and the principle of Dzogchen Semde and Longde. Guru Padmasambhava gave advice to his student Vairocana, who was very clever and could learn everything immediately and very easily, and told him that he should learn Sanskrit and Oddiyana language. He advised him of not only that, but that Vairocana should learn many languages, so Vairocana went to India, and Oddiyana, where he met Dzogchen teachers and there were original Dzogchen books that he should translate into Tibetan.

In the time of Guru Padmasambhava there were no Dzogchen Tantras in Tibet. There were only (what in later times were considered) Dzogchen Upadesha *terma* teachings. It is thought they were taught by Guru Padmasambhava. There was not Dzogchen Semde and Longde. Then later Vairocana traveled with his friend to India and Oddiyana and they met Sri Singha and they learned and studied. They received teachings. In the end, Vairocana returned in Tibet and when he arrived in Tibet and communicated Dzogchen Semde and Longde, he had some problems with some teachers, particularly Indian teachers who were related to Sutra. They had a very straight relationship with Tibetan kings and created some problems. For many years Vairocana was sent to East Tibet and wasn't allowed to stay in Central Tibet. They considered that Vairocana was not correct. Then later a Tibetan king invited Vimalamitra, a very important Dzogchen teacher, who arrived in Tibet and he began by giving Sutra teachings. The gradual path. For that reason today, meditation based on the gradual path is

called *gomrim*, and there is one book of *gomrim* written by Vimalamitra. Vimalamitra is not really a gradual teacher but a Dzogchen teacher, but he was not able to communicate Dzogchen directly because there were so many confusions in that period. Sutra and Tantra teachings were more prevalent and they were not accepting the Dzogchen teachings by Vairocana. Guru Padmasambhava was no more in Tibet. So Vairocana had many problems, but later Vimalamitra arrived and first taught Sutra and then slowly, slowly, he communicated Dzogchen teachings. When Vimalamitra taught Dzogchen teachings the Tibetan king really



Photo by: P. Barry

Dzogchen Longde Tantra of Space Part II Teaching in Namgyalgar, Australia April, 1997

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

understood that they had been wrong and Vairocana was correct. They asked Vairocana to return, and he translated many books and taught and communicated Dzogchen teachings.

The books Vairocana translated were mainly Dzogchen Semde and Longde. Dzogchen Semde, Longde and Upadesha are three series of Dzogchen. Why are there three series? Because all the Dzogchen teachings taught by Garab Dorje all his life were related to his three statements. In the end he manifested rainbow body. Then Manjushrimitra received permission from Garab Dorje to collect all these teachings and he also received the three statements of Garab Dorje: Direct introduction. Not remaining in doubt and Continuing in that state, he understood that these three statements of Garab Dorje really represent the essence of the Dzogchen teachings and are also the guidelines of the Dzogchen teachings. For learning, for teaching, for applying; everything is related to these three statements. For that reason he divided all Dzogchen Tantras and lungs transmitted by Garab Dorje into these three series. The first series related to the first statement, the second with the second statement, and the last with last statement. So these are Dzogchen Semde, Longde and Upadesha.

The first statement is Dzogchen Semde. We say *sem*, *sem* means mind. When we say *semnyid* it means nature of mind. When we say *semde*, *de* means series of teachings. *Semde* doesn't mean series of teachings of mind, that is a shortened version, the long version is *changchub sem*, *chang* means purified, *chub* means perfected. *Sem* means that pure mind or that pure condition, so in a real sense in Sanskrit we say *bodhicitta*. But *bodhicitta* in the Sutra principle and Dzogchen is not the same. In Sutra we consider *bodhicitta* something like cultivating

compassion. In Sutra we consider two kinds of *bodhicitta*: absolute and relative, absolute means knowledge or understanding of *shunyata* or emptiness, having the realization of that knowledge. So in this case, that could be very close to the *bodhicitta* of Dzogchen. When we say relative *bodhicitta* we divide in two, we say relative *bodhicitta* of intention and application. We have intention to do something good for having realization and for that purpose we enter into action. So these two are the more famous *bodhicitta* we speak of in general. We don't speak much of absolute *bodhicitta*. That is considered something as a final goal of realization. What we need are these two *bodhicittas*; cultivating with intention and application.

In many, many Dzogchen original books, in the *lungs* or *tantras*, sometimes in a *tantra* you couldn't find a single word saying Dzogchen. They always said *changchub sem*, *bodhicitta*. The kind of *bodhicitta* of Dzogchen we translate as primordial state. We must go into the sense or meaning. *Chang* means purify, but in a Dzogchen teaching our real nature is pure since the beginning, there is nothing to purify, it is already purified. *Chub* means everything is perfected since the beginning, there is nothing to progress or develop. So that qualification of purified or perfected state is in our real nature of mind. That is then *bodhicitta*. *Changchub sem*. So this, in the real sense, means the same thing as Dzogchen. *Dzog* means perfected, all our qualifications, etc., and *chen* means totally, the totally perfected state. So if we say Dzogchen or *changchub sem* it's the same, there is no difference, always the same meaning. We must not understand *bodhicitta* as relative *bodhicitta* and in the Dzogchen Semde *tantras* and *lung* they are saying a hundred times *bodhicitta*, that means the primordial state, our real nature. For that reason Garab

Dorje gave direct introduction for the student to have experiences of that knowledge; experiences one by one. The most diffused experience is emptiness, because that is taught and introduced in Sutra teachings and also practiced as *shine* or calm state. Why? Because we are very confused, agitated and charged. That is our nature. All our tensions are agitated. So we need to relax. When we are relaxing through fixation for example, we get in a calm state. When we get in a calm state we can discover the state of emptiness. In a calm state there is nothing but the nature of emptiness. In emptiness then slowly, slowly we distinguish thoughts, movements,

to change, for example. Many people when they are following teachings they say, "Oh, I am student of Sakyapa, or Gelugpa", or consider themselves a student of someone. Then when people follow the Dzogchen teachings they think, "Oh, I must change, I must become a student of Dzogchen, I am accepting this path, maybe I like this path, maybe it is more interesting than teachings of Gelugpa." For example you can have this kind of idea and maybe you have this idea of changing, you think there is something to change. Many people do, they change.

When I arrived in India, for example, for the first time, there was a French nun, she originally said she was Catholic and then she became Theravadin and spent many years in Thailand. Then she arrived in India and became a student of a Kagyupa Lama. Then she said didn't like some method, and became a student of a Nyingmapa lama. Then when I met her she wanted to become Sakyapa in that period and someone told her I was Sakyapa, because I spent many years in a Sakyapa monastery and my college was more in the Sakyapa tradition, so I know the Sakyapa tradition and teaching very well. I had received all. Then she came to me and said she wanted to follow a Sakyapa teacher, and I told her I had no time and didn't know really, I am not a teacher and I am only a student, I am only visiting India, that's all. Then she went away and after some two or three years someone told me she became Hindu. I was very surprised. So, life is very short.

There seem to be many different ways. Some people feel that way; but when we have this attitude that means we are not understanding the teaching and we never entered into understanding. If we have really entered into understanding there is nothing to change. It doesn't mean all the methods are the same, there are hundreds of different methods. But the essence or substance of the teaching is the same. There is nothing to change. We discover. When we discover there is nothing to change we don't have any problems. We meet Sakyapa, Kagyupa, Gelugpa, there is no problem, we are always free. So that means we tasted sugar, we know the taste of sugar, and we are an expert of that. We are no more dependent on some information and we have no problems.

In a similar way, Dzogchen Longde is something like that relative to not remaining in doubt. That kind of teaching, for example the Tantra *Longchen Rabjam Gyalpoi Gyud*, the Tantra of Space, and later many other experiences of teachers, all this put together is called the series of Dzogchen Longde. Both Dzogchen Semde and Longde were brought from Oddiyana by Vairocana but the way of applying Dzogchen Longde in the time of Vairocana and today is a little different. In the time of Vairocana Dzogchen Longde was introduced, presented and used in a more pure Dzogchen way. Later it developed as a mixture with Tantrism. But that was a later time.

Part III will be in the next issue, #42. ■

and manifestations of clarity and then we know how to go ahead with other experiences like the experience of clarity. At the end we can have the experience of sensation, more concrete at the physical level. But firstly we go with the experience of the calm state, the experience of emptiness.

In the Dzogchen Semde there are different methods, for example explaining the four contemplations, mainly like the calm state, *miyowa*, *nyamnyid* and *lhundrup*. At the end there is also the state of integration and sometimes there is only being in a state of *shine* and we observe different kinds of experiences related to our five elements, etc., without speaking of the four contemplations. There are different methods, not only one, mainly there are three very distinct in the Dzogchen Semde but all are going primarily with the experience of emptiness and bringing one into the state of that knowledge. So these are the characteristics of Dzogchen Semde. All these kinds of teachings, *tantras*, *lungs* and also something like the advice of teachers like Garab Dorje and Sri Singha and Jnanasutra, all these Mahasiddhas and their experiences, all put together are called the series of Dzogchen Semde. This is related to the first statement of Garab Dorje.

Then we have the second statement of Garab Dorje. Not to remain in doubt. We don't only learn in an intellectual way, but discover with experience. For example, we don't understand in an intellectual way how the taste of sugar is. If we have never had the experience, we don't know what sweet is. We can read many books, many books of introduction, for introducing how sweet looks, we can learn, we can construct many ideas, but we can never have a concrete experience of sweet in this way. But we can have a concrete experience if we get a small piece of chocolate and put it on our tongue. After that we have nothing

His Holiness the Dalai Lama was invited to officiate at the grand opening and dedication of the Great Buddha and the 10,000 little Buddhas circling the great Buddha statue at the Great Hall of the Chaung-Yen Monastery in Carmel, New York on Saturday, May 24th, 1997. Seven thousand people attended the inauguration ceremonies. His Holiness gave two and a half days of teachings following the inauguration in which fourteen hundred people participated.

The Chaung-Yen Monastery was founded in November of 1975 on one hundred and twenty-five acres of land in Putnam County, New York, by the Buddhist Association of the United States (BAUS). BAUS was founded in New York City by Dr.C.T. Shen and Mrs. Jiang in 1969.

Following is a transcription of a news conference held on Sunday, May 25th at 10 am at the library of the Monastery.

I have nothing to say!
(laughter)

Except, of course, that I am very pleased to participate here. As I mentioned, I think this is one occasion where quite a big number of sangha members of both traditions, the Mahayana and the Hinayana tradition, have the opportunity to meet. I always feel that we are lacking communication or contact, within the Buddhist community. Sometimes I have closer relations, more contact with, other religious institutions, mainly the Judeo-Christian traditions. So I am very, very happy to have this contact.

At the other meeting I expressed that it is not right or appropriate to think how to propagate one's form of faith, rather, how much we can make a contribution for the benefit of society. I mentioned that as Buddhists we have two forms of responsibility. One is to make a deeper understanding about Buddhist teaching within the Buddhist community. I have stressed study and to introduce Buddha dharma in the family. That is extremely important. Sometimes we have the feeling or impression that the study is the responsibility is of the monastery or the temples; that in a Buddhist family it is just sufficient to say "I go for refuge to the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha". And like with the Tibetans it is sufficient

just to carry a rosary (mala) and recite some mantras, while in the meantime the mind is thinking something else. That is not sufficient. Therefore, in the family, we need to create a more complete knowledge of Buddha dharma. That is very, very important. And the second responsibility is sincerely to pray for the happiness of all sentient beings. Other places and other planets, that is too far, but to those sentient beings on our own planet we have to make some contribution.

Sometimes we Buddhists, at least myself, think we can benefit sentient beings by sitting comfortably in own rooms and praying. Not doing much. That is wrong. Like our Christian brothers and sisters, who are very much committed to the welfare of our society, our Buddhist monks and nuns should be more involved with service in society. So these are the thoughts that have been on my mind.

My main purpose in this visit to America, which is quite long, is to give teachings. Here the main audience is Chinese. Some of the program is elevated teachings, some public talks, some is lectures at a few universities. This visit is mainly of a cultural and spiritual nature. I am very happy to have another opportunity to say hello to my old friends and to meet new friends also. So, that's all, I'm very happy, thank you.

Question: Can you give us your perspective on why Buddhism is growing in America so rapidly?

His Holiness: The best answer is that maybe you should ask those Americans who show an interest in Buddhism. That is the best answer. I also have a curiosity. I feel of course with individual cases, different reli-

gions should be there. But generally speaking, perhaps the human nature, you see, sometimes we are not satisfied with our routine, something that is part of our normal and everyday life. So, we change our clothes, have a new car, new shape, new color, that is our nature. So, similarly, regarding religion, we do the same thing. Sometimes we think "Oh, that's good, but still I want something new." That is one factor.

Another factor is that Buddhist or Eastern philosophy, particularly Buddhist philosophy, is very much involved in meditation and using mind. That is one reason why maybe there is more attraction.

The third reason is that particularly in Tantrayana there is an element of mysticism. That is a wrong expectation or concept. Too much emphasis is put on mysterious things; and that you can achieve something very quickly, miraculously. For some people that is a factor. That is a source of a big failing. The Buddha dharma I feel is a more scientific religious tradition; one of shaping our mind, transformation of our mind, gradually, like our own learning process, from kindergarten, step by step, change, transformation of our mind. I want to stress that the expectation of instant change is not right. In general I think it's better to keep your own traditional values and your own religious faith. Changing religions is not easy and sometimes brings disaster. One example is a Christian has in the center of their faith a creator, an absolute creator, so a person who has that kind of faith has very strong conditioning of that kind of orientation, will find difficulties or confusion with the Buddhist idea of no creator or self creation, so it's better to keep your own tradition. In the meantime you can adopt different methods from other traditions to develop or increase compassion or a sense of tolerance. And, of course, meditation.

Question: Your Holiness, you spoke about the family. Do you have any message for the young children

of America?

His Holiness: Yes, family is very important, in the initial stage for shaping minds at the stage of the young children, the family atmosphere at that time is very, very crucial. Whether they are rich or poor, educated or uneducated. Each family with children should have an atmosphere of compassion, a sense of caring, I think that is very important. The parents themselves are happier, and that is more important with children. Then the children grow well. Most important is that those children who grow up with a sense of caring, when these children become adults, they also share their sense of caring with others. That should be our long term plan, ten or fifteen year plan for a better world. If we expect that through education a child will become a nice person, I think that is wrong. Of course we can increase intellectual knowledge through education, but the basic warmth of the family atmosphere is most important. Then the families without children, whatever they like they can do. (laughter)

Question: I have a question about the survival of Tibetan culture and religion in the future, it's an interesting parallel about the Jewish religion being scattered all over the world and the Diaspora of the Tibetan people as well, being spread all over the world. I know you have had some meetings years ago with Jewish leaders to try and find out how they managed to survive their culture over many hundreds of years. Can you say something about that, and what you found interesting and what may be applied to your people?

His Holiness: As you may know, from the beginning, we always considered the Jewish method or secret to keep their tradition or identity under hostile circumstances. And somehow our relation with the Jewish community was quite satisfactory and through this personal contact we learned a lot. There is a technique to introduce their young children to what their past has experienced in a form of fun or play, to introduce in their minds. I think that is a great technique. Sometimes I think our tradition is wrong, several hours of prayer and things like that, which is boring. (laughter) Especially for those young, young monks. I think that is a very practical and wise method.

Question: In the West we have accepted and are very grateful for what has come from Tibetan Buddhism, but after we've studied

and practiced for a while we start to react with our Western perspective. I don't know what the right or correct way is to bring our Western viewpoint to bear on the Tibetan teachings. Do you understand?

His Holiness: Yes. The first point is that it is very important on the part of the Western practitioner themselves not to succumb to the general tendency which is to generalize across the wide spectrum of Buddhism by taking one instance and thinking that this is how Buddhism sees these things. It is important to cultivate a greater appreciation of the overall picture. Here I mean the teaching of Hinayana, Bodhisattvayana and Vajrayana, the complete picture, then you can analyze the basic Buddhist philosophy or standpoint. That I think is one important point.

In Buddhism there is tremendous emphasis on self responsibility, self reliance, you are your own master, your own cause for downfall, there is tremendous emphasis placed on drawing from one's own resources. For example there is a technical term for individual morality, known as individual liberation, and the sense is that by living one's life according to these ethical principles, one individually gains liberation. There is a sense of an individual on the path attaining freedom.

Now one thing that is a little bit of a problem is the Guru Yoga. The relation between teacher and student, this is one potential area where there could be a conflict between Western sort of cultural perspective and Buddhist practices in the area of the guru /student relationship. And here what is important is to be familiar with the minimum qualifications that the Buddha demanded on the part of someone who is to going to act as a teacher. And there are also different levels of qualifications that are required or demanded for the different criteria or qualifications for a Vinayana teacher, a Sutra teacher or a Vajrayana teacher. What is important on the part of the student is that it is all right to attend someone's lectures and relate to that form of teaching purely as attending a lecture, as a source of information, but what is important is not to be too hasty in taking someone as one's teacher or guru in the spiritual sense. Even after you become a follower or student, or even after you consider that person as your teacher, or your guru, still too much relying on that other person is not good. The teacher, even Buddha himself, is not considered as creator, but our teacher. So still the responsibility is entirely on our own shoulders.

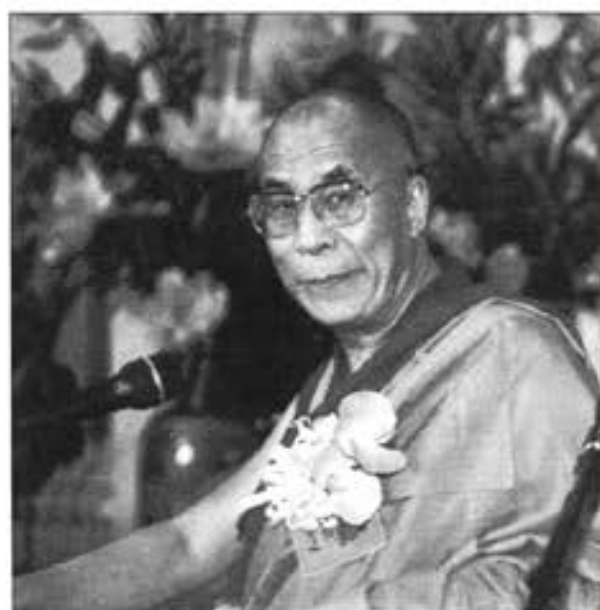
I have noticed that some Western students, firstly some young Buddhist students because of some family problems or some kind of problem, anyway, in many cases I think in themselves there is something weak, so you see they are seeking some kind of protection, they are relying too much on the teacher and that I think is the source of the problem. And then unfortunately, also on the side of the teacher, he or she may not be so self disciplined and that is also the root. Of course a teacher who is really self disciplined and qualified, if one

continued on page 4

A Press Conference with His Holiness the Dalai Lama

May 25th, 1997

Chaung-Yen Monastery, Carmel, New York



His Holiness the Dalai Lama

PHOTO COURTESY OF BAUS

NAMKHAJ NORBU RINPOCHE'S SCHEDULE		
Aug. 7	Leaves for Jomdazong (where the hospital is being built)	Retreat is cancelled.
Aug. 25	Leaves for Lhasa	Dec. 8 Leaves for Singapore
Sept. 5	Leaves for Ralung visit	Dec. 12-14 Weekend Teaching in Singapore
Sept. 8:	Leaves for Nepal	Dec. 15 Leaves for Sydney
Sept. 19-21	Kathmandu-weekend Teaching	Dec. 19-21 Weekend Teaching in Sydney
Sept. 26	Leaves for India to visit many places	Dec. 22 Leaves for Namgyalgar
Nov. 3	Leaves for New Delhi	Dec. 26-Jan. 1: Namgyalgar Retreat
Nov. 7-9	Weekend Teaching in New Delhi organized by Tibet House	1998
	E-mail: Internet:tibet-house@tibet.net	April 27 Arrives from Rome to Moscow
Nov. 10	Leaves for Goa or Kerala for resting	May 3-5 SMS Base Level Exam
Dec. 4	Leaves for New Delhi	May 6-10 SMS Level I Training
Please note: the Singapore Boat		May 15-19 Moscow Retreat
		May 22-25 SMS Level I Exam
		May 26-30 SMS Level II Training
		June 1 Leaves for Poland

Ven. Ngawang Gelek Namgyal, better known as Sey Rinpoche, is the third lineage holder of the lineage of his great-grandfather, Togden Dugu Shakya Shri Rinpoche as well as the reincarnation of Tripon Pema Chögyal, a great tantric practitioner who was recognized as the emanation of Gotsang Gonpo Dorje by the XI Drukchen Rinpoche and named by Togden Shakya Shri holder of his transmissions.

He currently resides at his monastery in Manali, North India, where he continues to receive teachings and transmissions from the abbot Khyentse, and often gives teachings of the Drukpa Kagyu tradition, in particular the transmission of the Six Yogas of Naropa.

As I told you yesterday, when we finish this three day retreat it's not that you finish your practice of *Ihagton*. It's not like this. All the retreats are not like this. Those who have interest should continue and then, as I told you, you should compare the person you were before with how you are now to see how much difference there is. If you see some difference that means that you have developed something or progressed, then you will be happier about it. But it depends very much on your individual motivation or interest. If you just do it to kill time, like going to a bar, then that is different. But those who really have an understanding of *samsara* and really want to get rid of it when those people compare their previous selves with the person they are now, and see some progress, then they will really have some joy. And then when you see this kind of progress you will have even more interest or motivation. So the most important thing is the continuation of meditation. We have spent three days together and it was a nice meeting but we should get some meaning out of it, then my being here and your spending time here will have been very meaningful.

I hope that the very humble and limited contribution of my presence here will help your progress in the future. As you know, as a Buddhist, as a practitioner, it is very necessary for the community, the *sangha*, to progress, but at the same time it is very, very important to progress in your own individual mind. When each individual person makes some progress then the community, the *sangha*, automatically becomes pure and good.

I think you have had a very lucky and precious opportunity to receive teachings from a Master like Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche. What he can do is that he can talk and teach, but he can't grab you and change you into



Sey Rinpoche and some of the Dzogchen Community of Merigar

PHOTO BY L. GRANGER

Continuing Your Meditation

Final advice at the end of a three day retreat

by Ven. Ngawang Gelek Namgyal (Sey Rinpoche)

practice, otherwise competitiveness has no limits. As long as you exist as an individual you will always have your enemies. It depends on your own motivation or actions. So this is very important. And you have to make a strong effort.

For example in the Dzogchen Community the main person is Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche. You see how much effort he has made to be able to have this community. But then once you get this community in a wonderful way it is very easy to destroy it, too. The existence of the community depends on each person. The practitioners in the Dzogchen Community should be as it says in the *chöd*, not one higher or lower than the others, but trying to be equal at the same level with each other, otherwise all this effort will have been useless. And it will be sad if this development which has taken place is destroyed. And this is also an important way for prolonging Rinpoche's life and bringing progress to all his activities in this world. All this depends very much on his disciples, how we behave, how much progress we have made. So if he sees some kind of progress in his disciples then he will see some kind of meaning to live longer. And so it is very important for all of us to do this.

That's all I wanted to say. Thank you very much individually for inviting me here and sharing some time together. It has been very nice. Thank you very much. And I hope that if it is beneficial, whenever there is the need of myself, I will be present.

Merigar, June 8th, 1997.

Transcribed and edited by L. Granger ■

Retreat Center in Kinnaur

*A project of
Tulku Gelek Namgyal (Sey Rinpoche)*

This year I was invited to Kinnaur in the north Indian state of Himachal Pradesh where I spoke about the Dharma and gave some initiations. The people there were very kind and offered me some land. For myself I didn't see much need for that land in Kinnaur so I thought it would be good to build a retreat center there because Kinnaur region is considered to be a region of Cakrasamvara and most of the people are Buddhists. Among the Buddhists there are two traditions there: one is the Gelugpa tradition and the other is the Nyingma and the Kagyu traditions. In the Gelugpa tradition I was very happy to see that they were progressing well; many people are sent to be instructed at Sera and Drepung and they are well educated in Buddhist philosophy. I'm not trying to compete but I felt quite sad when I saw the Nyingmapa and Kagyupa tradition there of which there only remain things like rituals. I did not see much progress into the view of the Nyingma and Kagyu traditions, such as practicing meditation and the mind transmissions of their traditions. I felt quite sad about that and I thought if I could create a retreat center there and put some local people into it to follow the practice (of the Drukpa Kagyud tradition) such as *tummo* and so on, that maybe it would awaken them again to the tradition to which they have belonged for centuries and centuries. So that's why I felt it would be important.

I would like to build a retreat center, not for many people, for a minimum of 20 people up to 40 people. They will be in retreat for practicing Mahamudra and I will try to contribute my knowledge of it. Then I would also like to add Dzogchen practice, which I don't know very much, so I will invite Dzogchen masters there according to my own ability. And that's how I want to develop this project.

My goal is to finish this project in three years, or even in one year if it is financially possible. When it is finished, if any one of you wishes to come and stay in retreat (which depends very much on the visa) you will be welcome. I will make two sections there: one for the three years retreats and another section for retreats of six months, three months so on. This is the region of Cakrasamvara and there is a mountain there called Kinnaur-Kailash, or Kang Rinpoche and you can do a *korlo* in two or three days. When the retreat center is finished I will send some photos to the entire Dzogchen Community to see.

another person - this is impossible. So what he has taught you, you have to listen to and keep in your mind, not in books or writings, because this is the wish or the motivation of Rinpoche in everything he has done for all of the *sanghas*, and so it is very important.

When there are so many people together—and of course our mind is a sentient being's mind—there is also competitiveness even in Dharma and we think, "Oh, I should sit better than him" or "I should behave better than him" or "I should have better qualities than him" and so on and there is no limit to that. But if you want to compete then you should compete with yourself, in your mind, the mind that influences you towards competitiveness and leads you towards a negative side and a positive side of behaving and living. If you really want to compete, it should be between these two sides to overcome (the negative side) with meditation. This is the real practice.

The Dalai Lama

continued from page 3

is relying on him or her, there is no possibility of exploitation. The teachers have their own kinds of weakness and these problems can happen. We should take care. In general in Buddhist teaching there should not develop any kind of cult. Buddha himself made very clear that the teaching is more important than the person. Sometimes we are relying more on the person and forget about the teaching. That is absolutely wrong. Even Buddha himself has gone on record stating that one should not rely on the person or personality, but on what the person has said, the teaching. Even the words that he himself has said that are found contradictory to that body of knowledge or that experience, they cannot be taken at face value. Also in the Vinayana teachings, the monastic disciplinary teachings, Buddha has said that even if a teacher tells you or gives you an order or instructions and if you find that it contradicts the general framework of a Dharma path, even if it is instructions of one's guru, one should not follow it, one should reject it.

Question: If there was one message you would like to give to people, what would that message be?

His Holiness: I don't know. (Much laughter)

Question: Our noble Dalai Lama, as a spiritual master, what do you think is America's greatest spiritual difficulty and how are we going to overcome that difficulty? And what is our greatest privilege and how are we going to utilize it in the next millennium?

His Holiness: For that question also the answer is also I don't know. (Much laughter)

I think generally speaking, I think, firstly the purpose of our life is happiness. Each of us has the right to work on something and achieve happiness. That I think is basic. And also in order to become a happy person, the material facility alone cannot provide. While we are acquiring good facility we should not neglect our own inner potential. What is inner potential? Good heart, warm heart, that's quite clear. There's no place for argument. Warm heart here, the person immediately has more self confidence. So with that, more determination, more courage, less fear, less doubt. That I feel is very important. Even if the person is a believer or non believer, be a warm hearted person, that I believe is one of our secrets. Warm heart here, that brings a lot of good things. Thank you!

Transcribed and edited by
Naomi Zeitz ■

BIRD'S NEST WITH ROCK SUGAR

(AN EASTERN MEDICAMENT)

The thought of you
is my nest
I can return to it
any time

the taste of sugar
reminds me
how homesick
I am

my powers never fail me
since you told me how to
use the longing
for wings

Dorothea Franck



Lives of the Great Masters



Manjushrimitra

by Alexis Merritt

As Buddhists, when we look for the source of the Dzogchen lineage, we always return to Garab Dorje and his main student Manjushrimitra (Jampalshenye). Manjushrimitra, a dharma student and scholar, had devoted his life to understanding the view and practice of the Buddhist path after mastering the concepts and experiences of emptiness, of the ultimate truth through Madhyamika logic and the Yogachara distinctions of the two relative truths (the teaching on the three natures).

Manjushrimitra was convinced of the rightness of his view, but he had developed his capacity to the point where he could receive direct introduction and transmission. When he learned that there was a young man in Oddiyana espousing the so called "effortless state of total completeness," a teaching that is beyond cause and effect and superior to all teachings of cause and effect, he set out to dispute this heretical guru. But at their meeting, Manjushrimitra understood and received the introduction to the state of pure and total presence. Garab Dorje's words to Manjushrimitra in the Shitavana charnel ground were recorded by Vairocana and here are rendered into an English version by Tulku Thondup in his 1996 *Masters of Meditation and Miracles*.

The nature of the mind is Buddha from the beginning.

Mind like space has no birth or cessation.

Having perfectly realized the meaning of the oneness of all phenomena,

To remain in it, without seeking, is the meditation.

At that moment Manjushrimitra exclaimed:

I am Manjushrimitra who has obtained the siddhi of Yamantaka

Thoroughly understanding that samsara and nirvana are really equal,

ever fresh awareness that thoroughly comprehends everything that arises.

Manjushrimitra's text, one of the first five Semde texts translated into Tibetan by Vairocana, at the time of Padmasambhava, and translated by Kennard Lipman and Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche, under the title of *Primordial Experience: An Introduction to Dzogchen Meditation*, asserts that Buddhist concepts such as *samsara* and *nirvana*, ultimate truth and relative truth actually block the realization of pure and total presence. He describes how the path of renunciation, cultivating compassion, seeking non-attachment through realization of emptiness are not the point.

One's mind is not engaged in anything.

One is not disturbed by anything,

knowing the fundamental nature.

There is no fear of intoxication by objects or attachment to anything.

One does not avoid nor dwell on anything.

This text, the *rDo la gser zhum*, was written by Manjushrimitra at the request of his master, Garab Dorje. To understand the enormous leap made by Manjushrimitra from the approaches of Yogachara and Madhyamika to Dzogchen we must look at his critique of some key Buddhist concepts.

Manjushri's text makes use of the term *bodhicitta*. *Bodhicitta* is a term used in the Sutra teachings as the cause or seed of enlightenment that must be discovered and then brought to fruition through practice. In Manjushrimitra's text the term *bodhicitta*, awake mind, is from the beginning totally present and awake; *Bodhicitta* is pure and total presence, our real condition which has never been obscured and needs no purifying.

In the *Uttara Tantra*, a Yogachara text of the time, the image of gold rep-

resenting our Buddha nature needs to be discovered and its impurities (negative emotions and primitive beliefs about reality) must be removed. The gold of Manjushrimitra's text is pure and totally perfect from the beginning. It is not hidden, and any effort at purifying it actually prevents realization.

There is not any (*samsara*) eliminated or actual state of nirvana sought. The accepted notion in Madhyamika that ultimately all is emptiness is refuted here, by explaining that conceptualizing, categorizing and applying logic to perception actually blocks realization of what is always present and pure (without dualistic notions of good and bad, or nonexistence etc.)

Saying that something ultimately is the case, is itself the state of a pervasive lack of clarity.

It is interesting to note that the *Uttara Tantra* was the basis for many Tantras of the later translation schools, while this text by Manjushrimitra with the other Dzogchen texts formed the basis of the Old Translation School that came to be called Nyingmapa.

Manjushrimitra as a scholar of Yogachara thought refuting the view of the three natures, in particular the understanding of the experience as three-fold: the nonconceptual ultimately real, the deceptive nature that is conventionally accepted as real, and the projections of neurotic mind, (*klesha* mind) of the seventh consciousness.

Manjushrimitra proclaims the incorrectness and deceptiveness of this view:

Just as the Lotus-like Lord of everything worldly does not reject anything.

(All things) are seen as alike and present in utter sameness.

The very seeing as deceptive that which is fundamentally not deceptive is to be understood as deception.

Manjushrimitra, by going as a Buddhist scholar to Oddiyana, and then bringing the teachings of effortless enlightenment beyond cause and effect into the language of Yogachara thought as it had developed in India as of the seventh century, had a very different impact on later generations than the masters of the so called Later Translation Schools who went to India from Tibet to gain Tantric practices and Buddhist wisdom teachings. Manjushrimitra's introduction by his guru was direct and immediate. His experience contrasts with the stories of gradual development of Tilopa, Milarepa and Gampopa, whose *Four Yogas of Mahamudra* is the centerpiece of Kagyupa teaching and decidedly more path oriented than the Dzogchen approach of beginning in the view and realization of total completeness. The *Four Yogas of Mahamudra* are clearly stages of development from One Pointed calm, to Simplicity (not following thoughts), to one taste (all phenomena seen as alike in being empty), and finally Non-Meditation (no effort, no duality between practice and post-meditation).

Manjushrimitra's text, reflecting *The Three Words of Garab Dorje*, begins with the approach of non-meditation and the assertion of total awareness and presence without manipulating mind through concepts of emptiness

continued on page 18

BOOK REVIEWS

BARE BONES MEDITATION: Waking Up From The Story of My Life by Joan Tollifson

Bell Tower
239pp



Bare Bones Meditation: Waking Up from the Story of My Life, a memoir by Joan Tollifson, is a rare and heart-felt look at one person's spiritual journey. As she explains in her preface, what she wants to communicate is "...not some distilled final truth but rather the actual messy process of spiritual exploration as it unfolds in the life of one person." She does just this with prose that is bright and vivid and with a sense of humor that never fails her.

Joan Tollifson was born with only one hand. She spent most of her life feeling different, first as disabled and later as a lesbian and bisexual. Coming of age in the 60's, she spent a number of years wading through the turmoil and changes of the times including becoming a feminist and an activist for the disabled. As she says, "At 33 I had tried alcohol and drugs of every kind, sex of all imaginable varieties, several forms of therapy and revolution. Here I was at the end of all that sober, celibate and unsure of anything. It seemed like a good idea to sit down, shut up, and listen." This is when she discovered Zen.

Tollifson began meditating at the San Francisco Zen Center and soon moved to the Berkeley Zen Center as a student of the Abbot Mel Weitsman. She loved the stark beauty, simplicity and order of Zen ritual and practice and began to slow down and sink into the present moment. About her first meeting with Mel:

"What comes up when you sit zazen?" (Mel asked.)

"I think about my future alot," I told him. "I always do. I can't decide what to do with my life."

"Do you have to do something with it?"

Later he told her to find the one thing she can't not do and not to give it up no matter what.

After a time she left the Zen Center and practiced on her own and met other teachers including Joko Beck and Toni Packer. It was with Toni Packer that Tollifson discovered a "listening presence", a deep awareness of the present moment and sense of immediacy of pure being from which all thoughts and perceptions arise. As Tollifson says, "Toni seemed to take a step beyond anything I had encountered before, revealing that the observer-meditator and all of its practices are also thought."

Toni Packer was a student of Roshi Philip Kapleau at the

Rochester Zen Center in Rochester, New York, and was eventually asked to teach at the Center. Wanting to go beyond the limitations of tradition and hierarchy, she gradually dropped the Zen ritual and practices and went more and more deeply into what she considered the most essential: the immediate moment. She founded her own center in Springwater in 1981.

Not long after Tollifson's first retreat with Toni Packer, she went to Springwater to be a volunteer for six months. We follow her as she struggles with adjusting to the simple life of the Center, with what to do with her future as she keeps recommitting herself to yet another year at Springwater, and with how she gradually learns to apply this "listening presence" to her thoughts, ideas and perceptions and discovers a sense of her own underlying true nature.

Working with Toni Packer, Tollifson begins to see how the narrative of our lives emerges out of our thoughts and memories and we believe this story to be true. In fact, this story of ourselves is just an illusion based upon fleeting thoughts, memories and perceptions.

Throughout her book, Tollifson integrates the natural world into her life and writing. The land, the animals, the sounds, the weather surrounding Springwater leak into her presence and into her writing. She describes autumn: "Blood red gashes in the foliage. Morning frost. Fields turning brown...Colors like a bruise are coming out everywhere, the rosy sky awash in the pond..."

My only criticism of this beautiful book is that Tollifson stretches it out longer than needed. I recommend this work to anyone traveling on a spiritual path; it speaks to us all.

by Barbara Paparazzo

WHEN THINGS FALL APART: HEART ADVICE FOR DIFFICULT TIMES

by Pema Chodron

Shambhala Publications, 1997.

Some years ago in 1986 I attend-



ed the late Chogyam Trungpa's annual three month seminary—his final, as it turned out, for he died the following year. I very much remember the last talk he gave in the context of Mahayana teachings. He spoke so slowly, each word enveloped in an immense silence. The written transcript of this talk was only a paragraph long but it took him a long time to speak it word by word and sometimes syllable by syllable. One thing he said which has stayed with me all these years is that the Mahayana is like life lived without a companion.

How is it as practitioners, just as

continued on page 17

In the midst of the all encompassing sky of his wisdom, the Absolute Space, the warm rays of his compassion shining upon the clouds of his prayers, the abundant rain of amrita falls continuously on the field of the beings to be trained, ripening the sprouts of the Three Kayas—

We bow down to the feet of the Guru, the protector, the Supreme of the Three Jewels.

Through the power of my aspirations I could join the supreme lineage of accomplishment; but lacking in diligence, this existence, lived in vain, comes now to its twilight. I had the intention to do as the Rishis but I am now utterly dejected and I have seen others like me.

This is why, to arouse in my mind a clear renunciation I have uttered these thirty pieces of advice from the heart.

Alas! Having, through all kinds of skillful means, gathered round oneself a large circle of people, one may hold a flourishing monastic estate. But this is the source of quarrels and causes great attachments for oneself.

To remain alone is my advice from the heart.

At the occasion of village ceremonies intended to discard obstacles and subdue evil spirits, one may display one's qualities in the crowd. But through covetousness for food and riches, it is one's own mind that will be carried away by the demon.

To subdue one's own mind is my advice from the heart.

Having collected great contributions from poor people, one may thus erect statues and monuments, distribute plenty of alms and so on. But this is to cause others to accumulate sins on virtuous grounds.¹

To make one's mind virtuous is my advice from the heart.

Desiring one's own greatness, one will expound Dharma to others and through numerous deceitful tricks one will retain a circle of important and humble people. But such a mind clinging to gross realities is the cause of pride.

To have only short term plans is my advice from the heart.

Selling, loaning with interest, and all these kinds of deceptions: with the wealth amassed in this wrong way one may very well make large offerings, but merits resting upon

"Thirty Pieces of Advice from the Heart"

by Gyalwa Longchenpa

Translation by the Padmakara Translation Group

greed are the source of the eight worldly dharmas.²

To meditate upon the rejection of covetousness is my advice from the heart.

Acting as witness, guarantor, and getting involved in law disputes, one may thus settle others' quarrels, thinking this is for the good of all. But to indulge in this will bring up interested aims.

To remain without either expectations or apprehensions is my advice from the heart.

Administering provinces, having attendants and material wealth one's renown may thus spread all over the world. But at the time of death these things do not have the slightest use.

To endeavor in one's practice is my advice from the heart.

Bursars, attendants, those in responsible positions and cooks, are the pillars of the monastic community. But a mind interested in these is the cause of worry.

To minimize this confusing bustle is my advice from the heart.

Carrying religious objects, offerings, books and cooking paraphernalia, one may go to the mountain solitudes with all the necessary. But to be well equipped now is the source of difficulties and quarrels.

To have no needs is my advice from the heart.

In these decadent times one may reproach the crude people around one. Although one thinks it will be useful to them, it is just the source of poisonous thoughts.

To utter peaceful words is my advice from the heart.

Without any selfish consideration, one may, with affection, tell people their defects, only thinking of their own good. But although what one says is true this will ulcerate their hearts.

To say gentle words is my advice from the heart.

One engages in controversies, defending one's point of view and contradicting the other's thinking thus to preserve the purity of the Teachings. But in such a way one induces impure thoughts.

To remain silent is my advice

from the heart.

Thinking one is rendering service, one supports in a partisan way one's Guru's lineage and philosophical views. But to praise oneself and belittle others ripens one's own attachments and hatred.

To leave these things is my advice from the heart.

Having examined thoroughly the Dharma one has heard, one may think that understanding others' errors is proof of having discriminative wisdom. But to think in this way is to cause the accumulation of one's own sins.

To view everything as pure is my advice from the heart.

Speaking only the language of blank emptiness and disdaining cause and effect, one may think that non-action is the ultimate point of Dharma. But to forsake the two accumulations will wither the prosperity of one's practice.

To unite these two is my advice from the heart.

Concerning the third initiation, there is the descending of the essence and so on. One may think that the way of the other's body will lead to outstanding progress. But on this path of the impure many great meditators have been ensnared.

To rely upon the path of liberation is my advice from the heart.

To bestow empowerments upon unqualified people and distribute to crowds sacramental substances is the source of abuse and of spoiling the samaya.

To prefer upright behavior is my advice from the heart.

To go naked in public and other eccentricities one may think is to act as a yogi. But this is how one causes worldly people to lose faith.

To be thoughtful in all things is my advice from the heart.

Wherever one stays, with the desire to be the greatest one will act in a traditional and clever fashion. But this is the cause of falling from the highest to the lowest.

To be neither tense nor relaxed is my advice from the heart.

Whether one dwells in villages, monasteries, or mountain retreats,

without searching for intimates one should be friends with all, but with neither intimacy nor animosity.

To keep one's independence is my advice from the heart.

Assuming an artificial countenance one may pay homage in a fine way to the patrons who take care of one's subsistence. But feigning on account of others causes one to entangle oneself.

To act with uniform taste is my advice from the heart.

There are innumerable writings upon divination, astrology, medicine and so on. Although they all deal with the methods, based upon the interdependent links, leading to omniscience, to become very fond of these various things will scatter one's contemplation.

To minimize the study of these sciences is my advice from the heart.

At the time one stays inside arranging the interior, one may thus have all comforts in the midst of solitude. But this is how to fritter away one's whole life on trivial details.

To put off all these activities is my advice from the heart.

Learned, virtuous and so on, also having some diligence towards accomplishment, thus one's personal qualities may reach their peak. But the clings associated with this will just entangle oneself.

To know how to be free, without egocentricity is my advice from the heart.

To make hail and thunder fall, cast magic spells, while protecting oneself from all these, one may think to subdue what has to be subdued. But by burning another's being one will end up in the lower realms.

To remain humble is my advice from the heart.

One might have an abundance of all desirable texts, spoken advice, notes and so on. But if one does not put them into practice, at the time of death they will be of no use.

To study one's mind is my advice from the heart.

At the time one practices one-pointedly, one may have experiences, discuss them with others, write spiritual verses and sing songs of realization. Although such things are natural

manifestations of the practice, they will increase wandering thoughts.

To keep away from intellectualization is my advice from the heart.

Whatever thoughts arise it is important to stare at them. Thus when one has a clear understanding of the mind it is important to remain with it. Although there is nothing to meditate upon, it is important to remain in such meditation.

To be always attentive is my advice from the heart.

In the midst of emptiness, acting according to the law of cause and effect, having understood non action keeping the three vows,³ with absolute compassion,⁴ may we strive for the benefit of all beings.

To unite the two accumulations is my advice from the heart.

One has followed many wise and accomplished Gurus, received many profound instructions, and looked through a few sutras and tantras, still one does not apply them.

Alas! One is just deceiving oneself.

Thus for myself and those like me I have spoken these thirty pieces of advice from the heart. Whatever little merit may arise from such a spirit of renunciation, may all beings be guided in the wild expanses of existence, and be established in the great bliss. By walking in the footsteps of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas of the three times and of all the great saints, may we become their supreme sons. Thus urged by a little bit of renunciation, Tsultrim Lodro⁵ conceived these thirty pieces of advice from his heart.

1. Doing so, instead of accumulating merit both the Lama and the donors accumulate demerit.

2. Fame and obscurity; pleasure and pain; gain and loss; praise and blame.

3. Of Hinayana, Mahayana and Vajrayana.

4. dmdigs-med sNying-rje: "compassion without representations, non referential compassion".

5. One of Longchenpa's names.

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Fax 5 53 51 16 06. ■

A Trip to China

continued from page 1

greeted Rinpoche and offered him and ourselves, as representatives of the donors towards the projects of A.S.I.A., *katas* and libations of a strong clear liquor, arak. We were given an elaborate meal of many courses, complete with toasting and a tour of the city. We saw, in the melancholia-inducing dusk, a beautiful old temple compound, long abandoned, at the edge of town.

And the next day, after viewing a festive foot-race with thousands of participants, who ran in colorful groups according to their age and school, to celebrate the return of Hong Kong in a few days' time, we

continued on to Dangche to the inauguration of the Tibetan Language School of Guide County.

As we approached the town, horseback riders came to meet Rinpoche and escort our caravan. And as we entered the tree-lined street of Dangche, throngs of school-children, families and merchants filled the embankments, a multitude of smiling curious faces met our own gazes, a brilliant sea of beauty in human form. The traditional dress of Amdo is very colorful: the women and girls had long plaited hair in 108 braids, long fur trimmed dresses, many wore large silver-colored ornaments and beads in their hair, and hats with bright flowers, while the men wore handsome coats, an incredible and festive sight.

When we got off the bus, we plunged into the crowd, and found ourselves on a walkway drawn with *tsampa* patterns of the eight auspicious symbols, flanked by monks blowing horns and banging cymbals, leading us to a large tent, in which there was a throne for Rinpoche and seats for all of us, numbering about thirty, in the midst of all the seats for the monks of Bon and Buddhist sects. We sat on carpets and drank tea and ate fruit and cookies from the ample pyramids decorating each table. More and more food was offered, but Rinpoche warned us to save some room, as a meal was to follow on this as on many subsequent occasions.

This backdrop to and reason for this festivity was of course the

school itself, a large Tibetan-style building which houses many classrooms in an L-shaped two-story section as well as providing office and dormitory space for students and faculty. It's a handsome, well-built and well-conceived structure, richly ornamented, invoking an optimistic vision of many children learning in the Tibetan language in comfort and security in years to come.

The festivities continued for our entire five-day stay in Dangche. There were ceremonies at local temples, a horse race, and numerous meat-filled meals, all honoring Rinpoche as a teacher, scholar and master, as well as the head of ASIA. There were many really delightful and moving things which we had not seen before, such as the way a

drink of alcohol is offered, with a special type of singing in a high, loud, shrill voice, first to Rinpoche and then to each other person. And the openness and warmth of people in general, so different from our more guarded style of behaving! We were fortunate to see Amdo in the summer, when nature is smiling and everyone else does too, for it is said to be very cold in winter, and though the people would have been the same, it would have been a very different experience.

The school was finally dedicated on June 23, at a ceremony attended by over two thousand local and provincial leaders, guests, journalists, teachers, students and villagers. It was given over to the government

continued on page 18

The Return of the White Buffalo Calf Woman

Excerpts from a talk by Mary Elizabeth Thunder at Merigar

Transcribed and Edited by Liz Granger

Mary Elizabeth Thunder is a well known speaker, author, Sundancer, United Nations delegate, mother, grandmother, and wife, of Native American and non-Native descent. She travels globally now to share a message of peace and healing of the Earthmother by healing of oneself. She and her husband, Jeffrey "White Horse" Hubbell live and maintain a ranch which is a Spiritual University in West Point, Texas.

On April 30th of this year in France, Thunder participated in an inter-traditional meeting dedicated to Peace which was attended by representatives of the Great Religions and Ancient Traditions and held in the presence of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Following this, on the invitation of members of the Dzogchen Community, she briefly visited Merigar where she spoke and shared with us the Native American ritual of smoking the pipe.

We've come here to be with you in honor of your teacher who we've met several times and to celebrate the gift that he is still here with us in this realm. So we say his name, Norbu, in celebration of us all being here together today.

Before the ceremony we'll talk for a few minutes, then we'll light the pipe and when the sacred pipe is loaded we can be praying all the time. You don't have to pray from the mouth, our prayers are from the heart. My father would always say, "This pipe comes to you today because it's your pipe. It rights the wrongs and it brings to the family health and prosperity, but more important, prosperity of the heart. When the pipe is going to be filled, starting from this moment, all the words, all the feelings, all that we share together will go into the pipe." So I tell everybody, watch your thoughts because we say, you get what you pray for. So think before you pray. Make sure that's what you want. Just like our Tibetan brothers and sisters, this is the oldest way of my people and it's very powerful. We go to many centers, of all ways of praying, and today here at Merigar we make prayers so your center will grow and prosper and your dedication and love for your teacher.

The elements are the same as the Buddhist ones. The blanket and the objects on it represents the earth, the water, the fire and our Father, the Sky. These are still the most powerful symbols on our planet. Amen to everything that has life.

Our time is short but I want to share from the heart that we live our life in joy and celebration and the creation of beauty. (We should) lighten up on ourselves, be child-like, dream again. Remember the dream that you had for yourself before you were born and live that dream to the fullest. Don't get stuck

in judgment, just have lightness and joy. And be serious 'cause this is a dualistic world of dark and light, male and female, the illusion of separation. But the truth is, I've been told, and I feel it in my heart, that we are all the same soul. We just live in a different place, but our hair is different. I've got purple hair!

I have a vision. I know about visions — if you have a vision, you've got to do something. Anybody here ever had a vision and didn't have to do something? You got to go to the top of the mountain in Tibet, then come here to Merigar, go out, sell your house. I'm very smart. I believe in the spirit and I believe in the visions. So I didn't ask for anything. They said, "Pray for the people" so the people would live. I was happy. I could do that. I didn't have no visions. I asked the Spirit, "No visions!"

So five years I was Sun Dancing. And Sun Dancing you dance for four days and nights, no food or water. I danced five years and my Sun Dance Chief asked me, "Have you had a vision?" "No." "Why?" "I haven't asked for one." "This year ask for one." "OK."

We danced four days. Into the third day he says, "We don't want to rush these things." 'cause sometimes when the Spirit comes you fall down. Notice that I was thinking about these things, I was thinking about everything. So I said, "OK, Spirit, I wish to ask you for a vision. What is the meaning of life?" I could not believe it ... it was just like a movie. And it showed me a place where we were all pretty spirits and colors and sounds, and everything was beautiful. And we knew that we were a part of God or the Great Mystery. And nobody was jealous, we were all happy. And then this big man came in. He said, "You want to go to earth?" I said, "No. I've been there and done that and got a tee-shirt. It's all emotions and arguing and hard and I don't want it." But he was very serious and he said, "You could go to earth and you could remember who you are here and you could bring beauty to the earth. And you could remember that you are part of God. You could remember that it's an illusion and you could make a difference." So a lot of us bought it and lifted up our hands, "Yes, we want to do it".

So then we left this beautiful harmonious place and went to a big computer. They have a computer in heaven, I saw it. It's an opportunity computer so you get to choose all your opportunities for growth. I chose that my mother would leave

me at three weeks and lots of other things. And I chose to be a woman. You get a lot of mileage for choosing to be a woman especially in a male patriarchal religion. Sometimes I



Mary Thunder at her wedding

think that we women should have really big lungs just 'cause they're breathing all the time for what all our brothers are out doing.

So then we came down to earth and we forgot everything so fast. So I asked the spirit, "Please help me. What can I do?" "Well, you could not only remember yourself, where you've been, you can go out and help others. And watch your judging."

So I want to talk about judgment. We all have judgment. Sometimes it's whether you like a hamburger or a vegetable. But it's the other judgments that kill us, our religious beliefs, our sexes, our hearts and our lives. It wasn't until 1978 that the Native Americans could again pray. Until that time our ceremonies were against the law. That's sad. But we kept praying. Just like the Dalai Lama. They ran him out of Tibet but he's still going. And that's what we're doing 'cause we've been praying for 500 years.

Yesterday I got to pray at the house of Christopher Columbus. And I didn't pray for anything other than to ask for his forgiveness and to forgive him. Everything happens as a lesson; You just say? "OK. How can I fix it?" We're big problem fixers. And we're here as human beings to love each other and help each other and most important, to listen to each other. But why aren't we doing it? I don't know. We're doing the best we can.

But having a teacher helps to teach you. I'm 52 years old and I still have a teacher. When he says, "Jump!" I jump. When he says, "Do this", I do it. So that's what you must always do 'cause then sometimes they pass into spirits, and they

still help you but you miss them. You can see them in your mind but you can't reach out and touch them. So take care of your teacher while you've still got your teacher.

May peace and gentleness, good food and prosperity be part of this home. We're going to light this pipe in a moment and we'll have everyone stand. And my son will take the pipe around and then someone will bring the water around and you can dip your finger in it. That's a prayer for all our waters becoming safe to drink again. If not our children will get mad with us for what we have done. We've got to work on clearing it up. And places like Merigar, a sacred land, and prayers like this are the answer 'cause prayers can go out and help to keep the universe in harmony.

Also blue corn will be brought around. This corn was given to me in 1983 when I Sun Danced at Big Mountain, California. And Rinpoche and many lamas came from Tibet in response to the Dharma. And they all prayed over the corn and they say these are the seeds of our new prayer. So we'll bring the corn around so that each of you can have some. I've had this for a long time and I give away thousands but it's still there. It's wonderful.

This pipe has been filled by a woman. I would like to ask this man, White Horse, who walks beside me to light the pipe for us.

(The pipe is lit)

The first puff (of the pipe) went upward, to the Great Mystery and the second puff went down to our Mother, the Earth. The next puff is in celebration of the East where we stand and make a prayer for enlightenment. The next prayer is to the South where we stand and make a prayer for trust and innocence. And the next prayer is made for the West where we pray for the teacher within, contemplation. The next prayer is made to the North where we honor wisdom and in the North it is the wisdom of the children and the elders. And we very excited to hear that a home for the old people will be built here because so many people send their old people away. But their wisdom is with you. And the last puff is for the pipe itself and today especially in honor of Merigar, Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche, the Dalai Lama and Tsultrim Allione. May all of us seek and find enlightenment.

(as the pipe is passed Mary Thunder tells this story)

A long time ago the Indian people were very hungry, hungry in spirit and for physical food, two thousand years ago. Then they had a big council and all the tribes came together. There were so many people and no food. So they sent out two of their best warriors. These warriors went to the hills and they made a plan. One went around the hill this way and the other went around the hill the other way. They came back together. They saw no buffalo and no signs. They were worried.

But then they looked out and they saw a beautiful woman coming. No. They saw a buffalo coming.

No. They saw a woman coming. No they saw a buffalo. Make up your mind, they told their eyes. Is it a buffalo or a woman? As she came closer it was the most beautiful buffalo that turned into the most beautiful woman, pretty hair, pretty white dress and this dress we still wear today in her honor, not now but in our ceremonies.

Then the men looked at her in two ways: one man looked at her with lust, sexuality, the other looked at her as a sister, with sisterly love. So she went to one of them and gave him what he had shown with his look. And they came together and there was a lot of dust and when the dust cleared there were bones and snakes and bugs around. Then she went to the other warrior. I bet he was really scared at that point. I would be! And so then she said, "Go to your camp, make a great big teepee that will hold all the people. And then I will come."

So he ran back to camp and they did it (as she had asked) and then she was ready to come. And they looked out and they saw a woman. No. They saw a buffalo. OK, it's happening again. (Laughs) And she came into the teepee and she had this beautiful bundle. She walked around clockwise then she came back to the door and walked through the middle and stood before the chief and she opened the bundle and brought this pipe out. She gave instructions to the men and instructions to the women and instructions to the children. And then she talked about the pipe. And she foretold of a day when the people would be spiritually hungry again. The people might have fear and the people might need a prayer.

Then this pipe would come out again and walk among the people.

In Green Grass, South Dakota, that pipe is still there after two thousand years. And this pipe here is connected to that pipe so we have to watch the prayers. She said she would come back. And they asked her what she would look like, how they would know. And she said, "Watch me." So she walked out the door and there was tall buffalo grass and as a beautiful woman she went down into the buffalo grass, and when she came out she was a red buffalo, then again a black buffalo, then again a yellow buffalo. Then she turned and said, "This is how I will come back." So as a beautiful woman she went down in the grass again and came out as a beautiful white buffalo.

On August 20th 1994, a white buffalo was born in Wisconsin. All the Elders from all the tribes came and affirmed that this is the return of the White Buffalo Woman. And that's the prophecy — she's with us here again. And in answer to the prophecy the pipes are walking again. And the dream and the wish is that we each see other through rainbow eyes. I can't tell the color, I can't tell the difference, one people, one planet, one prayer, one heart. And we'll make it through a gateway at the year 2000. And we're going to have something for our children. I don't know how, but none of us do. We just have to have faith. It's up to us.

Aho mi takaye ovacin
Amen to all my relations
All things with life

The identification of ancient monuments with Bön or to the Zhang Zhung pre-Buddhist civilization is a fairly vague imputation. Even if the exact character and content of Bön and Zhang Zhung in pre-Buddhist Tibet were clearly defined, it still remains to be proven that these archaeological localities belong to these religious and cultural milieu. Perhaps certain ones have their origins in a much earlier period? Moreover, it serves little purpose to look at the sites monolithically as it is likely that they underwent various phases of development and, rather than spanning a single time period, might in fact have enjoyed a multi-epochal life span.

The chronology of the archaeological niches of gNam mtsho and Dang ra g.yu mtsho will not be easily forthcoming, barring further systematic archaeological inquiry. At this preliminary point in the investigation, it cannot be unequivocally established whether a particular ancient structure was found in the Neolithic, Bronze Age, Iron Age or in the historical period. In the light of these discoveries, the development of a historical and archaeological perspective, which accounts for the period of deep antiquity on the Byang thang, is urgently called for. It may well come to pass that this evidence affords proof of a civilization with a relatively advanced material base founded as early as the Neolithic. At the very least, the chronology and nature of civilization on the Byang thang will have to be re-evaluated to accommodate these recent findings made at the great lakes.

As important a question as how old the ruins are is how new they are. Bönpo scholars such as sLob dpon btsan 'dzin nam dag and rGyal ba sman ri mkhan po are of the opinion that by and large these sites predate the annexation of Zhang Zhung by the Yar ling Dynasty kings. This is not to say that this is the case with all of them. In the biographies of sTag lung bka' brgyud religious personalities, there are descriptions of how the renowned lama Kong po dar came to gNam mtsho and began to have contests of magic with Bönpo adepts in which he emerged victorious. As a result of the sTag lung pa's victory the Bönpos were forced to vacate bKra shis do and adjoining areas (sTag lung chos 'byang: 298-301). Are some of these "pre-Buddhist" structures at gNam mtsho as late as the 12th century? In any event the questions of chronology and typology will not be satisfactorily addressed until more detailed surveys of the sites are conducted.

How important are these discoveries of archaic remains at gNam mtsho and Dang ra g.yu mtsho, and what do they contribute to our overall understanding of Tibetan civilization? The answer to these questions can only be partially answered until the exact extent and character of these archaeological nooks are better revealed. Their sheer numbers strongly suggest that at one time material civilization at the lakes was more highly developed than in the late feudal period. Until the changes of the 1950's, permanent structures at gNam mtsho consisted of five monasteries⁶, several hermitages and perhaps several small houses owned by the sgar dpon and mtsho

dpon (heads of 'brog pa camps). Dang ra g.yu mtsho, on the other hand, was considerably more developed. In her vicinity were four operational monasteries⁷, a couple of hermitages and eight agricultural villages⁸. Even in the contemporary period there is only one township headquarters each at gNam mtsho and Dang ra g.yu mtsho⁹, reflecting the sparsely populated character of these vastitudes.

In contrast, at some indeterminate time in the past the two lakes were home to more buildings and inhabitations, especially at Dang ra g.yu mtsho. Seemingly a concatenation of farms, forts, monasteries and other monuments dotted the shores of the lake. While no traces of ancient agriculture were found at gNam mtsho, at least 12 unused agricultural sectors were detected at Dang ra g.yu mtsho. This string of abandoned agricultural parcels is a powerful validation of the collected oral histories, which allege that in the time of the Zhang Zhung empire the lake was host to a much expanded population utilizing a sophisticated infrastructure. Nevertheless, at this preliminary stage of investigation, the archaeological finds at dang ra g.yu mtsho and gNam mtsho do not necessarily corroborate the historicity of Zhang Zhung, although they are persuasive evidence in favor of its existence.

At present, not only is the chronology of the archaeological sites puzzling but their functions and usages are problematic as well. Oral histories point to them as having served a variety of purposes. Among the sites are forts, monasteries and in one case a necropolis, or so say local informants. Field surveys have shown that in addition to these functions some of the sites operated as alternative centers of inhabitation, including villages and fortified settlements. Nearly all the archaeological remains have at least some oral history or legend attached to them, scanty though it may be. For this reason it is more accurate and desirable to refer to this disclosure of the archaeological heritage of the Byang thang as modern documentation rather than discovery.¹⁰

GNAM MTSHO SITES

Do ring

One of the most famous ancient personages of Bön is sTsong rgyung mthu chen, known as the "Scholar of Zhang Zhung" (Karmay: 27). He is said to have achieved great realizations at gNam mtsho do ring (Karmay: 48,49), and this is well established in the Bön tradition.¹¹ Do ring (long Headland), the place at Ngam mtsho most closely associated with sTsong rgyung mthu chen, is situated on the north side of gNam mtsho and, as the name suggests, it is very long. In fact, of all the headlands at gNam mtsho it is the longest, extending more than 10 kilometers into the lake. It is one of the 18 nyen do chen (Grub dbang gong mas byin gyis brlabs pa'i

A Preliminary Archaeological Survey of gNam mtsho and Dang ra g.yu mtsho

by John Bellezza

Part II of a series about the lost city of Zhang Zhung



Small section of the Zhang Zhung dgon pa at Phyug 'tsho. grog po. (Dang ra g.yu mtsho) J. BELLEZZA

gnas:8,9), and for this reason and by virtue of its eye-catching length is well known at gNam mtsho.

At the very end of Do ring among prolific groups of spa ma (scrub juniper) are the remains of structures which might be where sTong rgyung mthu chen's hermitage stood. The ruined structures contained a number of rooms, indicating that the original hermitage might have been expanded into a monastery. There are no popular Buddhist associations linked to Do ring; it is one of only a few places a gNam mtsho which still retain an exclusively Bön mantle of tradition over them. According to Bön history, sTong rgyung mthu chen lived during the reign of the Tibetan King sPu lde gung rgyal, and was invited by him to help rebuild the Bön religion (Karmay: 72,73). The ruins, or at least portions of them, could well date back to this period.

At the tip of the Do ring against the escarpment is a group of ruins centering around two light-colored boulders which together span approximately 13 meters. Around the boulders both the inner and outer walls were built of flat, multicolored stones, some of which exceed 50 centimeters in length. The two layers of walls create outer and inner passageways and rooms, seeming to enhance the sanctity of the two central boulders which occupy the core of the layout. The walls appear to have once supported a roof which might have been built of spa ma. Roof spans are no more than 2.5 meters, a length that fully mature spa ma trunks attain. On a smaller boulder, resting against the rear of the innermost passage, a Bön g.yung drung has been inscribed and also the mantra "A Om' Hum' Ra Dza".¹² Both of these have rang byon characteristics.¹³ On the uphill or north side of the central structure and adjacent to it are remnants of several foundation walls built at different levels. To the west and south of the central edifice are the remains of other walls. Although nearly forgotten locally, these remote ruins may hold the key to an important part of Tibetan history.¹⁴ Only an in-depth archaeological analysis of the site will determine its value.

Sha do

West of Do ring is a much smaller headland also heavily covered in spa ma, called Sha do (meat

headland). because of its thick blanket of brush Sha do supports very little grass and therefore sees little pastoral activity. The main trail around the north side of gNam mtsho bypasses the topographical irregularities created by the headlands, thus shortening the distance around the lake. As a result, Sha do, Do ring and other headlands to the west are cut off from through traffic of all types proceeding around the lake, giving them a high degree of isolation. There are no permanent abodes (gchi ma) on the headlands and very few seasonal camps.

According to local oral histories, in the distant past Sha do supported a Bön monastery. While this claim could not be substantiated, there is no question that ruins are found here.

sNyng do

Further yet to the west is a place called sNyng do (Heart Headland) which, according to local accounts, was the site of an ancient Bön monastery of considerable proportions. Again, it proved impossible to date the ruins unequivocally or to discern their function, but the extensive nature of the ruins supports the testimonies of it having been very large at one time. The name sNyng do hints at the site as having occupied a weighty position in the cultural life of gNam mtsho at some time in the past. Today it is highly marginalized place with little significance in the storied sacred geography of the region. Evidently, Buddhists never invested sNyng do with the same degree of prominence as their predecessors.

The ruins of sNyng do consist of at least 10 complexes, containing more than 50 rooms in total. The largest of the complexes is about 13 by 18 meters in size and is oriented to the cardinal directions. Its entrance is in the south facing the lake and its north side is built into the escarpment. It appears to have contained several commodious rooms leading off a central corridor or courtyard. Its walls are still as much as two meters tall and 0.75 meters thick. In the westernmost complex, which is built into a rock outcropping, two niches (bang khung) have survived in a wall near ground level. This is an architectural feature still fundamental to traditional Tibetan construction today. For all but the largest rooms at sNyng do, indigenous spa ma could have been utilized as rafters. Roofs were probably flat and constructed much as they are today, of twigs and flat stones laid onto the rafters and covered with layers of wattle. Although at this juncture it is impossible to identify the function of the ruins at sNyng do, it does appear that the larger structures were communal in nature and may have been ceremonial or religious buildings. The smaller complexes could have served a variety of capacities, not least of which were domiciles. Given the diversity of

architectural forms at sNyng do and the number of ruins, it is reasonable to hypothesize that it was once a village and/or sacred precinct.

6. These five monasteries were as follows: a) east of gNam mtsho - bKra shis do dgon pa; b) north - Bya do dgon pa; c) west - Do skya dgon pa; d) south - Gur chung dgon pa; e) 20 miles north of gNam mtsho - Phug pa dgon pa.

7. These monasteries were: a) north of Dang ra g.yu mtsho - 'Om bu dgon pa; b) east - Dang ra g.yu bun dgon pa; c) south-east - Phyug 'tsho dgon pa; d) south - Se shig dgon pa.

8. The eight agricultural villages on the north and east sides of the lake were: 1) 'Om bu; 2) Lung gnyi; 3) Gangs lung; 4) La lung; 5) Kyil gsum; 6) Lha sa; 7) Phyug 'tsho; and, on the west side of the lake, 8) A'chen.

9. These township headquarters are gNam mtsho chu at gNam mtsho and 'Dam khung shang at Dang ra g.yu mtsho.

10. The archaeological sites surveyed in this article will be treated in more detail in a forthcoming book by the current author entitled, Divine Dyads: the Ancient Civilization of Tibet to be published by the Library of Tibetan Works and Archives (LTWA). This monograph will examine the cultural history and sacred physical geography of Dang ra g.yu mtsho and gNam mtsho compiled from field surveys, interviews and primary and secondary literary sources.

11. sLob dpon btsan 'dzin nam dag, and rGyal ba sman ri mkhan po, among other Bön scholars, are convinced that Do ring is associated with sTong rgyung mthu chen. In terms of geographic correlations this is one of the most important pieces of lore concerning Zhang Zhung times in Bön history.

12. This is a Bön dharani with each of the syllables representing the five human attributes-body, speech, mind, knowledge and activity field respectively in their purified condition. It is recited as a prelude to certain sadhanas to prepare a practitioner for more immersed levels of meditation.

13. Rang byon, or rang byung (self-formed/self manifested) is an extremely important phenomenon in conceptions relating to Tibetan geography. Often, unusual or sacred natural phenomena or topography are believed to have magically appeared from an inner potentiality, without the agency of an external existing force. Famous saints, and especially the places where they practiced religion, are frequently associated with rang byon effects.

14. One of the great lacuna of Tibetan history is the exact nature of the relationship between the sPu rgyal and Zhang Zhung empires in the Pre-Imperial period. It is still a puzzle how these two empires stood vis-a-vis one another and what kinds of trade, commerce and other interactions they may have shared. stong rgyung mthu chen in the Bön historical tradition is said to have been a cultural bridge between two empires, translating a tremendous body of texts in the Zhang Zhung language into Tibetan (Karmay 1972). ■

The Rime Tradition

A Non-sectarian Tibetan Religious Movement

by Giuseppe Barozzo

The Tibetan word *rime* (*ris med*) means 'non sectarian', without barriers, confines or limits, and was adopted by some Tibetan masters to designate a spiritual trend which arose in the Kham region of east Tibet during the 19th century. "This *Ris med* movement," wrote Gene Smith, "represented a reaction against the religious rivalry and persecutions that have marred so much of Tibetan history; it sought to reorient Tibetan religious life to the higher ideals and mutual understanding that had been the rule with the great teachers of the past". (Introduction to *Kongtrul's Encyclopedia of Indo-Tibetan Culture*, p.23.)

Unfortunately even in Buddhism those who are sectarian and interested in power have not been lacking although the general tendency begun by the Buddha was, without doubt, non-sectarian. In fact, in every era and country in which it spread, Buddhism has always stood out for its ideals of peace and tolerance simply because it was not born as a closed sect which was dogmatic, totalitarian, arrogant and violent, but like the rediscovery of an eternal and universal knowledge.

For Buddhists, Sakyamuni is not the only buddha since all human beings can become buddhas; furthermore his teaching is pragmatic and diversified so that it can meet all the requirements of people with different capacities and attitudes. As a consequence Buddhism in Asia spread in a natural and peaceful way because the Buddhist masters knew how to integrate it with the local culture, wisely adapting it to different conditions.

Since the Rime movement arose in Tibet, it may be helpful to start with a reference to a brief work of Jamming Khyentse Chökyi Lodro (1898-1959), one of the Rime masters of Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche. The text is entitled, "The opening of the door of the Dharma. An essential exposition of the heart of different vehicles". I will translate and comment on some excerpts which are related to our theme.

Buddhism was officially introduced into Tibet in the VII century. In the following century the first monastery was founded and systematic translation of the Buddhist scriptures began. The Tibetan Buddhist canon includes more than three hundred volumes grouped into two principal sections: the Kangyur and the Tengyur. The former is a collection of teachings handed down as "the Words" of Buddha Sakyamuni or of other Buddhas and Bodhisattvas; the latter includes the treatises, commentaries, ritual texts and instructions on meditation composed by various scholars and mystics. Besides this collection other collections of tantric texts exist which have been excluded from the canon for sectarian reasons, for example the Gyunbum of the ancient Nyingma tradition.

The source of the principal Buddhist teachings are preserved in these works which are subdivided into three fundamental categories: Hinayana, Mahayana and Vajrayana. The first vehicle or means is called the "lesser" because its main ideal is the monastic life which few can enter; the second is defined as the "greater" as it is open to anybody and is mainly for lay people. The third is the adamant vehicle or Tantra in which the esoteric doctrines, principally of magic and alchemy, are transmitted.

In Tibet Buddhism has always been studied and lived according to the principle of the three vehicles and even today many lamas are monks but at the same time practice and teach according to the Mahayana and the various Tantras. However in order to become a lama or a master, it isn't necessary to be a monk or to practice all the Tantras. This eclectic and versatile characteristic sets Tibetan Buddhism apart from the Buddhism of other Asian countries where, on the other hand, the master of a school is often an expert of only a single method. Buddhism in Tibet has not known this form of division between individual methods but another form which has produced typically sectarian effects in certain periods.

The Buddhist schools of Tibet have never existed in the same way as those in India. The tradition of the most ancient school goes back to the 8th century. It is generally divided into nine vehicles: the vehicles of the Listeners (shravaka) and the Solitary Realizers (pratyeka-buddhas) are part of the Hinayana, the vehicle of the Bodhisattvas constitutes the Mahayana, while the six tantric vehicles characterize the Vajrayana; the latter are subdivided into three outer Tantras (Kriya, Ubhaya, Yoga) and three inner Tantras (Mahayoga, Anuyoga, Atiyoga).

This tradition was recognized as a school in itself and therefore called the "Ancient" (Nyingma) only when, starting in the 10th century, new Buddhist scriptures were introduced into Tibet, mainly Tantras such as Shambara, Hevajra, Kalachakra and Yamantaka. They were classified according to a different scheme which excluded the ninth vehicle and defined the two preceding Tantras as "Father Tantras" and "Mother Tantras". As a consequence in many cases the new Tantras were set up against the ancient ones so that the "New" (Sarma) tradition was born which, although a holder of great and profound teachings, did not always remain outside the struggles for power and ended up provoking or fomenting most of the wars which have marked with great suffering the history of Tibet up to our time.

"Regarding this", writes Jamming Khyentse Chökyi Lodro referring to the distinction between the ancient and new translations of

the Tantras, "some of the greatest scholars of the new translations sustain that the ancient Tantras are not authentic, while those who are impartial affirm that they are really authentic and, actually, I think that the latter are right. The reason is that [the ancient Tantras] teach the profound and vast meaning of the Word and the treatises correctly, thus [those Tantras] are to be accepted completely".

It should be noted that the expression "impartial" is clearly used as a synonym for "non-sectarian" (*ris-med*). According to the

**"But can we really
discover the original
spirit of the teaching
of the Buddha in
these 'schools'?"**

impartial masters all the Buddhist traditions are equally valid, even if they are differentiated by the lines of transmission, the terms, the definitions and the particular emphasis. After presenting the essential characteristics of the Tibetan schools, Chökyi Lodro concludes by synthesizing the Rime way of thinking: "Apart from a great number of terms, all these traditions do not show any particular difference regarding the meaning, in fact as far as final realization is concerned the key point is only one.

"The Sakya and Geden [or Gelug] schools are also known as the traditions of explanations, while the Kagyu and Nyingma are noted as the traditions of practice.

"Actually the scholars of the past said: 'The Nyingmapa gave rise to the Buddhist tradition in the Land of Snow; the Kadampa were the source of millions of masters; the Sakyapa spread Buddhism in a perfect way; the Kagyupa [taught] the short path of incomparable realization; Tsongkhapa is the sun of brilliant exposition; the Jonangpa and the Shalupa are the lords of the arrangement of the vast and profound Tantras.' This statement is really wise".

Another distinction referred to by some people to justify the separation among the Tibetan schools is the triple subdivision which is typical of the Nyingmapa: teachings transmitted without interruption (*kama*), rediscovered teachings or treasures (*terma*) and teachings revealed through pure visions (*tak-nang*). The master Chökyi Lodro deals with the topic with these resolutely impartial words: "The 'treasures' of the Nyingmapa are the ordinary and extraordinary teachings that the great master Padmasambhava gave to the king and his subjects on his arrival in Tibet to be a resource in times of degeneration. These teachings were hidden as treasures in the earth and in the mind until a propitious moment in which they would be rediscovered by holy reincarnations [of his disciples] bringing benefit to the Dharma and beings.

"Pure visions and the oral [or uninterrupted] transmission are widely present not only in the ancient tantric tradition but also in the new schools.

"Some scholars contest the 'treasures', however if we examine the intention of these teachings from every point of view, it is clear that they are valid according to three types of logic [direct perception, deduction and tradition]. So we should be careful since denigrating the 'treasures' we harm the Dharma.

Even in India there were 'treasures' such as the hundred thousand [verses of the prajna-paramita discovered by] Nagarjuna and the Tantras that the realized masters took out of the Stupa of Dharmatala in Oddiyana. There is a lot of evidence such as these but I will limit myself to [mentioning] only them."

Today these traditions — except those of the Jonangpa and the Shalupa which have disappeared — exist in the West along with other Buddhist traditions which are not Tibetan. But can we really discover the original spirit of the teaching of the Buddha in these 'schools'? Is Buddhism an experience of reawakening to knowledge of oneself, to a universal and eternal wisdom? Or is it a religion considered to be superior to others and used to acquire power? Or does it sometimes seem to be a group of factions that don't even manage to find harmony among themselves? Perhaps reflecting on the origins of the Rime movement can help us to answer these questions sincerely. It has already been said that the Rime movement arose as a reaction to the rivalry among the schools which had been fueled for centuries by the sectarian attitude of some lamas and their followers. We won't take into consideration the long sad history which preceded but only two particular episodes mentioned by Gene Smith. The first concerns a tragedy which befell the royal family of Derge in Kham.

For several generations the sovereigns and a large part of the aristocracy had supported the Ngorpa branch of the Sakyapa. However this alliance went into a state of crisis when the young princess, after meeting the great Nyingmapa mystic Jigme Lingpa (1730-1798), decided to favor him and his school, thus provoking the jealousy and envy of Lama Ngorpa and his aristocratic patrons.

In 1790 the King of Derge died unexpectedly at only 22 years of age, leaving a son and a daughter

who were still very young, so his young wife became regent in place of his son. During her brief regency she greatly helped Jigme Lingpa and his disciple Dowa Drupchen. In this way thanks to the royal patronage numerous wood blocks were carved for printing the Nyingma Gyunbum in 26 volumes and the works of Jigme Lingpa in 9 volumes.

However in 1798, the year in which Jigme Lingpa died, the tension exploded in a civil war which saw the defeat of the Nyingma faction. The queen and Dowa Drupchen, who was considered to be her lover, were imprisoned and then exiled. Some Nyingmapas were even executed or forced to flee.

The young prince was put under the tutelage of teachers who were declared contrary to the Nyingmapa, but these tragic events matured a deeply religious feeling within him so that later on he renounced the throne, became a monk and retired from public life. Probably the first Rime document is one of his own writings in which, recalling the story of the family, he does not disdain the special relation between the royal house and the Sakyapa, but reaffirms the principle that tolerance and impartial support for all the schools should be the basis of the religious policy in Derge and — as Gene Smith notes — implicitly of any good government.

The second episode regards the expansion of the Geluk school and, consequently, of the Lhasa government in Derge and its surroundings. The Gelukpa masters were very expert in debating which had become a dogmatic technique in principle and purely formal in practice, crystallized in schematic terms and phrases to be memorized. In their search for support and followers, the Gelukpa missionaries made great use of dialectics to convince the local people to accept that their school was superior to those which had been in Kham for longer.

The masters who had welcomed the ideal of non-sectarianism reacted by underlining the importance of simplification and of real understanding, avoiding intellectual conventionalism, the controversy of interpretation and sectarian opposition. Regarding this, Gene Smith quotes an anecdote regarding the meeting between Dza Patrul (born in 1808), an important master of the Rime movement, and some dialectical monks who were opposed to his eclecticism and who wanted to trap him with their sectarian argumentation.

One of these monks asked Patrul what his school was, expecting him to nominate the Nyingma school, but Patrul said that he was only a follower of Lord Buddha. Then the monk asked him the name of his root master in whom he had taken refuge, believing that in this way Patrul would be induced to state his school and therefore reveal himself and start the diatribe. However his reply was that the master in whom he took refuge was the "Three Jewels" (the Buddha, his teaching or Dharma and the community or Sangha). Frustrated, the monk wanted Patrul to reveal his "secret name" which he had received on initiation since this would have certainly have identified him as a Nyingmapa. At

continued on page 18

Chökyi Nyima Rinpoche is the oldest son of the late Kyabje Tulku Ugyen Rinpoche and the abbot of Ka-Nying Shedrub Ling in Boudhanath, Nepal. He is known for teaching Westerners over the last two decades. He is the author of several books including *Jewel of the Heart*, *The Union of Dzogchen and Mahamudra* and *Indisputable Truth*.

This interview was requested and translated into English by Erik Pema Kunsang

Rinpoche, could you give a short statement about the purpose and content of your seminars and retreats?

We usually structure the retreats in two parts. During the first part we will be introduced to the reality of the preciousness of our human body, of the impermanence of all things and our mortality, of the consequences of our actions, and of the negative quality of *samsaric* existence. Reflecting on these sincerely, we inquire if it is possible to have any secure and lasting happiness in any *samsaric* situation — from the lowest pit of hell to the highest point known as 'the summit of existence.' This reflection will ensure that we direct our hearts towards a spiritual path, the Dharma.

Next, someone who is sincerely interested in Dharma practice must make sure that such practice follows an authentic direction. There is such a practice that is known as *ngondro* — widely renowned as the four or five times hundred thousand preliminary practices. During this seminar retreat we will cover the reasons for, the need to, and the beneficial outcome of involving ourselves in *ngondro* practice.

Following this, in order to clear away the basic mistakenness of experience, we will look into the Vajrayana practice of development stage, which means facing the fact that all things from the very outset are a unity of experience and emptiness. Development stage is generally described as the training in regarding our physical presence and environment as the pure and divine unity of sight and emptiness, in regarding sound as the nature of mantra which is audible emptiness, and in allowing thoughts and movements of attention to be the unfolding of original wakefulness which is the *samadhi* of aware emptiness. This, in short, is the most profound heart of Vajrayana practice, and whoever practices in such away clears away the delusion on the path.

Finally, as the main body of practice, we are introduced to the natural state of mind and the way to be stable in that natural state of mind. This is what in the general teachings of Buddhism is known as *buddha-nature*, and in Vajrayana as the thatness of mind, as the primordially pure view of *trekcho* in the Dzogchen teachings, and as innate wakefulness or ordinary mind in Mahamudra. Simply put, we will focus on discovering exactly how the nature of our mind is. Awakening to our basic state is the realization of the buddhas of the three times in the sense that all buddhas of the past became enlightened through realizing this. The buddhas of the present and who are to appear in the future do so through this real-

ization of the thatness of mind.

Someone may question us, "What is the final purpose of and training after having taken refuge in the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha?" The answer is exactly this training in realizing the nature of mind. This is what we personally must gain understanding of, but not only intellectually. We must gain direct experience. Moreover, a short moment of experiencing the natural face of wakefulness, once in a



Chökyi Nyima Rinpoche

Indisputable Truth Seminars 97

An Interview with Chökyi Nyima Rinpoche

while, is not enough to bring disturbing emotions and karma to a permanent end, to fully exhaust them. Facing our innate nature in a glimpse leaves of course a nice impression, but we don't have to be dazzled by such a brief moment of recognizing the natural state. We must develop its strength, we must reach full stability; that is what is called reaching accomplishment. There is no way around going through the training!

This training is known as 'traversing the path,' and on this path there could be many types of side-tracks, pitfalls, or hindrances. Often these are called the outer obstacles of the four elements, the inner obstacles of imbalances in the channels and energies of the body, and the innermost obstacles of dualistic perception. In order to avoid falling prey to these obstacles we have the practices known as gathering accumulations and purifying obscurations, the general and specific preliminary practice. Especially, we must train ourselves in loving kindness and compassion, in trust and devotion, all of which are indispensable.

To summarize: weariness and renunciation, loving kindness and compassion, trust and devotion, and the true view — these four are essential factors for awakening to buddhahood. During the seminar retreat we will give special attention to these four qualities, and try to train ourselves thoroughly in them. We will develop a sense of weariness for the entirety of *samsara*, not just practicing to gain fleeting moments of pleasure. We will develop loving kindness and compassion, not only for a few friends or those on our side, but for all sentient beings, free from prejudice and partiality. We will develop trust and devotion, not just in what is true, genuine and meaningful, but especially through a real appreciation of the natural state of original wakefulness; a sincere interest in the awakened state of *buddha-mind*; and through that in the ones who taught it, our spiritual teachers; in the words and statements that truly reveal this innate nature, the Buddha's words, the Dharma; in the one who fully realized and taught this natural state, the truly and com-

pletely awakened one, Buddha Shakyamuni, the Fourth Guide of this world aeon; but especially in the Buddha's mind, the omniscient state of original wakefulness, that knows the nature as it is and perceives all possible existent things; in the enlightened qualities of omniscient wakefulness, compassionate love, activities of awakened deeds, abilities of helping and protecting, and so forth — the qualities of freedom, of maturation, of all the inconceivable, inexpressible virtues of buddhahood.

Being interested in these enlightened qualities, appreciating, longing for, trusting in, and taking delight in them, we develop the 'armor-like diligence', engendering the deep-felt wish: "I will exert myself, I will persevere, for as long as I have not reached complete enlightenment!" That is followed by untiring and enthusiastic perseverance in the sense of appreciating and taking delight in every opportunity to compose our mind in the equanimity; of appreciating and taking delight in providing any circumstance that is conducive to realizing this natural state; and of neither appreciating nor taking delight in any little factor that obscures, prevents or goes against the realization of the natural state. For someone who practices in this way, I don't expect that true and complete enlightenment lies far away.

On the other hand, without these conducive factors, it may take a great number of life-times, or attaining enlightenment may remain in the realm of wishful thinking, because the genuine training in the awakened state is missing. Please, everyone, keep this in mind.

During the second level, the Vajrayana Retreat, understand that everything I just mentioned is to be kept as the basis. This level is meant for people who already have read a lot about Buddhist practice, who already have received much personal instruction from qualified masters, and already have gone through an appropriate amount of training. For such people, the heart of the matter is to refine and settle upon an understanding of the view, the substance of the main part of practice. This process of refining and settling the view involves the three great

views: Middle Way as the ground, Mahamudra as the path, and Dzogchen as the fruition. These three views can be explained as a single Buddhist approach to enlightenment, and from that perspective there is no view more profound, vast, or great that could be explained. These three can be used in a way in which they are mutually supportive.

The Middle Way allows you to prove to and convince yourself of the fact that the nature of

'thorough cut to primordial purity,' there may from time to time be certain gifted people of the highest capacity who when introduced to their natural face are, as the famous statement goes, "sentient beings before sitting down, but buddhas when standing up again." Another important point is that we may use Mahamudra and Dzogchen as different words, but the reality of these views is that their realization is ultimately identical, totally indivisible. Within Dzogchen as well there are different levels such as the outer Mind Section, the inner Space Section and the innermost Instruction Section; there are the teachings focused on view, meditation and conduct; and there is the Dzogchen view as it applies to the context of other practices such as Kriya, Upa, and Yoga, as well as Maha, Anu, and Ati. In the essential view, and in the final fruition, there could not possibly be any real difference, but the various levels of tantra do employ a variety of technical terms. During this retreat we will therefore spend a little time sorting them out and gaining some understanding of their basic meaning.

For instance, we must understand the words used in the Mind Section within that particular context, as we must with perspective of the Space Section, distinctively and without mixing their principles together. Each level of teaching has its particular purpose, outline and key point.

For some of Dharma students quite a number of years have passed since they began their studies and training. It is therefore my deep-felt wish that they not only possess some clarity as to understanding these points, but also acquire a more personalized familiarity through experience and through that some realization.

In this way I will emphasize the view of the Middle Way, Mahamudra, and Dzogchen.

Contact addresses for Europe:
Rangjung Yeshe Gomdi,
Smedehalden 3, Esby DK-8420
Knebel, Denmark
Tel: +45 86 35 68 35;
Fax: +45 86 35 68 40
email: gomde@post4.tele.dk
For talks in the USA, contact:
erric@Synopsys.COM ■

A PRAYER FOR GAKYIL MEETINGS

Om A Hum

Homage to the Master. May his presence, clarity and wisdom guide, empower and illuminate our discussions.

May we respect each others differences and honor our collective wisdom and experiences.

May we seek the highest benefit for the community and the teachings without self-motivation and ego-clinging.

May we listen with openness and clarity and contribute our ideas, insights and energies without attachment.

May our decisions and actions reflect the Fundamental Principles of the Dzogchen Community as written by our Precious Master.

May we live in gratitude for the gift of the teachings and the opportunity to work together.

Svaha

John LaFrance



Belarus & the Bonpo Master

by Ruslan Malakhovsky

Belarus was visited by the Bonpo Geshe Nima Dagpa from March 20th to April 17th, 1997. No Bonpo teacher had ever given teachings in the vast area from the Baltic sea to Vladivostok.

Geshe Nima Dagpa is an abbot of the Lhati monastery in Kham, Eastern Tibet. His father was a third reincarnation of Tsultrim Puntsog, a great master of Bon from Eastern Tibet. Geshe Nima Dagpa was born in Tibet and received his first lessons from his father Gyeltsen Nima and from Tsultrim Nima. The Geshe was taught under the guidance of Lopon Tenzin Namdak and patronized by His Holiness Menri Tridzin Rinpoche, the thirty-third abbot of the Menri monastery. Geshe Nima Dagpa took the complete set of monastic vows in 1977 and received the highest degree of Geshe in 1978.

Geshe Nima Dagpa is a founder and the director of an orphanage at the monastery Menri Ling where children receive both secular and spiritual education in the Bon tradition. He publishes one of the only magazines devoted to the Bonpo tradition—*The Doors of Bon*. He is also in charge of the construction of the monastery Monguel in Deradun, Northern India.

For the first time our Community carried out such a big retreat and we ran into a lot of problems we had not encountered before. One hundred-fifty participants were expected and around two-hundred-thirty came. Approximately eighty percent of the participants arrived from other cities like Riga, Vilnius, St. Petersburg, Moscow, Kurchatov, Kiev, Simferopol, Kharkov, Dniet'sk, Samara, Elista, etc. It was heartening to see the selflessness of our Minsk Community as they let others have their room and board and lived six or seven people in rooms meant for two.

The Geshe arrived on March 20th and gave two lectures for the Minsk Dzogchen Community and two public lectures in the center of the city. The retreat took place in a sanatorium outside of the city from March 28th to April 2nd. Geshe gave transmission of Atrid Ngondro practice with detailed commentaries. After the retreat, the Geshe continued giving teachings in Minsk for approximately forty five people. There followed commentaries on *chöd* and instruction on *shine* and *lungs* on other important texts.



Vajra Dance Retreat in Riga

by Irina Pustovit

(translated from Russian by Natasha Eddy)

This day of May was unusually cold for a late Spring day in Latvia, when we gathered at the airport to welcome Adriana dal Borgo with her smile that brought the real flavor of Italian Summer. It was her first Vajra Dance retreat in Riga and for most of us our first meeting with Adriana, but we felt like a very close friend had come back to us. It felt like we all knew each other for ages.

Then the retreat began. We were all fascinated by the soft movements of the Dance of the Liberation of the Six Lokas and the Dance of the Three Vajras. We all felt as if we were entering into an unusual condition and as we became more relaxed and open, a new understanding of the teachings brought a new inspiration to our

group and our practice.

The whole retreat was like one wonderful moment. At the end of the retreat we had a Ganapuja. After the retreat we went with Adriana to our community's land, which is 250 km from Riga. There we had a wonderful rest and another Ganapuja. In the evening we went to a Russian style bath-house (banya) with repeated jumps into the cold pond. Then we sat all evening long around the bonfire, talking and cooking sausages.

The next evening we saw Adriana off as she took the train St. Petersburg. We were sad to see her go, but she left us with the teachings that we can practice until we meet again.

Adriana, thank you very much for your great patience.

Padmaling- Riga, Latvia

A Special Visit

For approximately three weeks this past July in Tsegylgar we were very fortunate to host a visit of Adriano Clemente, Laura Evangelisti and their daughter Yesan. Laura gracefully taught us Yantra Yoga for ten days, (article below) and Adriano worked many hours with Jim Valby on translation projects. Jim and Adriano went word by word through eight Semde lungs for the Vairocana Translation Project. As well, with great skill, kindness and humor, Adriano helped some of us with pronunciation classes, retraining us in singing various mantras and practices correctly, and in general was very available to answer questions related to practice and Santi Maha Sangha.

Thanks to Jim Valby and Catharine Ishii for a wonderful hosting job and many, many thanks to Laura, Adriano and Yesan for spending time with us. We hope they will return in the not too distant future!

Yantra Yoga in Tsegylgar with Laura Evangelisti

by Paul Bail

There were many smiling people at Tsegylgar in Conway, Massachusetts each evening during the ten-day Yantra Yoga retreat that began shortly after the American Fourth of July holiday. "Doing this practice makes you feel so good," was the general consensus. The retreat was led by Laura Evangelisti, one of the two teachers of Yantra Yoga authorized by Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche.

Laura was a calm and gentle, yet authoritative teacher who explained and demonstrated the movements and the breathing very clearly, clarifying the purpose of each section of the Yantra Yoga, and making sure everyone understood the essential principle as well the refinements and details for every movement. She checked the students' postures individually and suggested temporary modifications for those who were not yet flexible enough to perform the Yantras exactly as prescribed.

continued on next page

Rinpoche's Plans for Merigar Retreats

A short report by the Merigar Gakyil

At the Merigar Gakyil meeting on June 2nd, we had a pleasant surprise and listened to an audio tape prepared by Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche in Australia in which he announced the future retreat program with him and other masters at Merigar.

Rinpoche told us that he was well and his voice was cheerful and encouraging. He announced that he wished to give teachings during the usual Easter retreat on board a ship: a cruise retreat of teachings, relaxation and rest in a warm almost summer-like atmosphere of the Sicilian sea. Rinpoche explained that this proposal arose from his concern that in April the climate at Merigar would still be a little cold and thus would not be agreeable to his health. It will be the Gakyil's job to verify if this proposal will be possible.

Then Rinpoche told us that he had invited Tsok Nyi Rinpoche, the son of Urgyen Tulku Rinpoche, for the next Christmas retreat which will be held from December 27th until January 5th, 1998. Tsok Nyi Rinpoche belongs to the Drukpa Kagyu lineage and also gives Dzogchen teachings.

For June 1998 Rinpoche said that he had invited Sakya Trizin whom he had met in Australia. Rinpoche explained that he had asked him to give a particular teaching which is very diffused among the Sakyapa: "Overcoming the four attachments". Rinpoche also requested Sakya Trizin to give a particular initiation of Vajra Kilaya for total realization. The details of Rinpoche's summer program at Merigar will be decided successively.

Rinpoche concluded his message by thanking not only the members of the Gakyil but also all those who are working on the projects of our Gar, the construction of the Stupa and all the other activities. He also sent greetings to all the practitioners of the Community.

The Shang Shung Institute	SSI Offer	inventory of Western books
of Merigar offers a free place in the dormitory and 2 meals a day at 5.000 lire each for members of the Dzogchen Community who can help during this summer to:	3) Sew covers for the Tibetan texts in the library 4) Work on the digital Dharma project (transferring audio tapes onto CD)	
1) Copy tapes for the tape and video libraries 2) Work on a computer for the	Replies to Francoise c/o 101572.3265@compuserve.com or c/o Merigar, 58031 Arcidosso GR, Italy. Tel. 564 966940/1.	

New Gakyils

Lithuania

Blue: Lapinskas Ernestas, Vaitkus Nerijus
Red: Kirsa Valdas, Lakauskas Arunas, Lapinskiene Ausra
Yellow: Lukosevicius Algimantas

Poland

Yellow: Jaroslaw Pawlowski (Vice-Director), Cezary Wozniak
Red: Slawomir Forsysak, Idalia Zagroba
Blue: Agnieszka Baran, Przemyslaw Wachniew (Director)

CLASSIFIEDS

Astrology

Jhampa was one of the first western monks in the Tibetan tradition. Since 1970 he lived in India learning the Tibetan language and in 1980 entered the traditional 3 year retreat. Your astrology chart is interpreted from a Buddhist perspective. It will draw on the wisdom of the East to help you gain insights into yourself and your life's direction. Services for children and relationships are available. Call: 1-800-819-2288 for information; or Daka's, 5810 Wilson Ave., Duncan, B.C., V9L 1K4 Canada
Webpage: <http://www.mala.bc.ca/~shane-mani/wwwhome.htm>

A Beautiful Country House Close to Merigar

Beautiful property for sale near Merigar consisting of two buildings: the main house and a separate cottage next to it, a total of twelve rooms and three bathrooms. Both buildings have been fully restored with great respect for the environment and are surrounded by over three hectares of land (approx. 7.5 acres). The property is situated close to a wildlife reserve and has a large open space at the front as well as chestnut and pine woods, fruit trees and potable spring water.
Further information is available from the secretary at Merigar. Associazione Culturale Comunità Dzogchen, Merigar, 58031 Arcidosso GR, Italy. Tel.: 0564 966837 Fax: 0564 968110. E-mail: 101572.3265@compuserve.com

Correction: We apologize but there will be no course of the Dance of the Vajra at the retreat in New Delhi, India on November 7th-9th, 1997.

Yantra Yoga in Tsegylgar

continued from previous page

Approximately thirty people attended the retreat. The two-hour classes were held in the early evenings in order to avoid the summer heat and make the retreat accessible to those who could not take time off from their jobs during the day. The students included experienced practitioners who wanted to sharpen their practice of Yantra Yoga, as well as newcomers and members of the Community not so familiar with the postures.

Over the course of the ten days we were led through preparatory warm-up exercises, the purification of the breath, movements to loosen the joints, the eight movements that train the breathing, the exercises to regulate the channels, the rhythmic breathing, the principal Yantras of the first and second series, and the Vajra wave. Each session was cumulative as we practiced what we had learned in the days before and then added new movements.

Even though the pace of the class was strenuous it was not strained. Laura had us rest the mind completely in the natural state while lying in the "corpse" position between segments. She repeatedly told us never to force the movements or the breathing, but to train "slowly, slowly" towards perfect execution.

In conversation after the sessions I overheard people saying they had been inspired to practice Yantra Yoga more diligently after the retreat. Laura emphasized the importance of continuity in the practice, practicing every day even if only for a brief period. Those with very limited time could make some kind of compromise, such as doing just the tsijong and lungsang one day and the rhythmic breathing the next. The retreat ended with a dedication of the merit to all beings and a Ganapuja, since the last session fell on the lunar day of Guru Rinpoche.

Instructor Training

for the Vajra Dance and
Yantra Yoga in the US

VAJRA DANCE

There will be an advanced course and Instructor Training in the *Dance of the Six Spaces* and the *Om Ah Hum Dance* at Tsegylgar October 27th to November 1st. Applicants must already know both the male and female parts. Please send an application (name, address and contact numbers) and photo by September 15th to the Blue gakyil of Tsegylgar. (see address below)

YANTRA YOGA

Anyone interested in doing the Yantra Yoga Instructor Training in Tsegylgar in September of 1998, please contact the Blue gakyil of Tsegylgar.

Mailing address: PO Box 277,
Conway, MA 01341, USA.

Tel: 413 369 4153.

Fax: 413 369 4153 or email:
74404.1141@compuserve.com

The reality when Fabio Andrico emerged from the corridor at the Cairns International Airport, was the precious moment we had all wished and worked for. It was joyful to see Fabio being garlanded with bright yellow tropical flowers by a group of us welcoming him to Cairns on that auspicious day of Wednesday, April 30th, 1997. Thirty-five to forty people arrived for the first day of the teachings on Thursday. This was the culmination of much planning, advertising, promoting, distributing leaflets and a lot of hard work by the committee and practitioners of Bodhi Citta Buddhist Center, the only Buddhist group in North Queensland. The initial talk and instructions was on the Nine Breaths. Thereafter, including the all-day (two 2 hour sessions) on Saturday and Sunday, we had about twenty-five to thirty people each day. Fabio led us through the Eight Movements, the Five Tsijong and the first five Positions, touching on Tsandul as well. All this in three evenings and two days! Our teacher

Yantra Yoga in the Tropics

by Laurence Khantipalo Mills

enlivened his discourse with memorable stories and humor. All those present each day took delight in Fabio's presence. Everyone enjoyed the range and depth of his teachings and appreciated the obvious benefits that the practice of Yantra Yoga brought. On Monday, the last day of the teachings, we sat up after the short Vajra wave with feelings of gratitude.

After the teachings, Fabio had a short time to relax in the 'winter' warmth of Cairns (29°C by day) before traveling South a few thousand miles to the 'real' winter around Namgyalgar. He spent a day going out to a part of the Great Barrier Reef, snorkeling and otherwise admiring the beauty of the fishes and corals. On his last morning, we took him to an Aboriginal (Tjapukai) Theater to experience the

story of their precarious survival since the colonization of this continent. There was the recreation of their legends of creation and some of their dances-those which can be shown publicly. Fabio threw boomerangs very successfully and with a spear-thrower (woomera in some aboriginal languages) launched a wooden spear.

Finally on Wednesday, May 7th Fabio returned to Namgyalgar. May he return to teach us more in the future!

Now, six to eight of us meet every Monday evening to practice Yantra Yoga collectively. The Dzogchen Community of just three people hopes to see other Dzogchen practitioners in the balmy warmth of Cairns (best time is our winter/Northern summer). Please come and enjoy rainforest and reefs and let us do some practices together.

Bodhi Citta Buddhist Centre
PO Box 8177
Cairns, QLD 4870
Australia
email:bodhicitta@iig.com.au

Last April brought important events to the Polish Community. Firstly, we hosted Adriana dal Borgo and Laura Evangelisti, the first envoys to Poland from Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche since his last visit in 1994. The retreat began with Medium Thun on April 6th and ended with Ganapuja on April 13th. Around 30 practitioners from all over the country attended the sessions of the Dance of Six Lokas with Adriana and of Yantra Yoga with Laura, which took place in a remote suburb of Cracow. The weather was violent. Strong winds, rain, and even snow accompanied the retreat. We had to endure severe cold in the place of our training. In the mornings, Adriana initiated the practitioners into the Dance of Six Lokas. In the afternoons Laura made our stiff bodies assume Yantra Yoga postures. Those who trained with Laura were both beginners and more advanced practitioners of

News from the Polish Community

by Przemek Wachniew and
Malgorzata Wisniewska

Yantra Yoga, but all benefited from the contact with the appointed teacher. Many errors and misunderstandings were corrected. Adriana and Laura were very patient, understanding but demanding. Teachers' and students' joint efforts had obvious effects.

The training gave us inspiration and freshened our motivation for regular practice. Thanks to one week of intensive practice we had the opportunity to get a better feeling of our bodies and energies within, we became more relaxed and gained more clarity. Both practices, kindly transmitted by our Master,

turned out to bring unquestionable, immediate benefits to the practitioners. We maintain the collective practice. For example in Cracow, every Tuesday morning the Mandala is unfolded and a persevering group patiently repeats the steps of the Dance. Every Tuesday afternoon we exercise our bodies during Yantra Yoga classes instructed by Slawomir Kujawski, who was appointed our guide by Laura.

The retreat created a positive cause for further undertakings of the Community. Right after the last Ganapuja led by our guests we gathered to elect a new Gakyil and to decide upon the further developments of our Community. The Blue Gakyil are: Agna Baranand Przemek Wachniew; the Red are Idalia Zagroba and Slawomir Forsyjak; the Yellow are Jaroslaw Pawlowski and Cezary Wozniak.

A few days after our retreats we purchased the new Polish Community land of Palden Ling.

AT TSEGALGAR

RETREAT WITH ONTUL RINPOCHE

AUGUST 26TH - SEPTEMBER 2ND

Ontul Rinpoche will visit Tsegylgar on his World Tour and will teach on the Two Truths from the teachings of Patrul Rinpoche and will give an initiation of Lhamo Odsel Chenma.

The cost will be \$300.00US.

Ontul Rinpoche will also be teaching in New Mexico, USA, from September 5th-7th, California, USA; Sept. 11th-14th; Santiago, Chile, Sept. dates unknown; Tashigar, Argentina, Oct. 1st-5th; Vienna, Austria, October and Nuremberg, Germany, early November.

For contacts see the International Dzogchen Contacts list on page 14 of Issue #40. (Correction for the Santa Fe contact email number: Lidian King, INTERNET:garuda@roadrunner.com)

TIBETAN MEDICINE, TIMELESS MEDICINE

Eliot Tokar and Norzom Chokey

SEPTEMBER 13TH AND 14TH
9 AM - 5 PM

Eliot Tokar is a New York based practitioner of traditional Asian medicine. He has studied with the well known physicians Yeshe Dondon since 1983 and for the last seven years has apprenticed with the revered Lama/physician Dr. Trogawa Rinpoche.

Norzom Chokey graduated six years ago from the Man-Tse-Khang Institute of Tibetan Medicine in Dharamsala. She will bring her expertise and teach about how women's health is treated in Tibetan Medicine. \$80.00 for the weekend. Food is not included, but lunch and dinner should be available for around \$5US per meal.

For more information contact Shang Shung Institute at:

Tel: 413 369 4928, Fax: 413 369 4165 or email Verena Smith at 103626.1210@compuserve.com or Lauri Marder at 76453.441@compuserve.com

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Tel: 413 369 4153, Fax: 413 369 4153 or
email: 74404.1141@compuserve.com



New Gakyil & Office Bearers at Namgyalgar for the Coming Year

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Lisse Stutchbury (Canberra)		Jacqui Reeves (Namgyalgar)
Lynne Geary (Canberra)		

CHRISTMAS RETREAT WITH VEN.TSOK NYI RINPOCHE AT MERIGAR

DECEMBER 27TH, 1997 - JANUARY 5TH, 1998.

Ven.Tsok Nyi Rinpoche will hold a retreat of Dzogchen teachings. Ven.Tsok Nyi Rinpoche, a son of Tulku Ugyen - the great master of Dzogchen and Mahamudra who passed away recently - is the third reincarnation of Drubwang Tsok Nyi, a great Drukpa Kargyu yogi and master who founded the the largest yogini retreat center in Tibet. Tsok Nyi Rinpoche usually lives in Nepal and holds many official positions among which is the overseeing of his own monastery and a nunnery in Nepal and serving as abbot of Gechak Gonpa, a retreat center which accommodates thousands of yoginis situated in central Tibet.

The retreat will consist mainly of sessions of sitting and walking meditations combined with instructions, teachings and individual conversations.

The retreat begins on Saturday, December 27th, at 16.00 (4:00 pm) and ends around midday on January 5th.

There will be a free child-minding service for which one should book in advance.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

In March I attended the Easter Retreat at Namgyalgar. Because of my deafness, I experienced some heavy personal difficulties while there, and I can't say everything came off for me quite as rosy as it apparently did for the reviewer who wrote "The Vajra Family Gathers at Namgyalgar" (printed in May/June Mirror).

I was very impressed with the way the Australian community helped us from other continents find our way to the land, get rides, accommodations, and other important details that go along with retreat attendance. As an attendee from America, it seemed to me they had things pretty well together. Only one notable occurrence made me pause to wonder.

It seems on the last day of the retreat, after Rinpoche finished the Teachings, there was an open meeting, specifically to elect new gakyil members and to encourage many needed volunteers for participation in the work of developing a Gar. I was greatly shocked when, in Rinpoche's presence, very few raised an interested hand to help out, other than the small group already overburdened with responsibilities! At the same time, some heated discussions involving differences of opinions erupted, which indicated to me, at least, that things weren't quite as smooth as they may have appeared on the surface.

Then later in May I discovered that there had been some difficulty in Namgyalgar and Rinpoche had decided, because of what he viewed as some tendencies not suitable for a Gar (or as he put it, that the time was not yet "ripe"), to put the development of Namgyalgar on hold and wait to see what transpired over the next few years.

I was therefore very surprised when the last issue of the Mirror arrived, and not a peep about the recent happenings in Australia! The only articles printed concerning Australia included the praise about a picture perfect retreat noted above, and the transcription of Rinpoche's extraordinary introduction to the Longde Teachings. There seems to be an awkward, strained silence on the matter from Down Under, at least in terms of communications with the international community. I do not doubt that

Rinpoche's decision created shock waves in the Gar, and that locally they are working to address the problem. However, it seems to me this is a matter not just affecting one local Gar. It affects us all in the same family around the world with the same transmission. We need to know about it.

I would therefore like to believe that some thoughtful and reflective articles can be written, distributed, and pondered by intelligent members of the Dzogchen community at large, so that we can understand what is at stake for all of us. I for one am very interested in addressing the ramifications of the political "isms" enumerated on by Rinpoche. I would like to make an appeal to the Mirror to create a forum for future articles focusing on how to work with communication gaps. It seems to me we need a place in our newspaper to discuss intelligently whatever topics are key issues within our community. After all, isn't collaboration what it's all about?

Lidian King

Santa Fe, New Mexico, USA

Thanks to Minjyur Yeshe (who made the design for the Great Stupa last year during his stay at

Merigar - ed.) we were able to make the *srog shin* for the Great Stupa of Merigar. The *srog shin* is the sustaining column of the Stupa but can also be the spine of a statue or the support of a ritual object such as a *namkha*.

We got the *srog shin* of the Stupa from a tree trunk which was squared like an obelisk: at the top it ended in a point and at the bottom I sculpted a stylized half *dorje*. On each of its four faces I carved and painted the mantras that Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche had left. Before starting the work, Minjyur had told me that the mantras had been very simplified. Since winter had set in, that news cheered me up a lot.

One day, while Mingyurla and I were looking for a suitable tree for the *srog shin*, we saw a dried up cypress tree that seemed suitable in a field, but after we had felled it and taken off the branches we discovered that it wasn't right because it

The Raising of the *srog shin*

by Piero Bonacina

was bent. And so we continued our search. We were getting discouraged when, in Santa Fiora, a majestic pine appeared about twenty meters high, dry and without its needles. We could also see that it was completely straight.

A few days later with the help of Frank we cut down the pine, brought it to be squared at the sawmill and then to Merigar 2 where we put it in a semi-basement. Day by day, when the weather permitted (it was the end of November), we did the work of carving. Mingyurla was the architect, the mind, while I used my experience of working with the wood chisel.

Now that the work is finished I remember the fear I had at the beginning. I was full of doubts at the time of sculpting the *dorje*. All in all I think I did a good job but it would have been better if Mingyurla had not left.

On May 16th I was very excited when I woke up. Besides being a

day dedicated to Guru Rinpoche it had been indicated by Rinpoche as a propitious date for raising the *srog shin*. The weather was unstable and we didn't know if it would rain.

When we went to Merigar 2 to carry the *srog shin* on our shoulders to the Stupa as we had decided (more than a mile -ed.), we wondered if the weather would permit us to raise it and do the consecration ceremony before it rained. Chanting the OM A HUM which marked our steps, we slowly reached the Stupa.

Once we arrived, while we were deciding how to raise it, the others made preparations for the practice. In this regard Rinpoche had sent us precise instructions: some mantras in particular and his precious advice. A serene air pervaded everything, it was like having an enormous umbrella to protect us from a possible storm.

During the Ganapuja, while the mantras indicated by the Master were being recited, the *srog shin* was raised and deposited in the awaiting vase. All of us were aware of the fortune to be participating in the construction of the Great Stupa of Merigar.

EDITORIAL

Wake Up Call

The Future of Namgyalgar

Ten days before Choegyal Namkhai Norbu and Rosa left Australia in May of 1997, Rinpoche delivered a very important message to the Australian Community. The message is one that The Mirror feels is not only intended for the Australian Community, but carries universal impact for the entire international Dzogchen Community.

Rinpoche was dismayed at the lack of inter-community communication, including with himself from the Namgyalgar Community, as well as sensing a strong proclivity towards political ideologies that he referred to as the mountains of samsara; mountains that influence Community members and therefore cause factionalization and discord within the Community. These kinds of political identifications can so easily lead to fanaticism, something that Rinpoche has often warned against, and are in direct contradiction to the principle of the Dzogchen teachings, as political dogmas and 'isms' of any kind can only create walls, limitations and disharmony.

In the Dzogchen Community we have enough challenge maintaining our samaya and positive relationships with each other and our precious Teacher without fueling the already easily ignited fire of egocentric, self righteous behavior. How can we see the view of another or develop compassion if we are already conditioned by some "secure" ideology that brings us to the meeting point with a fixed criteria of rules and categories that in some way influences the interchange with our fellow Vajra kin?

We Westerners have been trained well in political life, especially many of us who lived through the sixties and agonized and rebelled over what we found as cruel injustice and hypocrisy in our world, only to find the injustice and hypocrisy never ending and many of us were forced to look for other solutions, like the Teachings.

In closing, Namgyalgar is not the only Dzogchen Community plagued with these sorts of difficulties. We all face many kinds of problems in the functioning of our Gakyils and Gars. Maybe it is better not to add to them by creating more divisiveness through political identity. This potent message from Rinpoche, which included the fact that Namgyalgar is no longer functioning as a Gar - Rinpoche will determine if it can continue as one when he returns in the year 2000 if the mountains have dissolved - is in reality a wake up call for us all. It seems vital that we shed as many layers of confusion and delusion as possible, and get on with things in a more open and loving spirit.

At the present time the Dzogchen Community of Australia is actively practicing and working towards a day of reestablishment of the Gar. They are inviting people to come, participate and help on many levels and enjoy the great beauty and potentiality of this land and Community.

Naomi Zeitz

US Editor for The Mirror



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Namkhai Norbu

Main Office:
PO Box 277

Conway, Massachusetts
01341 U.S.A.
Tel 413-369-4208 and
FAX 413-369-4165

E-Mail address:
102121.130@
compuserve.com

European Office:
The Mirror Merigar, 58031
Arcidosso GR Italy
Tel and Fax 0564-966608
E-mail: 105113.1133@
compuserve.com

EDITORS

Naomi Zeitz, Tseggyalgar
Liz Granger, Merigar

LITERARY EDITOR

John Shane

ADVISORS

Anna Eid
Des Barry
Barbara Paparazzo
Jim Valby
Adriano Clemente

DESIGN AND PRODUCTION

K. Dobbs
Gaby Harrington J16

ILLUSTRATION

Glen Eddy
Philippe Koenig
(cartoonist)

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News from Tara Mandala

We are now into our fourth summer of retreats, and, in contrast to last year's drought, this year there has been much water and everything is in bloom. This has been a bountiful Spring in many other ways as well! Through three 'angelic' anonymous donations we have miraculously paid off our land debt. The debt was so large we thought we'd be making land payments for years, but at the time of the full moon and lunar eclipse March 8th, through a series of auspicious coincidences, we were relieved of this pressure. Now Tara Mandala is secured for generations to come and our efforts can go toward building the practice community and retreats.

Another gift this year has been having our own water. We began to drill after performing a Ganapuja and making offerings to the nagas on May 5th. When we hit water at only seventy feet flowing in at ten

gallons a minute, water surged up the casing in a great gush. The driller turned with raised eyebrows and gave the thumbs up sign. The rush felt like a metaphor for the blessings of the Dharma. Just as a well is a place where we draw the most essential sustenance for the body, the Dharma is a place we receive the ultimate sustenance of the spiritual teachings.

The starting of the garden has also been an important step this year. We created an elliptical shaped garden and surrounded it with fruit trees. We are beginning to grow our own food and the fruit trees will both heal the eroded hillside where they were planted and provide food in the future. First honeysuckle, wild plum, nanking cherry, honey locust trees, ponderosa pine were planted, followed by Manchurian apricots, prairie spy apples and carmagnola trees. Then a tall fence was erected to protect plants from the elk and

deer. Now we are planting greens, vegetables and flowers.

We also have a new baby. Last winter after a heavy snowfall Dave went on horseback with a group of local friends to try to catch a wild mustang horse. They caught one which became ours. Isis is a beautiful red chestnut and comes from the herd near the land that we discovered by accident last year riding into a meadow are dusk. Our greatest surprise of the year came when, on June 9th, this little mare who we thought was only nine months old gave birth to a beautiful little colt with a lightning stripe on his forehead. So Isis, the mother, must be at least two years old! Meanwhile the red brown colt grows daily, he's so beautiful and, due to his unexpected arrival, seems almost self-arisen!

After heavy snow and rain our two ponds are full and able to irrigate the garden and provide great swimming. Swallows and night

hawks swoop over them to snack on insects. Sunrise and sunset provide a delightful display of multi-colored clouds.

Our daily morning practice is the Preliminary Practices for Santi Maha Sangha, a silent sitting, followed by song of the Vajra and dedication. The latest news in our program is that Wangdor Rinpoche, a cave yogi who lived for twenty-five years in North India, will be joining our September program. He will teach Khorde Rushan from the Yeshe Lama Sept. 6th-8th and then be on hand every evening for spontaneous teachings and questions during the Training in Bodhicitta Sept. 8th-11th, and Trenpa Nyershang Sept. 11th-16th retreats that Steve Goodman and Tsultrim will teach, with Lynn Sutherland teaching Yantra Yoga in the afternoons. During that same week people will be practicing Rushan by themselves on the land, so they

can also benefit from the presence of Wangdor Rinpoche.

Our building objectives this year are: to complete a new retreat cabin, continue work on the Stupa, install the running water, and upgrade the showers. The cabin will have passive solar and wood heat, so you can begin to come for personal retreats year round! Sam Albright is carving the snow lions and eyes for it and we continue with rocks and tsas. We'd love more help if anyone wants to come. We are enjoying the blessings of Steph Kerr and Eleanor Loudon from Namgyalgar who are here helping for the summer. Next summer we want to have longer retreats connected to the Base of Santi Maha Sangha. More retreat cabins and the year round residential retreat center will follow as funds and interest manifest. We look forward to a great summer of retreats and to seeing many of you here. ■

TARA MANDALA SCHEDULE

Please contact Tara Mandala for further information: P.O. Box 3040 Pagosa Springs, CO 81147
(970) 264-6177 (phone) (970) 264-6169 (fax) tara_mandala@compuserve.com (email)

DZOGCHEN AND THE SKY-LIKE MIND with The Venerable Tsok Nyi Rinpoche III August 22-31

Cost: \$500 - \$465. Closed Retreat. Mostly Silent.

For the third time we are blessed to have Ven. Tsok Nyi Rinpoche III teach at Tara Mandala. This year his teachings will focus on Dzogchen and the Sky-like Nature of Mind for experienced Dzogchen practitioners. 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. For this to be effective, the student must be prepared and open and then have the capacity to develop the initial understanding that has been transmitted through meditation and retreat. 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. Ven. Tsok Nyi Rinpoche is the son of the late 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 where he holds many charges which include overseeing his monastery and a nunnery there and his yogini center of 1,000 women in eastern Tibet. Rinpoche's retreats are conducted mostly in silence with sitting and walking throughout the day combined with instructions, teachings, and interviews. He is a wonderful meditation teacher, adept at answering questions and relating to the experiences of the practitioner in a fresh non-dogmatic way.

AUTUMN MEDICINE WALK with Dixie Neumann September 6 7:00AM - 4:00PM

Cost: \$35 - \$30 Limit: 20 people

Greet the sun while walking the land, talking and sitting with the flowers of the garden. We will find and meditate on a flower with the dew still on it to make our own flower essence. While the flowers float in the water, soaking in the sunlight, infusing the water with their individual essence, we will walk on the wild onion/garlic (allium) and gather some for healing oil. After lunch we will bottle our energized flower essence and mullein allium healing oil. Bring tweezers, notebook, drawing pen, clear tape, good shoes, hat, water, and snacks. Lunch will be provided. Those who wish may come and camp the night before on the land.

TRAINING IN BODHICITTA: THREE PRACTICES FOR THE PARAMITA OF MEDITATION with Steve Goodman, PhD, Tsultrim Allione and Lynn Sutherland. September 8-11

Cost: \$180. 15% Discount for Dzogchen Community members. Closed Retreat

Raising the Bodhicitta is a way of developing the profound inspiration for the enlightenment and relief of suffering for all beings. This is a deep turning within ourselves and requires a shift from self-oriented motivation in spiritual practice to a deeply compassionate focus. Usually we protect ourselves from and are unaware of the pain of others. 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. First, meditating on "Equality of Oneself and Others"—just as we do not desire suffering, but wish for pleasure—so too do all beings. In this practice we meditate on giving the happiness to others that we usually wish for ourselves, thus uprooting attachment and hatred. Second, meditating on "Exchanging Self and Others"—the well known practice of Tonglen, "taking and sending." Third, the practice of "Holding Others Dearest than Oneself"—the willingness to take on more suffering oneself in order to relieve the suffering of others. These practices open the heart and turn our motivation for enlightenment from selfishness to the wide open expanse of compassion. These meditations are an essential foundation for all practice and are required for Base Level Santi Maha Sangha. Lynn Sutherland will teach Yantra Yoga everyday. This is a form of Tibetan Hatha Yoga. Steven D. Goodman, PhD, is Associate Professor of Indian and Tibetan Buddhism and Comparative Philosophy at the California Institute of Integral Studies and Adjunct Professor of Buddhism at the Graduate Theological Union. He has studied with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche since 1980 and, for the past twenty-five years, has studied and practiced both in Asia and the U.S. He has taught Buddhist psychology and philosophy at Naropa Institute and at Nyingma Institute. He was a Rockefeller Fellow at the Rice Center for Cultural Studies, and a Visiting Professor in Religious Studies at Rice University. Lynn Sutherland is a student of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

Rinpoche, member of the Dzogchen Community and authorized teacher of Yantra Yoga. She took the Yantra Yoga teacher training program at Merigar in 1995 and has assisted Fabio Andrico in teaching retreats in the U.S. Lynn began studying Hatha and Iyengar Yoga in 1976 and has been a practitioner-teacher of the Feldenkrais Method since 1985. Lynn is also a student of Sogyal Rinpoche and is an instructor for Rigpa's Study and Practice Program.

TRENPA NYERSHAG: FOUR EXERCISES OF RELAXED PRESENCE THROUGH OBSERVATION with Steve Goodman, PhD, Tsultrim Allione and Lynn Sutherland September 11-16

Cost: \$300 15% discount for Dzogchen Community members. Closed Retreat

Dranpa means to remember or be mindful; nyerpa zappa means to relax. To understand on an experiential level that all existence, samsara and nirvana, appear through the mind, that beyond mind nothing exists and the nature of mind is essentially empty, we must understand where we get stuck in illusion. Through deconstructing body, sensations, mind and phenomena we get closer to truly experiencing egolessness of self and phenomena. The practices of "Remembering the Body," "Remembering Sensation," "Remembering the Mind," and "Remembering Phenomena" lead to a true experience of relaxation. This is not an intellectual process, but something to truly investigate and experience. This practice is an essential foundation for developing Prajna, the perfection of wisdom, and is required for Base Level Santi Maha Sangha. Lynn Sutherland will teach Yantra Yoga, a form of Tibetan Hatha Yoga, each day.

KHORDE RUSHAN with Tsultrim Allione September 8-16

Cost: \$400 15% discount for Dzogchen Community members. Closed Retreat

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. These will be practiced according to the desires of the individual practitioners. Some of you may want to do outer rushan, while others may have finished that requirement and wish to concentrate on inner or secret rushan. Tara Mandala provides one of the few places on

earth that outer rushan may be practiced. September is a wonderful time to be on the land as the business of summer subsides and the coolness of autumn comes. These practices are a requirement for Base Level Santi Maha Sangha.

KHORDE RUSHAN TEACHINGS AND PRACTICE

Sept 6-7 weekend and Sept. 8-16 mornings with Wangdor Rinpoche

This practice of separating the discursive mind from the vast nature of mind itself is a preliminary for Dzogchen practice. Wangdor Rinpoche will be teaching from the Yeshe Lama on the outer, inner and secret Rushan, and guiding us in the practices. Participants should have a background in Dzogchen teachings.

Wangdor Rinpoche is an incredible example of reaching realization in one lifetime. After carrying his Gura Drugpa Thusey Rinpoche out of Tibet on his back, he traveled to the Padma Sambhava cave in North India and lived in a cave there for 25 years. He was also a student of Nyala Chang Chub Dorje.

Lena is the translator and her background includes transmissions in all 5 of the Tibetan lineages, including seven years meditating in the caves in North India under Wangdor Rinpoche's guidance. She teaches privately in the San Francisco Bay Area and translates for Wangdor Rinpoche in the U.S.

TRAINING IN BODHICITTA AND RELAXED PRESENCE THROUGH OBSERVATION with Wangdor Rinpoche, Professor Steve Goodman, and Tsultrim Allione

Sept 8-16 - afternoons
Lynn Sutherland teaching Yantra Yoga.

During this retreat we will work on methods of turning the mind toward compassion with practices that open the heart and uproot ego clinging.

RELAXED PRESENCE THROUGH OBSERVATION

Sept 12-16 - afternoons

Through deconstructing our ideas of body, sensation, mind and phenomena we will investigate the fundamental awareness of who we really are.

Tsultrim and Steve will teach during the afternoons and lead practices and Lynn Sutherland will teach Yantra Yoga in the late afternoons.

In the evening Wangdor Rinpoche will join us for spontaneous teachings and question and answers.

Most of these books contain practices and teachings that are not intended for circulation outside of the Community. Books marked with an asterisk (*) are for public use.

*** THE MIRROR, ADVICE ON THE PRESENCE OF AWARENESS**
L. 15.000 US \$ 10
by Choegyal Namkhai Norbu
The Mirror aims to precisely define the principle of innate awareness (rigpa). It makes clear how the practice of the continuous presence of such awareness is, for the serious practitioner, the only real alternative to the rules and limitations characteristic of most religious traditions...

SANTI MAHA SANGHA PRELIMINARY PRACTICES OF THE BASE
L. 8.000 5.50 US \$
by Choegyal Namkhai Norbu
This booklet contains the verses of the Four Awarenesses, Refuge, Bodhicitta and the Four Immeasurables to be used for the Base of the Santi Maha Sangha. Their aim is to help the practitioner remember and maintain presence.

HOW TO PLAY THE DAMARU IN THE CHOED PRACTICE
L. 8.000 5.50 US \$
by Choegyal Namkhai Norbu
This system of notation on how to play the damaru is according to the instructions transmitted by the master Choegyal Namkhai Norbu.

THOS-GROL, THE PRACTICE OF THE TWENTY-FIVE THIGLES
L. 15.000 US \$ 10
by Choegyal Namkhai Norbu
This book contains transcriptions of the thos-grol teaching given by Choegyal Namkhai Norbu at Namgyalgar, Australia, in December 1995 and Merigar, Italy September 1995. He received this teaching from his root master, Changchub Dorje.

*** BODHICITTA**
L. 8.000 5.50 US \$
by Choegyal Namkhai Norbu
Choegyal Namkhai Norbu gives a detailed explanation of the real meaning of Bodhicitta and how to apply it in practice.

*** THE SONG OF ENERGY**
L. 8.000 5.50 US \$
By Nyagla Padma Duendul
The 'Song of Energy of the Nature of the Mind' is a spiritual song, written as advice for two of the Author's disciples. It is particularly meaningful in order to have a direct understanding of Dzogchen.

TUN BOOK
L. 8.000 5.50 US \$

*** FROM THE DEPTH OF MY HEART TO MY MOTHER**
L. 25.000 17 US \$
by Choegyal Namkhai Norbu
Written for his mother in Lhasa by Choegyal Namkhai Norbu at the age of 19, this text is a real direct introduction to the state of Dzogchen: it contains fundamental instructions which are indispensable for whoever wishes to approach the essence of his or her own mind. Contains a photo of the Master with his family in the late 50s.

THE SEVENTH LOJONG
L. 8.000 5.50 US \$
by Choegyal Namkhai Norbu
The Seven Mind Trainings belong to the Dzogchen Upadesa tradition and are included in the Santi Maha Sangha Base Level. The seventh training includes three methods to bring the practitioner to recognition of the state of contemplation through three specific experiences.

THE PRACTICE OF SINHAMUKHA
L. 8.000 5.50 US \$
by Choegyal Namkhai Norbu
Transcription of the teaching transmitted by Rinpoche at Merigar in 1991. A fundamental practice to integrate the movement of the manifestation and to obtain a highly powerful protection from every type of negativity.

KUMAR KUMARI YANTRA YOGA FOR CHILDREN
L. 15.000 10 US \$
by Choegyal Namkhai Norbu
Yantra Yoga for children, illustrated by Rinpoche himself with hundreds of

stylized figures. Children require a particular form of Yantra Yoga because their physical constitution, their breathing and their condition are different from those of adults.

LONG-LIFE PRACTICE AND

CHUEDLEN OF NYAGLA PEMA DUNDUL
L. 8.000 5.50 US \$
Choegyal Namkhai Norbu
Teachings on the terma of Nyagla Pema Dundul, master of Chanchub Dorje and Ayu Khandro. Contains the long-life practice Tsedrub gongdue and the chuedlen of the three dimensions.

THE PRACTICE OF RUSHEN
L. 8.000 5.50 US \$
by Choegyal Namkhai Norbu
Rushen (ru-shan) practice is for entering into knowledge of the real condition through different kinds of experiences related to body, speech and mind. One of the practices for the Santi Maha Sangha Base Level training.

YANTRA YOGA (MANUAL)
L. 13.000 9 US \$
by Choegyal Namkhai Norbu
An easy to consult booklet for those who already follow and practice yantra. It includes preparatory exercises, preliminaries and the first two groups of asana based on the text of Vairocana updated according to the teachings given by Master Namkhai Norbu. The booklet contains an introduction by Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche plus a series of drawings illustrating different positions.

TEACHINGS OF YANTRA YOGA
L. 12.000 8 US \$
by Choegyal Namkhai Norbu
"... This teaching of Yantra Yoga which was transmitted by Padmasambhava to Vairocana is a method linked to the practice of Noendzong Gyelpo: 'Noendzong' means royal perfection, 'gyelpo' means supreme. This is a practice of non-gradual transformation in which certain practices of yantra connected with prana, channels, cakras etc., are used..."

THE 25 BASIC YANTRAS, THE 7 LOTUSES AND THE VAJRA WAVE
L. 10.000 6.50 US \$
by Choegyal Namkhai Norbu
This booklet, an extract from the translation (by Adriano Clemente) of the original Tibetan text by Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche, is solely intended to those who have received instruction on Yantra Yoga from a qualified and authorized teacher.

TEACHING ON SEMDE
by Sodogpa Lodroe Gyaltsen
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In 1991, Choegyal Namkhai Norbu commented on a text by the master Sodogpa Lodroe Gyaltsen entitled Instructions on the Dzogchen Semde according to the Nyang system. Besides providing methods to discover the state of contemplation, Sodogpa's text contains interesting references to the meditative experience of Mahamudra according to masters of the Drupa Kagyudpa tradition.

GREEN TARA
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In 1991, Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche taught a practice of Arya Tara which included the mantra of Green Tara and White Tara as well as invocations of important masters such as Chogyur Lingpa (*Mchog-gyur Gling-pa*), Atisha and Norbu Rinpoche himself. The book contains a detailed explanation of the practice and its finality.

*** ARTICLES**
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This booklet is a collection of articles by Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche published in "The Mirror", the newspaper of the Dzogchen Community and contains advice on various themes such as daily practice, the relationship between 'old' and 'new' students, educating

children and includes a talk explaining why the Dzogchen Community in different countries has been buying land and buildings in recent years.

STEPS OF THE VAJRA DANCE
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Maritse or Oedzer Chenma ('Od zer can ma: She who has rays of light), a particular manifestation of Tara, is associated with the light of the sun. This teaching also includes an invocation written by Rinpoche's paternal grandmother, Lhundrub Tso (1864-1945), who was a direct disciple of Adzam Drugpa, and a short sadhana.

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THE BOOK OF MUDRAS
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* Three Songs for Disciples of Chang Chub Dorje L. 8.000 5.50 US \$
by Choegyal Namkhai Norbu.
With Tibetan text
The three songs which have been translated in this collection were written

by Master Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche in the summer of 1988 during a visit to Khamdo Gar in east Tibet, one time residence of Changchub Dorje, his principal Dzogchen master. On the day of his departure, some of the older disciples of Changchub Dorje asked Norbu Rinpoche for advice on practice giving rise to these three spontaneous songs which contain the essence of Dzogchen.

*** A BRIEF BIOGRAPHY OF ADZAM DRUGPA**
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This is a brief biography of Adzam Drugpa written in the form of an invocation by his disciple, Lhundrub Tso, paternal grandmother of Master Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche. It may be the only biography in existence or at least the only one found up to now.

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This practice is a terma discovered by Master Adzam Drugpa belonging to the cycle The secret treasure of the vajra of clear light. The lineage of this practice goes back to Vairocana, Yeshe Tsogyal and Guru Padmasambhava and was transmitted to Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche by his uncle, Toden Ogyen Tenzin, a great practitioner and master of Dzogchen who manifested the Body of Light in the 1960s.

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by Shense Lhaje
The Golden Advice of Dran pa is a collection of Dzogchen teachings in the form of aphorisms, revealed by the tertan Shense Lhaje, a Bonpo living in the thirteenth century. This publication contains some extracts translated and

edited by Adriano Clemente.

*** THE SGRA BLA, GODS OF THE ANCESTORS OF GSHEN-RAB MI-BO**
L. 8.000 5.50 US \$ by Adriano Clemente
A brief analysis of the fifth chapter of the *gZi brjid*, the biography of *gShen-rab mi-bo* containing a tsang rite dedicated to various classes of *sgra bla*. Although the *gZi brjid* only dates back to the fourteenth century, it is considered characteristic of the pre-Buddhist Tibetan culture.

*** KEY FOR CONSULTING THE TIBETAN CALENDAR**
L. 15.000 10 US \$
by Choegyal Namkhai Norbu
Edited by M.R. Leti
Much information on Tibetan astrology and on its application to daily life. A practical and complete manual, indispensable for the consultation of the annual astrological calendar.

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by Buddhagupta
The Little Hidden Harvest is a version of the text *sBas pa'i rgum chung* that was used by the great master *gNubs-chen Sangs-rgyas Ye-shes* as support to his views on Dzogchen expounded in the text entitled *bSam-gtan mig-sgron*. This work establishes the distinction between Ch'ang Buddhism from China, the transformation of Mahayoga and the way of Dzogchen.

*** THE INTERPRETATION OF DREAMS IN A 17TH CENTURY TIBETAN TEXT**
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by Namcho Minjyur Dorje
This short text belongs to a series of thirteen volumes transmitted by the tertan Master Minjyur Dorje called Namcho, 'The Teaching of the Sky'. This brief text is not sufficient as an exhaustive study on dreams, but does provide a wide perspective enabling the reader to have a general idea of a way of interpreting dreams.

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Windhorse Associates is a therapeutic action group committed to working with psychologically disturbed persons in individual households in a natural community setting in Northampton, Massachusetts, USA.

Jeffrey and Molly Fortuna are the co-founders of Windhorse, Inc. in Northampton. Jeffrey is the Executive Director, and Molly the Director of Nursing.

M: You are both practitioners of Vajrayana Buddhism and practice those meditation practices, and Windhorse is partially rooted in Ed Podvoll's experience with the teachings; is there some kind of requirement for people who work in your program to be practitioners of Buddhism?

JF: No. What is required is the therapist is coming with some legitimate discipline in their life that they are personally engaged in and that is helping them along with their growth.

MF: Preferably a person who regularly practices a discipline that synchronizes the body and mind. It can be prayer, meditation, or a martial art. It doesn't matter what "religious" affiliation.

JF: We look for certain qualities. You can be a Tibetan Buddhist and be very closed minded. You can be very unavailable, dogmatic, stupid—and not really have your interpersonal skills together at all. We look for people who are open minded, have a life long learning attitude, a sense of ease and compassion for other people, not heavily driven by neurotic patterns that are unresolved; we're looking for pretty healthy people.

M: How do you find these kinds of people?

JF: Well, they look for us and we look for them. Like minded. We find each other.

MF: Let's get into the real nitty gritty of a shift. Those are three hour blocks of time of "basic attendance" that the team therapist and the client spend together with an attitude of being present and mindful. We

chose that amount of time because there is a definite sense of beginning, middle and end. So there is an attitude in each shift of knowing what's going too happen: we have a beginning phase, a middle and an end phase. It seems that if you can understand that process in your life, that continuum, and know how to begin, maintain the action and finish properly, you can use that in many areas of your life. That ability can bring success to many areas of our lives. Let's just say someone comes in to meet with the client and they decide to cook a meal together. At the beginning they have the inspiration, they go the store, they cook, they eat, they clean up, and there's a sense of completion. And that's a goal of the time spent together. Within that time period the person who has some kind of mindfulness discipline brings that ability with them in those hours, and that's something that is transmitted. A sense of mindfulness, presence, flexibility and space. And at the same time a sense of carry through and completion. In that sense, the rest of the day will be perfumed by that sense of completion. There are many things people do together. They might take a course together, go hiking, look for work, do volunteering, and that becomes a bridge. There's a lot of that kind of bridging from our smaller community to the larger community.

JF: Sometimes we try to follow up on what the natural tendency of the client is. Natural and organic disciplines. Discipline is a big deal. Something that brings joy and also helps to synchronize their mind/body in the activity. Any discipline that they may have been into prior to the disturbance. Sometimes those interests are lost, and we're

trying to find them and resurrect them.

MF: There is always that focus to try to rediscover their natural interest.

JF: As well as over time these relationships are developing. These shift people may be seeing these people many hours a week over two years, that's quite a relationship that's developing. That's a kind of friendship, but not completely. It's more professional than that. Still there are rough edges; you go through phases of relating and getting to know each other, and it's these phases that are so key to someone's recovery because people with these kinds of disturbances are so alienated from human relations. It goes with the territory. These are binding, committed relationships that over time under pin everything, all that we're talking about. It's not your 'in today, gone tomorrow' managed care ten days, these are long term relationships. There is also this element of learning to relate to people over time. This is our wish.

MF: One thing I'd like to talk about is aftercare. People have this wonderful team around them who care. What do you do at the end? How do you make that bridge? We're always thinking of that. How do you help create a life for the person that's bigger than Windhorse? One thing is that we don't prevent relationships from continuing on after the professional relationships have ended, and many of them do. It's not as if they have to have a big loss. We have community activities and social affairs, everyone is invited to a housewarming, birthday celebration, or seasonal happening. We have an ongoing social network.

M: Is there a problem of people

making in depth long term commitments as staff people?

MF: Not really. We have waiting lists for people wanting to work here.

M: How do you see people adjusting "after Windhorse"?

JF: It varies. Let's back track a bit to the other wing of the program which is for the people who are already residents of Pioneer Valley. They're probably on medication, they see a psychiatrist, their parents are around, their lives are impoverished, stuck and unenriched. That's another group of people we work with in an outpatient style, and is a much smaller, affordable set up, a much smaller team of maybe two people. It's all the same principle; but it's much more on their terms, it's in their home. In terms of aftercare it's a lot easier. There's already stability. But with the other situation, if people have come here from out of state or out of country, it's much harder. Some people stay in contact. Some people stay and make this their home and maintain some contact with the community. That's probably someone with a deeper more long term disturbance. It varies person by person.

M: So, what happened to Dr. Podvoll?

JF: In 1986 we stopped doing Maitri Psychological Services in Boulder and Ed went into a writing retreat to write about what we had done for those for six years, where he wrote his book, *Seduction of Madness*. Then in 1990 after the book was published, he went to India to recuperate, he went to a yoga ashram to regain his health. Through a series of coincidences, he ended up in a three year retreat in France, at Kundrul Ling. He finished that retreat and decided he

would spend the rest of his life in retreat, so that's where he is. We have contact by letter. So he's gone and we're carrying on.

M: Is there anything you'd like to say to wrap things up?

JF: Well, something I was mulling over in anticipation of the interview was the relationship between meditation practice and therapy, and the primary thing I discovered was intention, in any or all of our activities; karma and the intention behind action. We have the opportunity in our work to at least expose our intentions and bring them into conscious awareness. We need to cultivate positive and compassionate intention.

MF: Our spiritual practice informs what we say and our view of the mind. I'd like to say that the Western view of mental disturbance is that it's an illness. From a Buddhist perspective, we think of it as a disorder of the mind—that there's this basic state of health or wakefulness that we can tap into that's not totally obscured. There's a way to tap into the spacious, aware aspect of the mind. As team members we're constantly challenged to discover that truth. And we're challenged in a good way if we're challenged with a person who may be presenting very solid and delusional mind states. So our daily practice of meditation affirms that there are these "islands of clarity" that are available. So, we keep practicing.


M: Do you have daily meditation practices?

JF: Yes. Daily sitting meditation. And "tonglen" practice, mentioned earlier, which is contained within the practice of "Lojong". This is traditionally taught as the "Seven Points of Mind Training" arranged in fifty nine slogans, often referred to as the "Atisha Slogans."

M: Thank you both very much for your time.


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Relatively Speaking

by Choh Goh

The second in a series about methods of communication within the Dzogchen Community.

This is the second half of Part II of an on-going series about methods of communication within the Dzogchen Community.

RELATIONSHIP MAINTENANCE

It is not sufficient that we build a good foundation for a house, we must also not be sloppy with the actual house building itself, because sloppiness will lead to the construction of a wobbly house. Maintenance of relationships is, therefore, about the care and attention that must go into the house building process.

What are the essential points? Again, it is the attitude of openness, the attitude to help others, and the attitude of considering others more important than oneself that will keep this going. I have always believed that there is no secret in good project management; the best practice is none other than the ability to apply our attitude of *Ati* in the appropriate way. The following items give us a reminder of some of the specifics.

RELATIONSHIPS. Practice our four immeasurables! Never be complacent about the strength of existing relationships because impermanence can strike at the most unexpected moment.

Maintain an open attitude and be genuinely interested in others' situation. Be visible, approachable, positive, and supportive and equanimous. Sustain strong two-way communications and integrity in all dealings.

CONFLICT. Reduce conflicts by having good plans and thorough communications. Nurture constructive feedback and confront emotions with the knowledge of the teaching so as to transcend and move the issues into a rational discussion of facts. Negotiate on needs or issues, not on positions, and be vigilant not to let one's ego get in the way. It is really vital that as practitioners, we are not overcome by our own emotions, but that we are beyond the effect of emotions while allowing them to manifest.

COMMUNICATE. Meet regularly with teams and individuals to keep focused and track progress. Be effective in managing meetings. Publish decisions and action items and distribute them widely. Know that in order to feel connected, remote team members must be informed about the project. Feel the sense of a community with human related news which is of equal importance to project related information. Travel to meet face-to-face to prevent or resolve any major differences, and for celebrations.

CHANGE HANDLING. Knowing the principle of impermanence allows us to cope with changes. Realizing that the relative world works in this way means we will be mentally strong in the face of disruptions. The difficulties associ-

ated with changes in a cross-organizational project is the need to get an agreement of arrangement from all members involved. Our Community does not have a hierarchy, and in many matters consensus is needed to proceed. The advantage of a very democratic situation is plain to see: everybody feels involved and that it is fair. The disadvantage also exists: no decision could ever be made without endless discussion and sometimes great frustration. There is no simple answer to some of these difficulties in our Community, other than what our Master always says, do our best. There are, however, some points that are worthy of making.

RESPONSIVE ATTITUDE

Approach other parts of the team with an attitude that no one place necessarily has the right answer because everything is relative. Adopt successful informal way of doing things into regular habit.

Be sensitive to the ebb and flow of group dynamics; know when to push and when to back off. Act positively and forcefully in order to inspire confidence and elicit participation but think tentatively; balance advocacy with inquiry. Succeed by being flexible, by learning and by working without circumstances, as has been so often spoken about in the teaching.

REFLECTION. Involve the whole team and learn from the experience of past collaboration. Capture information from persons in the previous project or, doing the task before. Ex-gakyl member or ex-gekos are the prime examples. Document their expertise and processes so there are smooth transitions in the face of changes.

CLOSURE. Closure means the conclusion of a relationship, be it a successful one or a problematic one. Either way, when relationships change, it is important to express your appreciation for the opportunity to work together toward a common goal and for their co-operation. It is important to appreciate that even a difficult working relationship is a positive one, in that we have the opportunity to practice kindness, perseverance, generosity and awareness. If the conclusion is the end of a project, what better way to celebrate than to have a wonderful Ganapuja! It is really important to see the relative world providing an opportunity for learning, but since we are prone to creating problems with others, even if it has been a very amiable collaboration, celebrate with a ganapuja is also a way to help foster future collaboration!

NITTY-GRITTY The above elaboration has mainly been a cook book recipe for good distance collaboration. However, the main points are entirely appropriate for a team of people in the same geographical area too. The key points are that people must learn to com-

municate appropriately. For example, if there is an e-mail system, use it! Put out information to all the team members about what is going on. Do not leave someone feeling ignored because you forget, or that you sub-consciously try not to involve that person! The whole thing is really a matter of habit, and even the best manager or organizer can fall into the trap of failing to involve people from time to time. It is therefore an excellent way to train ourselves of awareness so that we keep people informed. Make it a commitment which is equal to that of a vow, and consider that "if I can't even fulfil a mundane commitment such as communicating to others appropriately, how can I fulfil the ambitious commitment of helping all sentient beings toward enlightenment". Once we establish this attitude things will become much easier and cross organizational collaboration will stand a better chance of succeeding.

SUMMARY It is always surprising to find that the best practices in organizational principles are indeed the application of many Mahayana principles. If we are really conscious of our circumstances and try to achieve the six paramitas in the training of bodhisattva, we are on our way to many successes. The only problem with principles is that they are generic, that is why I have attempted to make these principles specific to a particular need—the collaboration of the community over long distance—so that it is easier to apply where appropriate.

If we can all reflect and "observe ourselves" as our master has repeated endless number of times, then there is a really opportunity to do many things for the community and for the preservation of the teaching for the future. ■

Book Review

continued from page 5

we are on the brink of vastness with the recognition of the sentient suffering of others, we feel so alone with our own suffering? Reading Pema Chodron's books is an excursion into this elliptical terrain of aloneness and other. All her books, *Start Where You Are: The Wisdom of No Escape* and *The Path of Loving-kindness*; and *When Things Fall Apart: Heart Advice for Difficult Times*, without exception turn again and again to the practical but majestic methods drawn from the Mahayana tradition. Her advice to us comes not in cheap words or something she made up but arises from her deep intimacy with the process of working with her own negativity and blockages as a path to loving kindness as understood in the Buddhist tradition.

If you have ever felt insulted, betrayed, pulverized by grief, annihilated by loss, broken-hearted, churning with jealousy, vengeful, attacked with that knife in the heart feeling, poised for the kill, profoundly disappointed, as sensitive as a porcupine, or just plain overwhelmed, Pema Chodron's newest book, *When Things Fall Apart: Heart Advice For Difficult Times* is an eloquent reminder that all is still well. For we are about to be given an opportunity to stretch the boundaries of our limitations and habitual patterns of response. Who among us has not experienced what she calls the "squeeze," that unbearable state between a rock and hard place where things fall apart, not the least of which is our practice. Although we aspire to integrate with circumstances, on occasion we may need to be reminded that the teachings are not some abstract antidotes to our suffering which we glibly memorize, but rather a living process experienced in the heat of the moment again and again. We can fool ourselves into thinking that knowing the words is the same as understanding the meaning just as Naropa did when questioned by Vajradakini in the guise of an old hag, but sooner or later we will have to come to terms with our dualistic

tendencies to say one thing while doing another. Otherwise we will not become realized. And what better teacher than our own suffering? So, while we are alone in our difficulties, all the great masters of the past faced numerous challenges. Like the Buddha, we can recognize that the arrows of the Maras are actually flowers, more precious ornaments than any worldly adornments. Similarly, to recognize the potential wisdom within difficulties sensitizes us to others and dulls the edge of our arrogance. Pema covers all of these topics eloquently.

Pema Chodron's message in *When Things Fall Apart: Heart Advice for Difficult Times*, is a simple one—realization doesn't happen sometime in the future when everything is "swell" but now in the face of shaky uncertainties. Most of all, loving-kindness first begins at home, monsters and all. In her chapter called, 'Reversing the Wheel of Samsara,' she tells a story about the great Dzogchen Master who was the teacher of many present day Masters, Khenpo Gangshar. I once saw a picture of him holding a phurba, only the phurba was pointed towards his own heart, a gesture I found shocking yet inspiring. So I was happy to hear her story about what had become of Khenpo Gangshar. She writes that when everyone else was escaping from Tibet, it is said that he walked toward China. With this metaphor, she reminds us that the essence of the teachings is to enter into non-duality whatever the circumstances. If in difficult times when things fall apart we can train ourselves to open a bit rather than close down, observe our habitual negativity developed over lifetimes instead of reacting immediately by blaming others or external factors, then our practice of realization becomes something courageous, as Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche has said to us many times. Reading this book, I found Pema Chodron to be a true spiritual friend, in the Mahayana sense, when I most needed one. But the real companion is emptiness, *kadag*, from whence compassion nakedly dawns, as all great Masters have understood, and so we benefit others and arrive at wisdom ourselves.

Jacqueline Gens

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or trying to still the mind or label thoughts.

The total realization of Jampalshenye occurred at the moment of receiving the *Three Vajra Verses* in a jeweled basket from the rainbow body of Garab Dorje. Longchenpa's account as rendered into modern English by Jim Valby is as follows:

By merely gazing upon this [basket] Jampalshenye became completely full like an overflowing vase. The end of the journey for Garab Dorje coincided with the increase in experiential understanding for Jampalshenye...He bowed before the circular image of the embodied Buddha. Then Jampalshenye divided the more than 100,000 immeasurable teachings into the three Dzogchen sections: the Semde for those whose mind is already settled, the Longde for those who are free of busybodying, and the Menngagde for those who deal with the essential point.

Then as John Reynolds explains in *The Golden Letters*, Manjushrimitra made a special condensation of the teachings. The Essence Occurring as its Own Essential Point, he divided it into two: the oral transmission (*snyan-rgyud*) and the explanatory transmission (*bshad-rgyud*). The traditional story says that he hid the explanatory section under a double Vajra shaped boulder and made them invisible with help from the Dakinis.

There has been among historians and scholars much speculation about the source of these teachings and the Oddiyana language of the original Dzogchen texts, but with Manjushrimitra these ancient words are delivered into the safe keeping of those who would translate them, write commentaries on them, and preserve them even across centuries and cultures. Fortunately before the end of Oddiyana, Garab Dorje transmitted its great wisdom treasure: total realization through direct introduction, going beyond doubts and integrating continually in that state of total presence.

As a student of the twentieth century, I was extremely curious about the source of these 100,000 teachings organized and summarized by Manjushrimitra in the seventh century. I found in Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche's forward to *The Golden Letters*, the answer I was seeking. In the forward Rinpoche writes "The Dzogchen teachings first appeared here in Tibet even earlier (than the eighth century), that is to say, during the time of Triwer Sergyi Jyaruchan, the king of Zhang-Zhung. From his time [1600 B.C.] until the present some 3600 years have elapsed. The teacher of Bon, Shenrab Miwoche, was the first to teach Dzogchen (to humanity) which, at that time was known as 'the Bon of the Perfect Mind'. He did this in Olmo Lung-Ring in Tazig (Central Asia), and later the Dzogchen teachings spread from there to the country of Zhang Zhung, which lay to the west of Central Tibet, and there he taught the Tantras of the *Zhang-Zhung Snyan Rgyud* (the S and R not pronounced). Thus it is clear from the

history found in the *Zhang-Zhung Snyan Rgyud* that it was this master who first inaugurated the custom of teaching Dzogchen in Central Tibet. But for some scholars possessing limited sectarian views, the very notion that the teaching of Dzog Chen could have existed before the advent of Garab Dorje is not an agreeable idea. Also in the Nyingmapa tradition it is inappropriate to think that the Dzog Chen teachings did not exist at a time earlier than Garab Dorje." Rinpoche then explains that according to the Dzogchen Tantras there have been Twelve Primordial Masters, including Sakjamuni Buddha; this implies that there existed an even more ancient source for the Dzogchen taught by Shenrab Miwoche.

Beginning with Garab Dorje, the first four lineage holders attained rainbow body and at that moment in response to the devotional prayers of their chief students bestowed the energy of full enlightenment and the heart of their teachings in a few words contained in a small basket. Garab Dorje's *Three Vajra Verses* represent the ultimate realization of the essential points of the profound dharma (of Dzogchen) and is the first of the *Four Posthumous Teachings of the Vidyadharas*. When Manjushrimitra dissolved into radiant light, as accounted by Tulku Thondup (*Masters of Meditation and Miracles, the Longchen Nyingthik Lineage of Tibetan Buddhism*, published in 1996.) The *Six Experiences of Meditation* which present a condensed thod rgal teaching descended into the hands of Shri Simha.

A story told by Dudjom Rinpoche in his history of the Nyingmapa reveals the direct instruction style of Manjushrimitra in cutting through the dualism of the vajra master Buddhajnanapada (perhaps the same person as Shri Simha). Buddhajnanapada, after serving many masters including Lilavajra of Oddiyana, received in a vision the injunction: *If you wish to understand reality you must ask sublime Manjushri. He set out for China's Wu-tai shan Mountain.*

Around midday, near a white house, he saw Manjushrimitra dressed as a venerable old householder, wearing his robe as a turban, and ploughing the fields with the help of a filthy old peasant woman. Buddhajnanapada was distrustful. Nearby an ugly white bitch was sleeping.

At lunchtime, when Buddhajnanapada went to beg for alms, Manjushrimitra caught a fish from the canal and gave it to the bitch. The bitch vomited up the fish, and Manjushrimitra offered it to the master (Buddhajnanapada), who thinking it to be impure, refused to accept it. The venerable householder said, 'The man from Jambudvipa has a great many ideas and conceptions. Give him some good food.'

The situation created by Manjushrimitra to wake his new student up to his delusions arising from notions of clean and unclean, good and bad, should and should not, reminds me of the discomfort I feel after ganapuja when I return to judging and rejecting, liking and disliking, so blind to my own responsibility in maintaining a sense of a nice secure world.

It should be noted that there was later Jampalshenye, a Tantric master who according to Longchenpa magically appeared in Western India. At that time he taught *The Meditative Realization Instructions of the Secret Mantras* to Padmasambhava and Aryadeva. This great master also achieved rainbow body.

From Manjushrimitra's student Shri Simha this transmission passed to Jnanasutra and Vimilamitra, who worked with Vairocana in translating the five early texts of Semde into Tibetan. May we each have the possibility to contribute our energy to the work of keeping alive the transmission and practice of pure and total presence, our own true state and real potential. ■

A Trip to China

continued from page 6

to operate, which will be done with the involvement of a committee from ASIA for some years. The plan is for it to gradually become a nine-year school, including a primary and secondary school. It is a very important contribution to the people of this region to have this school where Tibetan children can learn in the Tibetan language.

As we saw the children of the town, playing at home and helping to celebrate the inauguration of their school, we felt great hope for them. There were many speeches and presentations, but the children of the area are the most impressive aspect, whether dancing in a choreographed number to Tibetan music, or doing their exercise routines, marching, or just standing without faltering for hours in the hot sun. Looking at such lovely new faces, and seeing in them the grownups they will someday be, made the celebrations of this school's inauguration have real meaning for everyone.

The visit to Dangche was very beautiful. Those of us who are accustomed to traveling and staying in hotels and other westerners' homes, who are familiar with the biggest cities in the world, and who have seen many things, will never forget the hospitality we received in peoples' homes, the people we met, the kindness of strangers, the generosity of everyone in this small town in western China.

The years of hard work on the part of a few people in our community have really produced a result, and it was a great honor to be there to witness it, and wish, with all our hearts, for its success over the years to come. The dedication of the school made it clear for a few bright moments, that something does happen when good intentions, intelligence and hard work come together in the right time and place... for those who worked in our community did so in the best spirit, and those good people of Dangche and the greater area did the same. This was an example of good fortune manifesting because of real dedication, and attention to the guidance of Choegyal Namkhai Norbu, without whom none of this would have happened.

We left after this, some to go back home, and some to continue their travels in Tibet. It was a special time and place. May it mark the beginning of many good things for all, and be a reminder of what is possible if we really work with others. ■

Rime

continued from page 9

this point, without the minimum hesitation, Patrul showed the monk his penis indicating it as his secret name. Then the crowd which had gathered to witness the debate broke out in noisy laughter and the dialecticians left totally discouraged. It should be noted that in Tibetan one uses the same expression to say "secret name" and "penis" in the honorific form.

Patrul is considered to be one of the successive reincarnations of Jigme Lingpa; another was the master Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo (1820-1892), among successive reincarnations are the master Jamyang Chökyi Lodrö who has already been mentioned, and Jamyang Chökyi Wangchuk (1910-1973), maternal uncle and master of Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche.

The main representatives of the Rime movement were Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo, Jamgon Kontrul Lodrö Thaye (1813-1899), Chokgyur Lingpa (1829-1870) and Jamgon Ju Mipham Gyatso (1846-1912), all of whom were considered to be emanations of Manjushri, the Bodhisattva of Wisdom.

The impetus given to the spiritual, artistic and intellectual revival by the masters of the Rime movement was so great that today the Dalai Lama himself - just to mention the most important figure - is a Rime master in theory and practice. In fact he has received teachings from lamas of all the Tibetan schools, without any prejudice, not even towards the Bön religion which most Tibetans consider to be type of pre-Buddhist "cult of sorcery" but which is actually an extraordinary and truly non-sectarian tradition of wisdom.

As a confirmation of his openness the Dalai Lama has not only visited the Bonpo community in Dolanji, India, but has also celebrated a Bonpo ritual in the temple of the monastery wearing the blue hat of the abbot and holding in his right hand the scepter bearing swastikas

analogous to the Buddhist vajra.

Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche is the creator of a non-sectarian temple which has been built at Merigar in Italy. In this beautiful, simple yet deeply symbolic building, he has had some of the masters most representative of all the Tibetan spiritual traditions painted, including that of the Bonpo. This is not politics but wisdom, because for him it is a value that has been lived consistently.

If the Dalai Lama could freely follow the path of Rime going beyond the boundaries of Tibetan culture where would he arrive? Perhaps to become for the spiritual traditions of the world that which he is for the Tibetan tradition, an "oceanic master". ■

THE CUTTING, THE CHÖD

Hollow sounds damaru,
clear bell sounding
and harmonious song.
Invite the enlightened
the awakened energies
the powerful protectors
mind taken refuge-
spontaneous knowing.
Benefit all beings
unbounded compassion,
see the One Mother
with rainbow-awareness
shining before us.
Empowered by her
shot out of this body
as fierce dakini
this body dismember,
blood, guts and bones
stuff into the skull
and offer it then
for the good of all beings.
Let them enjoy it
as they prefer.
Give it away,
give it completely,
still there's no receiver.
With a mind of not-two
reciting the Dharma,
may all be auspicious
be born of this practice.

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HOW I MET THE TEACHINGS

An Interview with Nicole Bini by The Mirror
June 21, 1997 Tsegialgar



Nicole and granddaughter Emma photo by P. Samonnet

The Mirror: Nicole, what in your life led you the teachings?

Nicole: Right now I am writing my memories. The title is "The Memories of Someone Who is Nobody". Included in that is my first idea of the teaching. I didn't know what it was but I was about eight or nine years old and all the kids of the school were going to the church, to catechism, and so I thought maybe I would try that, maybe I could find something there. After about four or five times I just left, I didn't go back because I thought it was absolutely stupid.

M: Was your family religious?

N: My family always let me free to pursue my own ideas. And so the priest came to see my father and said, "Why don't you send your daughter back to the church?" And my father said, "Oh, I didn't know she was going. If she decides to go it's fine, if she decides not to go it's fine." And the priest went away. So after that I came back to my business as a kid and I forgot that for several years, because it was really difficult to find anything at this time.

M: You always had some feeling that there was something "other"?

N: Yes. Since I was very young. Since I fell down on the ground between my mother and my father, I knew there was something. I have this memory, kind of a strange feeling when I arrived down before I was born, spitting on the ground. But everything will be in my book.

N: Everyone will have to buy this book!

N: Yes, well, as far back as I can remember, at first I was really unhappy to be in this world. I refused to eat and sleep and my parents were very worried. Finally, I don't know, bad grass never dies, so I survived. When I was eight or nine I tried Catholicism and it really didn't work. Later, when I was twenty-four, I started to have a strange manifestation, I was kind of knowing what was going to happen before it happened. Especially when I was going to visit my friend in St. Tropez, I was in Marseilles, and during the drive, I had a kind of knowledge of what was going to happen, so it was really, really strange and kind of uncomfortable because there was no surprise and it was kind of scary.

So, this experience became even more and more, month after month, and I began to wonder if there was something I should do about it. Finally we moved to St. Tropez and my boyfriend got sick because he had been doing a lot of drugs since before I met him and he was having these kind of flashbacks.

Because my boyfriend was sick I met a guy who was kind of a natural healer, who now would be considered 'new age', although at this time it was called natural medicine. He came to help heal him with magnetism and massage. I saw it was working really well. I

asked him about what he did because I was really interested; I really felt to do something for people. I talked to him about this premonitory manifestation I had. He said, "Well, I am in this kind of group, it's a Japanese group, and they use a lot of magnetism and things like that." And so I went to see this group. In the end I decided to get involved and they were giving an initiation and it was really funny and it was a three day kind of very intense teaching, and at the end you had to pay some amount of money and they gave you a kind of medal with something inside and they told you "You should never open this, or put in the water, or you will lose what you have received!" I thought, this initiation is really strange and is completely like Christianity and I don't want that. But it was working to help people, so I did it. And after maybe 10 or 12 months I started to have real problems because this was creating many more manifestations inside me, and I was having real trouble.

M: By manifestations, you mean you were becoming more open and having more psychic experiences?

N: Oh yes! I was able to know a vast quantity of stuff, the life of the people around me and people I had never met before, I was able to tell them things like that. At the same time the guy I left sent me a curse, and I was really berserk. At the end I argued with this group of people and I told them they shouldn't really try to control and have real disciples because there wasn't really a real master. People who were really interested were really getting used and abused in some way, so I argued with this guy and I left. And I opened the little medal to see what was inside and it was just a little Japanese symbol.

So, at this point I was really having a lot of trouble and I woke up one day and said "I need to meet a Tibetan master." I don't know why, but it happened like that. So I start to travel the whole French territory to find the famous Tibetan master of my dreams.

M: Had you read about Tibetans or had any contact with dharma?

N: No, not really. Finally I came back to the French Riviera, and met a guy in a very simple place and I think it was the place of Alexandra David-Neel, I am not sure, but it was in the middle of nowhere, and this guy said why are you looking everywhere when you are in Southwest France and there is one of the greatest masters

you can find in Europe, he is Gendun Rinpoche and his Center is called Dagpo Kagyu Ling. So I went to see this Master and I told him my story and he said "Oh, that's wonderful, that's fantastic! This means you have a lot of compassion and you should continue." I said "Are you kidding?"

M: What did he mean you should continue?

N: Continue to be open and psychic. It was very difficult because I felt so confused and was feeling physically bad and I had thousands of problems and he said, "Very good!"

Anyway I didn't know exactly what my intentions were. There was a secretary there who told me if one day you decide to take refuge with Rinpoche, we can arrange an appointment. Well, I told her I would have to think about it, it wasn't really the goal of my visit and I needed help. I felt bad, and I didn't think what I was experiencing was wonderful. Then I came back home and all night I dreamed of him. So the day after I called him and told him I wanted to take refuge. So, that afternoon I took refuge and stayed one year with him very closely. After one year I had to go to Paris to work and I was cleaning my body and eating macrobiotic food. I was shopping in a macrobiotic store in Paris and they have all these advertisements for teaching yoga and there was a little flyer on the wall saying Namkhai Norbu, Dzogchen teachings. My eyes passed over that and another one, and I thought "They are blooming everywhere, these Tibetans now." And I went away. So it happened on this weekend I was alone, (it was Easter weekend 1979), which was rare, I was always with friends, and I decided to go to a movie, so I went to get the metro to the place where I knew there was a movie theater, and I just

stopped for a moment and in front of me there was this flyer: Namkhai Norbu, Dzogchen Teachings, metro Notre Dame. So, I said, "OK, I'm going", and it was the same day. I went in the metro and arrived at the place and it was a nice place with a garden on the side.

The first person I saw when I entered was Barrie Simmons, and he was much younger, a very impressive character. But I thought, I don't think that's him, he's not Tibetan. I sat down and waited and a young guy arrived, long black hair, in jeans and leather. And it was Norbu Rinpoche. I was used to the traditional Lamas with

the robes and things and hair shaved and he was justwow! I was really curious so I sat down. At this time Norbu Rinpoche was a young master full of energy, and he began to destroy everything. He destroyed all the folklore of monasteries, *tulkus* and reincarnations and monks and all these clichés about Tibet. At this time people in Europe had this fantastic idea about Tibet and they thought it was a kind of wonderland where all the women are Dakinis and all the men were kind of enlightened beings. So he told us, look it's not like that and Tibet was invaded because of corruption. There were a lot of people at the teaching who were used to the other view and they were leaving the place like rats leave the ship. At the beginning there were a lot of people and at the end a pinch. I was eating and drinking it, it was fantastic. All the teaching I had had, which was a very traditional experience with Gendun Rinpoche, who was at the same time very Dzogchen and very kind. When I heard what Norbu Rinpoche said I thought "Wow, that's incredible!" If he is putting all this down it's because he is going to give us something wonderful. I was wondering what he was going to give at the end. So I stayed and here I am!

M: You are a very talented painter. At what point in your life's journey did you begin painting?

N: This started the same time as everything else, when I was born. When I was kid in school I was absolutely uninterested in studying and I was just doing drawing. My English book had my best drawings and my English teacher really enjoyed my drawings. As he walked through the aisles he would say "The one yesterday was better!"

M: Do you feel your experience with the teachings has affected how you paint?

N: Absolutely. There was a kind of opening, everything opened with the teachings, a perception of another world, a kind of interpenetration of all dimensions. And dreams.

M: Did your dreams change after you had experience with the teaching?

N: Yes. I want to write a book about my dreams too. The last dream I had I emailed to Norbu Rinpoche. It was just before I finished my gekos time here, just before I woke up the last weekend we had as gekos here. In the dream I was in the countryside and there was kind of a small river. People were looking in the sky and in the sky arrived a big cloud, but it wasn't a cloud, it was the head of Buddha, made of twelve tons of silver. Like the twelve primordial masters. So there was this head of Buddha floating like a cloud, and from his eyes were falling tears, big like eggs, also like the head of Buddha. They were falling everywhere but nobody was hurt. It was to teach the people love and compassion. When I woke up I was so happy and I woke up and went down and emailed the dream to Rinpoche and he wrote back the next day and he said "Yes, a very nice dream, and this is what we try to do everyday."

M: So you have just finished being the gekos of Tsegialgar for one year. Could you talk a little about that experience?

N: It was very interesting. I'm very glad to have done it, but I am very glad it is finished. I was wondering for one year why I had to do this and then I realized it was like a one year retreat, dealing with patience, compassion and generosity and all these immeasurables we have in Santi Maha Sangha. I don't think I'm going to do it again really. It's not really good to do two times the same thing, it's good to change. I encourage everyone to try it one day. Also because I'm sure you can't understand what is a gekos if you don't do it.

Also, talking about the immeasurables, I would like to mention my friend Eliane, she doesn't know I will say this, and thank her. She has offered me the airplane ticket to go and see my family and granddaughter in France. I think this is really nice. She said already people have done this for her and she would like to do it for me and I will do it for someone else. I think this is really an example of what generosity means. So a big thank you to Eliane.

M: Is there anything in closing you would like to say?

N: My life would be nothing without the Master, really. My first Master, when I came back to him and told him I had met Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche, his face split in two and he smiled really and he said "Follow him, he's a great Master."

M: Thank you very much!

SWEEPING THE YARD

(WATCH OUT FOR THE UNDERTOW)

by John Shane

Sun in my face, broom in my hands, I'm sweeping the yard outside the front door of the house we've been renting here in Bermuda for the nearly four years that have passed since my father died.

It's early morning and warm already. I know that the day will be hot: the sky is a perfect blue, and there are no clouds.

I've got a lot of work to do today, but I'm in no hurry. Sweeping feels good, a very basic action - you know where you are with a broom in your hands. I need to feel that I've come home, that I'm really here, before I start work.

Today is Monday, and I have just returned from a ten day business trip to the States. I arrived back from New York on Sunday afternoon, and Jo picked me up at the airport. She took me straight to the beach where the kids were playing in the wild surf with their cousins, watched over by my sister-in-law.

I changed into my swimming costume and dived straight into the waves, laughing with Jessie and Susannah as a big breaker steamed right over us. There is a fierce undertow at John Smith's Bay, and lifeguards are always on duty. It's a little pink sand and palm tree beach in a cove up towards the airport end of the island and since it's not protected by reefs, the Atlantic rolls right in and over you as you swim.

"Never turn your back on the waves", the old surfer saying goes, and I guess the same is true in life in general. It's certainly true of writing; maybe it's also true in meditation?

Better to face the thoughts, emotions, and images that arise in the mind as they come rolling at us, rather than to turn away from them, trying to pretend they aren't there. Whatever's coming in, open up, relax, and let the wave carry you; but be careful not to get sucked down in its undertow.

Now I'm sweeping the yard in the Monday morning sunshine, and waves of thoughts about New Orleans, down on the Gulf of Mexico in the south of the US, where I was last week, are coming up.

New Orleans is in Louisiana, on the Mississippi river among the old cotton plantations and alligator infested swamps, and I went there on a business trip to attend a convention. But at night I ventured out to explore the streets that were full of carnival spirit and a fierce wild energy, the scent of danger filling the humid air.

Muggings and murder were the talk of the cab drivers in the beat-up taxis that prowl the town, and the hotel desk clerk routinely warns visitors to be alert when going out at night. A tourist was shot in the face a couple of nights before I arrived, and he died before he got to hospital.

Walking through the famous French Quarter late on the Saturday night of Memorial Day weekend - a big holiday in the States - the narrow old streets were a riot of color and sound. It seemed as if the whole of America was partying in wild mood in the hubbub of historic

two and three story buildings that house the clubs and bars that once were the birthplace of Jazz and which have now become the Mecca of millions of fun-seeking tourists.

Tattooed and mustachioed muscle men in black leather called out from doorways to blonde denim-clad lovers wandering by, arm in arm. Gangs of shouting and singing youths with beer bottles in their hands crushed up against ancient sunburned and wrinkled pensioners in baseball hats and running shoes. Bright-eyed teenagers in designer tee shirts barged into smart-suited business travelers out on the town - all these different types and ages of people caught up in a wild chaos of pleasure-seeking abandon.

Music from six or seven different bands at once swelled and boomed out of crowded dives and dingy bars, reaching the ear to mix and mingle in a strange soup of sound, a sonic feast as rich and spicy as the sharp aromas of Cajun and Creole cooking emanating from the restaurants that line the sidewalks.

I walked, and watched, maintaining the silent witness of present awareness, thinking to myself: America is celebrating itself, re-inventing itself tonight, right before your very eyes.

A group of enthusiastic young black child musicians with crashing bass drum and blaring brass passed by playing that most famous of all the traditional New Orleans Jazz marching band tunes: 'When the Saints Come Marching In'. I've heard it played at least five times in the few days I've been in this city.

But I wonder as I walk which way America is really marching tonight, and the world with it - to the devil or to redemption? - as we move ever closer to the millennium and to a media-driven, media-dominated monoculture that covers the entire planet.

The crowd on the street suddenly parts and an enormously tall and very thin black man with a long, solemn face appears. He looms above me, his wide mouth turned down in big creases at the corners. He seems quite old, but his full head of thick curly black hair is without a trace of gray. He wears a worn-out business suit and an enormous pair of shiny black shoes.

He's literally twice as tall as me. Accompanied (or perhaps pursued?) by a group of college-age white kids of ordinary height, he disappears into a bar.

My thoughts stop in amazement; all trace of tension has dropped away, and I have entered the state of contemplation.

My normal mental process resumes, but I'm changed: I'm more spacious.

All I perceive really does seem to be arising in me. I float through the crowd as if disembodied, but at the same time, I'm completely present. I find myself thinking of Allen Ginsberg. Though he's just died a few weeks before, lines of his

poems still reverberate in my mind.

I decide to return to my hotel to sleep. Passing through a stone-paved square in front of a little French cathedral, even at this hour of the night—or rather of the morning—there are dozens of fortune tellers at work.

Everywhere there is the play of duality, of shadow and light - although here it is given a subtle twist, a sense of opposites transcended. One of the palm-readers who plucks at my sleeve has the appearance of a ghoulish vampire - all black leather, gaunt face, unshaven cheeks and black eye shadow. Pulling away from him, I bump into an old lady with a crystal ball who appears to be the sweetest of gray-haired grandmothers: looking closer, I see that she's a man.

I sleep; my dreams are clear and untroubled. And rising refreshed the next morning, my work goes well.

When the evening comes, I go to the House of Blues on Decatur Street, where the legendary black soul singer Anne Peebles has brought her band from Memphis to showcase her new album.

Anne is no longer young, but she's like a less famous and less show-biz Tina Turner, as thin and taut as a steel wire, with a voice of pure gold that cuts like a knife through the hot night. Her band is incredibly intense, and the music is so emotional that it hits me as hard as the wild wave of energy in the streets the night before.

Again I am lifted out of my little self, out of the traces of the day's pressures, out of the undercurrents of anxiety running through the city, and am brought into the state of contemplation, right there in the middle of the howling mess of wailing saxophones, guitars, and crooning backup singers.

I feel stripped down, roots-naked, utterly exposed, and it's a good feeling.

What does it mean when contemplation comes upon you in the street, in the bar, at a concert, as easily as in a silent incense-filled shrine room - perhaps sometimes more easily?

Is this something I have 'earned' because I've formally practiced and studied dharma now for many years? Or is it something that happens in spite of all that - arising in such informal situations more readily precisely because there and then I have no expectations of such a thing occurring, no concept of 'spiritual practice' to get in the way of a wholehearted experience of the fullness of the moment, however it may manifest?

What really is the cause of such moments of awakening? In what sense can the self-perfected state—which is unborn and uncreated - be said to have a cause at all? Is it that the state itself is unborn and uncaused, but that my experiencing it—or not—does have a cause: there being causes in the relative dimension, but not in the absolute?

it, or does a constructed idea of 'practice' actually keep me from it?

No, no, don't read into what's written here an attempt to find an excuse not to practice. That's not the point at all. 'To practice, or not to practice?' is not the question: what's at issue is the attitude we bring to practice, what we consider to be 'practice', and above all, how we relate to each moment of our life.

The moment is all we ever really know. Why do we seek anything more?

Sweeping the yard - isn't the simple springiness of the brush against the stones, the swish-swish of the broom as it clears away all the clutter, enough in itself?

Listening to the click-clack of the computer keys as I type, is there any need to add anything to just what is?

Ginsberg's dead, Dylan's in hospital with heart problems in New York, Rinpoche's far away in China but always in my thoughts—and I'm just as crazy as ever, and just as enlightened—sitting here in Bermuda writing to you with the chirping of the morning birds, my memories of New Orleans, my wondering about life and practice, my imaginary 'neuroses', all still here, like the nose on my face (am I expecting them to change, or to go away? Aren't they self-perfected, too, just as they are, like the scent of the new mown grass, the breeze from the ocean?).

What's the big deal—what's to decide? There's only one taste, one single decision, one total sphere, no doubt, no conflict.

So I'll end now and send these words over the e-mail to Naomi, who'll put them on the page and send them out to you. When they reach you like waves crashing on your shore, just let them lift you in their flow—but remember, too, to watch out for the undertow.

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