

THE MIRROR

Newspaper of the International Dzogchen Community

October/November 1997 • Issue No. 42

The Tibetan Elementary School of Dang-che

A brief history of the project

by Giacomella Orofino

The Tibetan village of Dang-che, in the County of Gui-de, is situated two hundred miles from Xining, the headquarters of Qinghai Region. Surrounded by rocky mountains, Dang-che lies in a fertile valley where wheat and barley are cultivated. It belongs to the ancient Tibetan territory of Amdo. Six thousand Tibetan families live in this valley supporting themselves mainly through agriculture. Their houses are still constructed in classic Tibetan style and have wooden verandas inlaid with traditional motifs. The houses lie within high walls made of pressed earth which is the same color as the surrounding mountains and valleys. This type of earthen enclosure is very ancient and is found all over Central Asia and Mongolia and along the caravan routes of the Silk Road.

Dang-che is in a place of extraordinary natural beauty where life is still simple and moves to the slow rhythms of the earth. A number of nomad families, all of whom have many children, still live in yak-skin tents on the mountains around Dang-che. They live off their flocks.

Local statistics show that about five hundred Tibetan children a year study towards their elementary diplomas. Many Tibetan families however refuse to send their children to the nearest school where they would not be given lessons in Tibetan language and culture and where the children would receive their education mainly in Chinese.

For many years the Tibetan inhabitants of Dang-che had the idea of building a Tibetan language school for their children so that they would not see the complete destruction of their cultural heritage by the next generation. The difficulty of raising money for such a school seemed insurmountable. In 1992 the Non Government Organization ASIA came to know of the needs of the Tibetan people of Dang-che thanks to Professor Tsering Thar, a researcher at the Tibetan Science Institute of Beijing, who came to Europe on a study scholarship. Immediately upon hearing of Dang-che's needs, ASIA decided to initiate a project which envisioned the construction of a school for at least 500 Tibetan children. In 1992, ASIA and



Festivities at Dangche

L. MARDER

the County Government of Gui-de signed a cooperation agreement and thus the Italian NGO began a fund-raising campaign for the construction of the biggest Tibetan school in Qinghai Province. The generous response of many private individuals was immediately encouraging. The following year a further agreement was signed with the local government for the provision of water mains and electricity and to acquire all the necessary equipment for the classrooms, the kitchen, workshops etc. The village people would supply the land for the construction of the buildings and would also construct the perimeter wall and main gate of the school. An Australian architect, Tony Laurent, provided the plans for the campus with buildings to be constructed with long classical Tibetan design lines. The buildings included a large two-story structure for the classrooms (about 1300 square meters), one building for the teachers' quarters (500 sq.m.), another for student dorms (600 sq.m.), kitchens, storerooms and a

large cafeteria (500 sq.m.) and bathrooms (250 sq.m.) The first phase of work began in 1994 and successive phases led to the completion of the entire project by June 1997. The work was entrusted to local companies and to Tibetan artisans who used traditional woodworking techniques. The local villagers organized a Tibetan Development Association for the Village of Dang-che supported by ASIA. They began the construction of the perimeter wall in packed earth and they leveled and landscaped the campus and planted different kinds of trees.

Altogether the entire project cost around \$200,000.00 U.S. donated by the Italian NGO, while 300,000.00 Yuan were provided by the government of Gui-de County, and this doesn't include the donation of the land, the perimeter wall, courtyards, and gardens provided by the Local Villagers' Association.

During the month of June 1997, before the official inauguration of the school, the president of ASIA, Professor Namkhair Norbu Rin-

poche journeyed to Dang-che to obtain the necessary agreements for the future organization of the school. In the official stipulations made with the heads of the County of Gui-de, the school is to remain the property of the Tibetan Village of Dang-che and the cost of salaries for the teachers, sports equipment and textbooks will be provided by the government of the County and the District. The children's families are to provide food for the cafeteria and the cover the cost of coal for heating. The inhabitants of Dang-che, furthermore, requested the County Government to nominate Prof. Namkhair Norbu as president of the school. They also wished to form a Committee made up of three separate entities to oversee and direct the school, the three entities to be:

1. The County Department of Education.
2. The Dang-che Village Development Association.
3. ASIA

These requests were accepted and noted in a legal document. A discussion ensued concerning the development of health and education in the Dang-che valley. The principal projects outlined at the moment that require a further urgent commitment from ASIA are:

1. To send a native-speaking English Teacher to teach a four month course to the schoolteachers and the establishment of an English language course from the third to the fifth elementary grade.
2. To acquire four computers and to send a computer science expert to give the schoolteachers a course on computer use and soft-

continued on page 12

We had been driving on this bumpy and muddy road known as the Sichuan-Tibet "Highway", and 105km to the Northwest of Chamdo, for four days. Cloudy skies concealed the peaks of freshly snow capped mountains. Regularly the monsoon clouds released their heavy load, causing the bad roads to disintegrate even more. Frequently the old Beijing-Jeep provided by Riwoche's Forest Police broke down, once it got stuck in the middle of a flooded creek. The water flushed out the muddy inside floors. Luckily a nearby truck pulled us out within an hour (not without exacting a small fortune from our predicament). On our fourth day we finally entered Riwoche County, our destination. Crossing the Dzekri La we were greeted by a mountain made of beaming white marble under a deep blue sky. The slopes were clad with dense dark spruce forests interspersed with lush pastures. It truly seemed like paradise. Very appropriately Takzham Gompa, the first monastery entering Riwoche is built in Zangdok Petri style, representing Padmasambhava's own divine abode.

Riwoche is famous throughout Tibet for the impressive Tsuklakhang temple founded in 1276, which is the main seat of the Taklung Kagyu school in Kham. The prayer hall is built as an atrium, its open roof rests on huge pillars of

Environmental Projects in Riwoche

by Daniel Winkler



Yiri district

D. WINKLER

gigantic spruce trunks. Some decades ago the county seat has been moved from Riwoche to Ratsaka, which is located on the Sichuan-Tibet "Highway", and 105km to the NW of Chamdo. Now Ratsaka is generally referred to as Riwoche town. Our plan was to visit Riwoche and conduct a feasibility study tour to understand the local situation and gather information. The result will be two project proposals, for which we need to find funding to launch

the projects in 1998. Once we arrived in Riwoche we were received warmly by the heads of the forest department. Yet to our dismay the weekend was ahead and everybody was out having 'Hongkong Picnics'. We were left with the recommendation to rest. Finally we had reached our destination, we surely did not feel like resting! Instead Pema Gyatso, my translator originally from Amdo, and I adapted quickly to local customs and staged

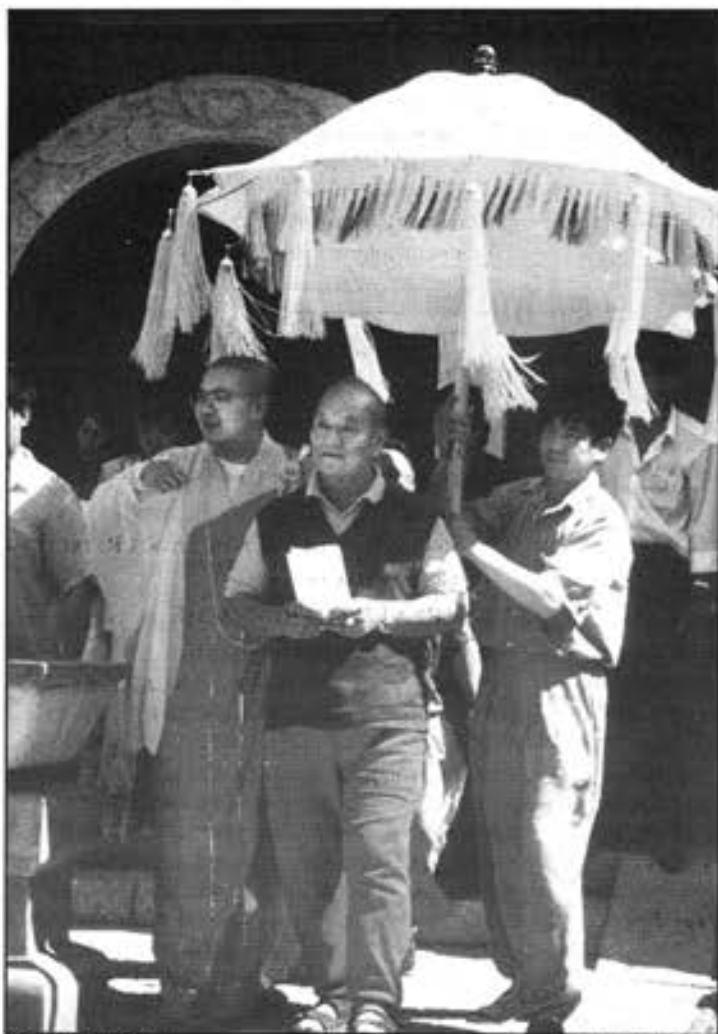
our own Hongkong Picnic, by hiking on the mountains surrounding Riwoche. We were taking it easy uphill, both of us still had to get used to the altitude, so we were enjoying the flowers, small blue Iris, bright crimson Incarvillea and purple and white Rhododendron shrubs.

Two sites that we should visit as future project sites had been selected. One was Yiri, the other was Chamoling, about 60km to the NW of Riwoche. Chamoling (Tramoling), which is already mentioned in the Gesar epos, was declared a Nature Preserve in 1976 to protect its wildlife, especially the population of Red Deer (*Cervus elaphus macneilli*), which due to the efforts of the local people and administration has survived. In many areas in Tibet deer populations went extinct in the 60's and 70's. In addition the area is supposed to contain populations of Snow Leopard, Wolf, Tibetan Brown Bear, White-lipped Deer, Musk Deer, Goral, Blue Sheep, Eared Pheasant, Brahminy Shelduck, and Crane to name a few rarer species. The forest department has hired one wildlife guard to ensure wildlife protection in an area of 637 km, which is located between 3850m and 5274 m a.s.l. The landscape is dominated by grassland mountains used for grazing. The forests, besides a few patches, have already disappeared a long time ago

continued on page 15

CONTENTS

Dzogchen Longde, Tantra of Space Part III	
Choegyal Namkhair Norbu	2
Ontul Rinpoche in Tsegylgar and Merigar	4
Interview with Tashi Dolma	5
Master biography	
Jim Valby	6
Book Reviews	6
A Preliminary Archaeological Survey of gNam mtsho and Dang ra g.yu mtsho	
by John Bellezza	8
August Moon Reflections	
by Des Barry	9
Community News	10
Special Practice Calendar	12
International Dzogchen Contacts	13
Relatively Speaking	
by Choh Goh	14
Reflections:	
One Drop Too Much by Glen Eddy	
Life in America by Gendun Sakyal	
How I Met the Teachings	
by Costantino Pucci	18
Naked in New York	
by John Shane	20



Rinpoche in China

Daniel Winkler

When Vairocana was invited from Gyalmo Tsawarong in East Tibet—close to China—back to Central Tibet, on the road along the way he met an old monk. The old monk was eighty-five years old. The old monk was very interested to follow Dzogchen teachings; he had heard Dzogchen teachings that existed as taught by Vimalamitra and Vairocana. He had never met them, but had met a student of Vairocana called Yudra Nyingpo. Yudra Nyingpo had given some transmissions and had told the old monk he needed to meet his teacher Vairocana. When Vairocana returned, the old monk went to see Vairocana and was very interested in the teachings. The monk also felt very upset. He said, "Now I am eighty five years, I am old, I met you too late, I am sorry, I can't follow, but can you do some blessing for the next life that I will meet this teaching?" He asked in that way. Vairocana said "The Dzogchen teachings and knowledge do not depend on age, education, etc." The monk asked "Even though I am old I can follow?" and Vairocana said "Of course!" Then Vairocana gave him a short teaching, very, very condensed, in the Dzogchen way, of this teaching of Longde. He also gave him a meditation belt for sitting in a position, a meditation stick for controlling the body, and something called tsulshing (a meditation stick with a bowl-shaped upper part to put the chin). We don't use these in general; we use only when we do dark retreat. All this helped the monk to do the positions for Longde, the tsulshing, meditation stick and belt, so he could hold positions for a long time. Also for remembering the principle of the Longde practice Vairocana wrote some verses, essential things of the Longde. He wrote the verses on this tsulshing, on the inside and outside. So, that old man did this practice and he realized in a short time. He lived a longer time, and never had a bad old age and later he manifested the rainbow body publicly. He had only a few students. He was not a very great or famous teacher, but he became famous after he manifested the rainbow body. The only remains were his nails and hair. That is the

symbol of the rainbow body.

If we say for example that the body has disappeared, something that exists also in Sutra realization but particularly in the Dzogchen teachings through doing practice of trechöd, not particularly integration; or we if apply emptiness and the practice of integration in a state of emptiness, or some Tantric practice, then there is a realization where the body disappears. That is called lu dultren in Tibetan; lu means physical body, dultren means atom, very tiny atom, ting means entering in the atom, so it all means slowly, slowly disappearing into emptiness. That is not the rainbow body. The rainbow body means that our physical body disappears because it's entering into its real nature of five elements. Those five elements are five colors, so even if the physical body is disappearing, the form and shape and everything are maintained in five colors. People have represented the idea of rainbow body by painting thangkas of Guru Padmasambhava in rainbow colors. That is not accurate. With the rainbow body all the form remains, the nose, eyes, etc., only normal people cannot see it because everything disappears into the elements. We cannot see because we don't have the capacity to see the nature of elements. If we are developed a little and have a little more clarity or such realization, then we can see the rainbow body. It is visible, if there is clarity. In this case, the sign of rainbow body is that the hair and nails remain because nails and hair are impure aspects of the physical body. The physical body entered in a pure dimension but what remained is that impure aspect. There is also the great transfer called phowa chenpo. That is another way, not the ordinary rainbow body. According to some historical accounts Garab Dorje manifested the rainbow body in that way and some say he manifested the ordinary rainbow body. Particularly in the biographies we say that Vimalamitra and Guru Padmasambhava manifested the great transference. That means not even manifesting death. In the normal rainbow body firstly they manifest death; they are dying and after death they are dissolving the physical body. For example,

there is a small piece of ice and you put the ice in the sunshine—the ice slowly, slowly is becoming smaller and smaller, because it's melting. In the same way, our physical, material body is melting in its nature of elements. The nature of elements is always maintained and that form remains. So it is necessary to first manifest death and then sometimes it takes a week, sometimes less, to manifest the rainbow body.

The teacher of my teacher Changchub Dorje and Ayu Khandro, Nyagla Pema Dundul, told his students "Now I am dying. At the end of this month I die, so you come and we spend it together." The students went there and did many days Ganapuja for purifying relationships between teacher and student, between student and student; if they had created some problem of samaya they purified with Ganapuja. He gave much advice and in his book the Song of Nyagla Pema Dundul there is a record of the advice he gave in that period to different students. Then at the end he said he wanted to go to the mountain where he had discovered many terma teachings. It's a sacred mountain. He wanted to go there for dying. Many students said, "Oh, please don't die. You remain, we need you." He said, "This is my time, when it is the time everyone should go, so I should go. More important is that you collaborate with me and follow the teaching." So they went to the mountain and he asked them to put up his small tent, the practitioners of chöd have them, and he asked them to sew him inside this tent because otherwise on the mountain animals could enter. Then he asked them to go back to the Gar, called Kasum, and do practice, Guru Yoga, etc. So they went back and they did practice for seven days. Then they saw many rainbows and other interesting signs on the mountain. They went on the mountain and opened the tent and the only thing remaining was hair and nails. Then hundreds and hundreds of people came to see and Nyagla Pema Dundul became very famous. Then everyone claimed to be his student. When he was alive there were only a few students.

Also, one of my uncles Ogyen Tendzin who was a very good practitioner of Dzogchen and student of Adzam Drugpa, and also practiced Yantra Yoga and contemplation and integration very much, realized the rainbow body. When I was very small I spent some months in a retreat place, and I remember he was always sitting and doing meditation, and I didn't have much idea because I was very small, and I would try and get him to play with me and I was bored, and sometimes he was sitting naked in the cave and I would beat him and then escape. Later, before I left Tibet, I went and spent some weeks with him particularly to learn Yantra Yoga well. I asked him many questions, many

parts I didn't know well or didn't remember, I also received some teachings. When I was seven years old I received my first Dzogchen teachings from my uncle. He gave me Dzogchen Upadesha teachings, *longchen nying tig*; all this series I received from him. Also, he manifested the rainbow body in the time of the cultural revolution. He was living in the house of a very famous noble family of Derge, at Yelung, where he lived at the end of his life. In this family there was a man who was a Dzogchen practitioner, who became very important in the Chinese office. So my uncle was living on the roof of their very big palace always doing a retreat, because this man was his student and he was doing service for my uncle, so my uncle lived there for many years. During the revolution he was there. Then the revolutionaries took him. Then some Tibetans who had faith in my uncle and were functionaries of the Chinese office, they guaranteed and let him free. Even though he was free he didn't know where to go, where to live, and that functionary said he would find him a place. He found him a nomad house where the nomads stay in the winter, a small house, and my uncle lived there and that functionary went every weekend to my uncle; brought him a little food, and visited and checked up on him. He went many times. One day he and another Chinese functionary knocked on the door and it didn't open. They thought maybe he had escaped. They knocked down the door and saw his dress on the bed, but he is not there. They looked inside the dress and they found a small body inside and they knew Ogyen Tendzin is no longer alive, but has become small body and they shut the door and went away. We didn't know what happened after my uncle died until 1978. Then we received news from Derge that later they made a report to Derge that after two or three days, some Chinese functionaries had reported that Togden died and left hair and nails. So the rainbow body still exists

even today; not only in ancient times.

In Dzogchen Longde many teachers after that period manifested rainbow body. Then later, Dzogchen practitioners were almost always doing practice of Dzogchen Upadesha and Semde; Longde remained only like a transmission. For example, when I received a transmission of Dzogchen Semde and Longde, in that period, there was only this kind of lineage of hearing the transmission, but no more of doing practice of Longde or Dzogchen Semde. It had disappeared. Everybody became engaged with Dzogchen Upadesha. Dzogchen Upadesha also developed much more later, more than before. In ancient times, Nyang Tingdzin Zangpo, a student of Vimalamitra, manifested rainbow body. Vimalamitra manifested the great transference. There had been some problems in the transmission, we don't know very precisely, in any case, so the realization of rainbow body was stopped for four or five generations. There was no more manifestation of rainbow body. Then there was a teacher called Jetsun Senge Wangchuk who was a great tertön who discovered Dzogchen Upadesha terma teaching. He met Vimalamitra in the rainbow body and spent three months with him. Vimalamitra transmitted all Dzogchen Upadesha transmissions, and particularly Dzogchen Upadesha Tantras. Then people considered that Jetsun Singye Wangchuk had some special transmissions; and people really believed because he manifested the rainbow body. After this the lineage was restored and many teachers manifested the rainbow body in the Dzogchen Upadesha lineage. So this is the reason why later all Dzogchen practitioners are doing Dzogchen Upadesha, and Dzogchen Semde and Longde remained a little outside. But the transmission has never been interrupted. The transmission is still alive.

Transcribed and edited by Naomi Zeitz

Dzogchen Longde

Tantra of Space

Part III

Teaching in Namgyalgar, Australia

April, 1997

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

NAMKHAIR NORBU RINPOCHE'S SCHEDULE

Nov. 7-9	Weekend Teaching in New Delhi organized by Tibet House	Dec. 22	Leaves for Namgyalgar
	E-mail: Internet:tibet-house@tibet.net	Dec.26-Jan.1:	Namgyalgar Retreat
Nov. 10	Leaves for Goa or Kerala for resting	1998	
Dec. 4	Leaves for New Delhi	April 27	Arrives from Rome to Moscow
Please note: the Singapore Boat Retreat is cancelled.		May 3-5	SMS Base Level Exam
Dec. 8	Leaves for Singapore	May 6-10	SMS Level I Training
Dec. 12-14	Weekend Teaching in Singapore	May 15-19	Moscow Retreat
Dec.15	Leaves for Sydney	May 22-25	SMS Level I Exam
Dec.19-21	Weekend Teaching in Sydney	May 26-30	SMS Level II Training
		June 1	Leaves for Poland

Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche in Nepal

by Liz Granger

Tuesday, September 9th, Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche and his wife, Rosa, arrived at Tribhuvan International Airport in Kathmandu, Nepal from Lhasa. At the airport, Rinpoche was enthusiastically welcomed by a small group of students. Before his arrival in Nepal, Rinpoche had expressed his wish to meet the well-known Dzogchen Master, Chatral Rinpoche, who lives a short distance from Kathmandu. On an earlier visit to Nepal, Chatral Rinpoche had been away but this time he was present at his residence. After a brief stop-over at the hotel to deposit his luggage and shower, Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche, escorted by a troupe of students left, for an appointment with Chatral Rinpoche at his retreat center in Godavari. While the group of taxis was on its way, Chatral Rinpoche had left for his monastery in Pharping and so the cavalcade followed in his steps until they found the Master and were received by him. At this momentous meeting, Chatral Rinpoche invited Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche to visit him for a few days after the three-day retreat in Kathmandu.

After an overnight stay in the capital, Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche left to spend a few restful days in the beautiful mountain resort of Pokhara which is situated 200 kms west of Kathmandu. Pokhara Valley is set beside a still mountain lake (Phewa Tal in Nepal) amidst a background of stark snowy Himalayan peaks, Machapuchare in particular, otherwise known as Fishtail Mountain. Several of his students followed him to this tranquil spot where they were able to dine, stroll, swim and go boating on the lake with the Master.

On his return to Kathmandu, Rinpoche gave three days of teachings from September 19th - 21st at the Malla Hotel located in the center of town. About 250 people attended, many of whom were local, while others had come from as far away as Japan, Australia, Greece, Italy, Poland, Russia and Germany. Dressed in a dark maroon silk robe, Tibetan style, Rinpoche geared the teachings towards those who were newcomers, giving a clear and concise explanation of the principle of Dzogchen and speaking at length on Guru Yoga and its essence as practiced in the Short Tun. He stressed that the principle of the teaching is not praying or ritual but understanding and that transmission from the teacher awakens the students to this. In the Dzogchen teaching, the Guru is the knowledge of our real nature with which we unite through Guru Yoga.

On the first and second day, Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche gave a full and detailed explanation of the short Guru Yoga as practiced in the Dzogchen community. During the morning session of the second day, he spoke about tawa, gonpa and chopra (point of view, meditation, behavior), saying that "Looking in a mirror, you can see yourself," referring to the Dzogchen *tawa*. He explained that there are many methods of meditation related to body, voice and mind but they are simply different ways to have experiences and that everything we come into contact with can be used as meditation. The attitude of

Dzogchen, he went on to say, is that of being responsible for ourselves.

During the afternoon session of the second day, Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche gave an explanation of the transformation practice in the Short Tun and listed the beings of the eight classes, mentioning, as he has on several occasions in the past, the importance of heeding the advice of His Holiness the Dalai Lama in refraining from the practice of the Gyalpo.

During the final morning session, Rinpoche talked about how to apply the teaching in daily life during the four moments of sitting, walking, eating and sleeping. The aim of the teaching he said is to get into our real nature and this comes about through being aware. After a short break during which many people greeted Rinpoche with traditional Tibetan *katas* (scarf), there was a Ganapuja to bring to a close the three days of teachings so kindly given by the Master. Throughout the retreat, Rinpoche taught in English which was translated into Nepali, Italian, Japanese and Russian.

As one of the many people who traveled a long distance to attend the teachings, I would like to thank the retreat organizers on behalf of all those who participated, for their excellent and smooth organization and great kindness and consideration towards us all.

In the evening of the same day, 135 people came to the Malla Hotel for a buffet dinner which was attended by Rinpoche and to watch a dance performance given by a group of young artists who call themselves Nasaa Syena Kuthi. Traditional Buddhist dances and classical folk music were presented at this time much to the delight of the audience. The dancers were dressed in traditional and very colorful and beautiful costumes, headgear and jewelry and performed on the platform and in front of a thangka of Guru Padmasambhava and white A which had been left from the teachings held earlier.

The following day, Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche and his wife Rosa together with a group of students had lunch and met with Lopon Tenzin Namdak at his Monastery, Tritan Norbutse which means "The Highest Seat of the Jewel" and is located at the base of Nagarjuna, near Swayambhu, west of Kathmandu. In the afternoon, we were happy to see the monks debating (Sutra, Tantra and Dzogchen) on the roof top which had been especially arranged for our benefit.

Two days later, Rinpoche left to spend a few days with Chatral Rinpoche at his Monastery near Pharping.

On Sunday, September 28th, Rinpoche, Rosa, Catharine and Fabio will leave for Varanasi on the first leg of their trip to India where they will be visiting many holy places.

The Dzogchen Community in Kathmandu would like to take this opportunity to express their heartfelt thanks to Rinpoche for the time he spent in Nepal and hope it won't be too long before he comes again to this part of the world.

HELP WANTED

The Shang Shung Institute in Conway is looking for a Program Director to work part time, at least initially, in conjunction with the board of directors to establish our programs and organize lectures and courses, among other duties. We would prefer a student of Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche. Experience necessary with fund-raising and organizational work. Modest salary. Must have working papers in US. Call 1-413-369-4928, or fax 1-413-369-4165 for more information.

Dzogchen Community of Australia

1997 NAMGYALGAR PROGRAM

On the occasion of Choegyal Namkhai Norbu's visit to Namgyalgar at the end of the year, there will be an extended summer retreat period of one month with activities beginning on December 20th and continuing through until January 20th. The schedule will be as follows:

DEC. 20 - 24 COMBINED PRACTICE & KARMAYOGA RETREAT

DEC. 25 CHRISTMAS DAY LUNCH

DEC. 26 - JAN. 1 RETREAT WITH RINPOCHE

JAN. 1 NEW YEAR CELEBRATION

JAN. 3 - 7 YANTRA YOGA with Fabio Andrico (afternoons) Dance with Adriana dal Borgo (mornings) (possibly Dance of the Six Spaces which may be extended to 9th Jan.)

JAN 8 - 20 Group practice retreats of Tun & collective practices following on from Rinpoche's retreat: practice workshops: Yantra Yoga & Vajra Dance practice, SMS Study Periods, and Personal Retreats.

YANTRA YOGA AND VAJRA DANCE Introductory Yantra Yoga will be taught by Catherine Simmonds during Rinpoche's retreat while more advanced yoga will be taught by Fabio Andrico during the afternoons of the 5 day course that follows. Courses in Yantra Yoga with Fabio will also be held in Melbourne, Sydney and Cairns in late January and early February. Adriana Dal Borgo will teach the introductory Om A Hum Dance during Rinpoche's retreat and the Dance of the Six Spaces (to be confirmed) during the course that follows.

It is preferable that people register and pay a deposit in advance for the courses.

ACCOMMODATION

CAMPING There is no sheltered accommodation at the Gar but people are welcome to bring tents, or camp-a-van, and stay on the land. There are a number of comfortable bush style toilets and showers, suitable for use by even the most inexperienced campers. Hot water is available. Laundry facilities are non-existent; possible to do a little washing in buckets. No washing in creeks. Only environmentally friendly soaps are to be used. Laundromats located in nearby towns. Water is drinkable.

COOKING FACILITIES During the retreat from Dec. 26th - Jan. 1st food will be on sale, cooking in the bush kitchen will not be possible. However, people camping at the land before or after the retreat without their own cooking equipment are welcome to share the use of the bush kitchen's gas fridge, gas burners, pots, etc. People with cars generally offer help with transport to buy food from local shops. There is some gas and solar lighting but no main electricity at the land as yet. Bring a flashlight or gas lantern with you.

RENTED ACCOMMODATION Various types near Namgyalgar. Contact the office to receive the Accommodation Information sheet which includes phone/fax no's. of establishments and Real Estate Agents to contact. Book well in advance as the South Coast is a very popular destination during peak holiday periods. Please make your reservation as soon as possible. Many places are already heavily booked.

SHARE CABINS For retreat (not courses) 4 share cabins at Hubara near Wallaga Lake, 20 mins drive from the Gar, have been reserved by the Dzogchen Community. Cabins sleep 1 couple & 2 singles or 4 singles. Available from Dec. 25th to Jan. 2nd* (8 nights) @ \$140 per person. Deposit \$40. (non-refundable after October) required by each person by end of October and full payment by Nov. 30th. Make payment to the Dzogchen Community, sent to Vicki Forscutt, PO Box 14, Central Tilba, NSW, 2546.

* If you wish to stay in a cabin earlier than Dec. 25th Vicki must know by end of Sept./early October to arrange this. (See Transport for travel to the retreat from the cabins.) More info. is available from the Namgyalgar office.

MEALS - catered meals & snacks will be on sale 3 times per day at the Skydance Cafe during Rinpoche's retreat (Dec. 26 - Jan. 1). There will be no Food Co-op at this time. Adults and childsize, vegetarian and non-vegetarian meals will be available. Bowls of soup and eats at very cheap prices will be on sale. Owing to high fire danger self-catering (at your tent site with your own equipment) can only be done on gas cookers. There can be no open fires!! **CHILDCARE** will be available during Rinpoche's retreat. To assist us with planning could people please advise us in advance if children are coming. As we are legally responsible for the safety of children whilst on the land they must be in childcare or at their parents' side during Teachings.

TRANSPORT - Contact the office for information on bus travel to Namgyalgar from Sydney and Melbourne. Be aware that being the Christmas holiday period, buses need to be booked well in advance (by end of November). During the retreat with Rinpoche a mini bus will transport people without cars to the Teachings from specified locations (Wallaga Lake/Hubara Cabins and Tilba). The bus will also make some trips to shops, banks etc., from the land during the retreat.

WORK EXCHANGE - Limited number of jobs available. Expect to work at least 5 hours per day, prior to & during the retreat. Register at office. Fulfillment of positions depend upon particular circumstances and skills/experience.

OVERSEAS VISITORS - Contact office if you require information. Vicki will book buses to Namgyalgar (from Sydney & Melbourne) for overseas visitors. Payment required to confirm ticket. Vicki requires creditcard details - your name, number and expiry date. Or ask your travel agent to book the bus. Note: it is important to ask the bus to stop at the BERMAGUI TURNOFF on the Princes Highway and not at the town of Bermagui itself.

SYDNEY TEACHINGS Rinpoche will give general Dzogchen Teachings in Sydney the 19th, 20th and 21st of December at the Buddhist Library, 90 Church Street, Camperdown.

For further information or to register please contact Barry Gazzard in Sydney: 02/9560 5674 or email: B.GAZZARD@UWS.EDU.AU

NAMGYALGAR OFFICE To register for the Namgyalgar Retreats/ Courses or for any information contact Vicki Forscutt, The Secretary, P.O. Box 14, Central Tilba, NSW, 2546, Australia. PHONE / FAX: (02) 4476 3446 or email: namgyalg@act.net.au All retreat info can be easily faxed or emailed.

RETREAT ON DZOGCHEN MEDITATION NEW DELHI, INDIA

NOVEMBER 7 - 9, 1997

with Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche

Organized by Tibet House Cultural Center of His Holiness the Dalai Lama

The three day retreat will be held at Jamia Hamdard University, Hamdard Nagar, New Delhi.

THE DAILY SCHEDULE

10:00 - 11:30 Discourse
11:30 - 12:00 Coffee Break
12:00 - 01:00 Meditation Session
01:00 - 03:00 Lunch and Rest
03:00 - 05:30 Individual Consultation / Yantra Yoga (Optional)

REGISTRATION FEE

Those who wish to take part in the entire discourse should register themselves at the Tibet House before October 15th, 1997. There will be a registration fee of Rs.750 (\$20.75US). In addition to that, donations towards expenses for organizing the retreat would be helpful to meet expenses, at least partially. We encourage participants to attend the entire discourse.

ACCOMMODATION AND MEALS

Participants from outside Delhi are expected to book their rooms in advance through Tibet House. The room charges for a night are Rs.500 (\$13.83US) for a double room and Rs.250 (\$7.47US) for a single room. They are also required to pay Rs.270 (\$7.47US) per day for three vegetarian meals and refreshments. Non - Veg. meals and mineral water can be arranged on advance order and extra payment. The local participants are required to pay Rs.125 (\$3.46US) per day for lunch and refreshments. (\$ amounts are approx.) For any further information, please contact the following address:

Program Coordinator

Tibet House

1, Institutional Area, Lodhi Road

New Delhi 110 003, India

Phone: 91 - 11 - 461 - 1515 Fax: 91 - 11 - 462 - 5536

Email: tibet-house@tibet.net

Ontul Rinpoche in Tsegylgar

by Paul Bail and Sara Handley

Teachings on The Two Truths: Relative and Absolute were given by Ontul Rinpoche at Tsegylgar in Conway, Massachusetts from August 26th to September 2nd. Ontul Rinpoche is a Drikung Kagyu tulku whose monastery is next to the sacred lake Tsoi Pema in India. Rinpoche commented on a text concerning the Two Truths composed by Patrul Rinpoche, the great Nyingma Rime teacher. He also taught on the qualities of the spiritual master, the attitude with which to approach the dharma, and other key topics particularly relevant to the base level Santi Maha Sangha. Rinpoche illustrated the key points with vivid images drawn from traditional metaphors.

On Sunday Rinpoche gave the empowerment for Hodser Janma, the Goddess Rays of Light, which he explained was an emanation of Tara and Vajrayogini. The visualization of Hodser Janma has the relative benefit of acting as a protection from harm during one's travels, and is one of the practices recommended by Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche.

On Sunday night Rinpoche and his wife Tashi Dolma stayed for an informal party in the gonpa where some of those present demonstrated their talents: guitar strumming, dancing, singing, and poetry reading.

The translator for the retreat, Dawa, was a young Tibetan woman who spent several years at an Institute for Sutric Studies in Northern India where she studied the Kanjur and learned Sanskrit. Having arrived in the United States only a few months ago, she occasionally was



Ontul Rinpoche in Tsegylgar

T. DOLMA

unsure of the correct English term to use, leading to humorous three-way Tibetan-English interchanges between Rinpoche, his wife, and Dawa, trying to find the best term to use. This itself was a wonderful teaching on how to collaborate together with grace and good humor to produce the best result.

At the end of the retreat we took a trip to the sacred land in Buckland. We showed Rinpoche and Tashi Dolma the Dance Mandala at the top of the land and sang the Song of the Vajra. Then we sat down for a small picnic, shaded by trees and cooled by a slight breeze. Tashi Dolma and Dawa sang a lovely Tibetan song and Louise Levi sang songs of India. We laughed in the afternoon sun. On the way down to the pond Rinpoche blessed the site for the Stupa and stopped at the Guardian cabin to view the progress made by our diligent Joe Zurylo. We took some parting group shots and talked of their next visit here.

August Retreat with Ontul Rinpoche in Merigar

by Marcella Testa

From the 11th to the 18th of August, Merigar hosted a teaching retreat with Ven. Ontul Rinpoche, a Master belonging to the Drikung Kagyu tradition. It was the third retreat held in Merigar by Rinpoche in the last few years.

In August two years ago, Ontul Rinpoche gave teachings on the stages of generation and completion and on Mahamudra, and also gave a Milarepa initiation. This summer his teachings focused instead on the Bodhicitta vow and in the end he gave an initiation of Avalokiteshvara.

Assisted by Elio Guarisco and his impeccable translation from Tibetan, Ontul Rinpoche explained a renowned text on the meaning of the three vows (Hinayana, Mahayana and Vajrayana) written by a Nyingmapa Master, Ngari Panchen Pema Wangyal, with a commentary by a lama of the Kagyupa tradition known by the name of Karma Nunpo, who was a disciple of the first Ontul.

The text, under the title of "The determination of the Three Vows as an auxiliary method of Dzogchen", speaks of the Intention of Buddha and subsequently of the Three Vows and the Three Disciplines: Hinayana, Mahayana and Tantra. The Three Vows represent the three levels, external, internal and secret. Corresponding to the external level we have the Pratimoksha system, to the internal the Bodhisattva vow and, corresponding to the secret level, the Samaya vow.

As usual with treatises on Bodhicitta, the text begins with an analysis of the interrelation among all sentient beings: all beings, from infinite past to our present karmic condition, have been our parents. In the Mahayana system the meditation on this point is the first step of the training on the Bodhisattva path. From here begins the development of Bodhicitta and the conceptual training on Emptiness. "All conditioned existence" said Ontul Rinpoche "is synthesized in Six Realms, three lower ones—hell beings, hungry ghosts and animals—and three higher ones—human beings, demigods and gods. Each kind of being experiences its peculiar kind of suffering, and that of the human beings is made up mainly of four problems: birth, disease, old age and death".

Through purification and engaging on the path leading to awakening we have to develop towards all beings,



Ontul Rinpoche in Merigar

CHRISTIAN SKRUBEL

without exception, the attitude of compassion, and the desire that all be exempt from suffering. In Tantra too, the Bodhicitta motivation is the foundation of all knowledge. The Tantra practitioners, who use also the secret means, have the distinction—Rinpoche said—of absence of confusion with respect to the mind, of a multiplicity of techniques at their disposal, and of the capacity to reach

the fruit of realization without ascetic practices and without special difficulties.

All dharmas—explained Ontul Rinpoche—are only conditions, as all depends really on our aspiration. So, when we listen to the teachings, we have to observe ourselves, to discover if we have the pure motivation to lead all beings to liberation. If we find out that this is not the case, then we have to work on our intention and make it pure.

Day after day Ontul Rinpoche explained how, applying the methods of listening and reasoning and the Six Paramitas, we can keep our vows and purify our intentions and our transgressions. Getting down to details he explained the eighteen root-vows of Bodhicitta and its eleven levels of realization, of the root, secondary and auxiliary vows of Tantra.

In the afternoon of the 15th of August, crowning the teachings on Bodhicitta, Rinpoche gave the initiation of Avalokiteshvara in his aspect of Sadaskari-Lokeshvara (represented with one head and four arms, seated in the lotus positions), that is to say the aspect in which he manifests his real nature of Lord of the Six Syllables (sadaskara) composing the mantra "Om Mani Padme Hum".

The last morning, the 18th of August, Rinpoche gave us the final recommendations on the importance of the Bodhicitta intention; then just as he was saying "Now we have come the end of these teachings", thunder and lightning erupted from the sky and rain poured down giving relief to the earth and plants after so many days of relentless sunshine. A few moments before earth also had made her presence felt with a very soft earthquake. Another soft vibration was felt a little later, during the Ganapuja, as we were beginning to chant the Naggon.

Visit of a Bonpo Lama

by Jim Smith



J. SMITH

On August 8th-10th, His Holiness Lungtok Tenpei Nyima, the 33rd Abbot of Menri, came to Tsegylgar to conduct a workshop on Healing Practices of the Bonpo sponsored by the Shang Shung Institute of Tsegylgar.

His Holiness is the world-wide spiritual leader of the Bon religion of Tibet. He was born in Amdo, in the far eastern region of Tibet in 1927, and became a monk at the age of eight at the Kyong Tsang monastery near to the place of his birth.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama asked His Holiness Lungtok Tenpei Nyima to

start a school in Massori, India. He remained as the head of that school for three years.

In 1968, while His Holiness Lungtok Tenpei Nyima was teaching at the University of Oslo in Norway, he received a telegram requesting that he return to India to assume his position as the new Abbot of Yung Drung Ling. Slowly he began to build a new Menri monastery in Dolanji and a Bon Dialectic School, from which thirty-seven Geshe degrees have been awarded. He also created an orphanage for Bon children called the Bon Children's Welfare Center.

An Appeal for the Drikung Kagyu Monastic School Project

Rewalsar (Tso Pema), North India. The Wogmin Tupten Shedrup Ling Monastery at Rewalsar has been founded by Ven. D. Ontul Rinpoche in order to preserve the spiritual knowledge of Tibet and the living tradition of a thousand years.

The original monastery was founded in 1179 AD when Kyoba Jigten Gonpo, the foremost disciple of Drogon Phagmo Drupa (an embodiment of the great Buddhist Siddha and scholar Nagarjuna) built a Monastery in Drikung (Central Tibet). Another branch of the tradition was started in Kham Nanchen (Eastern Tibet) by Nuden Dorje, an embodiment of Tibet's greatest yogi Milarepa. The present Lho Drongtrul Rinpoche is the 8th reincarnation of Nuden Dorje. This monastery is called Wogmin Thubten Shedrup Ling or Lho Lungkar Gonpa. The Chinese government has given permission for reconstruction. Three young Rinpoches and monks are trying their best to build the Monastery in Kham Nanchen. They are badly in need of help for the constructions.

The Drikung Monastic School in Tso Pema (India) has been partially completed through donations of the people of Ladakh, Kinaur Valley and Tibetans in exile. The temple overlooks the holy lake in the pilgrimage village of Tso Pema (Rewalsar). The great yogi Padmasambhava, who brought Buddhism to Tibet, meditated in caves and performed miracles with his consort Mandarava. She was the daughter of the King of Mandi (Himachal Pradesh).

The Monastery provides a school for about thirty children and food and shelter for a number of older people. Some of these monks are orphans, semi-orphans and others are from poor families. The youngest monk is six years old and the oldest is seventy-four years old. Due to lack of facilities some of them are sick.

The young monks are learning English, Hindi, Tibetan language, Buddhist rituals and philosophy. Their living conditions and food need to be improved. If you can make an offering or donation to improve this situation of need of individual boys or for the construction projects, however small it may be, you would assist in the preservation of a noble spiritual lineage and provide education, health and a home to a delightful young Tibetan boy. Each boy will need a minimum of about \$25US per month for living and education expenses. Apart from being deeply grateful for any donation, the monastery will welcome you if you choose to visit.

Our construction projects are as follows:

1. A kitchen, dining-room and store-room will cost about \$12,000US
2. A living quarter for monks will cost about \$12,000US
3. A class-room which will cost about \$4,000US
4. Restoration of the Monastery will cost about \$8,000US
5. A water tank and filter will cost about \$3,500US

One could finance one of these projects either individually or with another person. Each project will be named in the honor of a loved one, if you would like. We are dedicating all the projects to the benefit of all beings. We greatly appreciate your participation.

All correspondence related to these projects should be addressed to: Ven. D. Ontul Rinpoche, DK Monastic school, PO Box Rewalsar 175023, District Mandi, (HP) India

Interview with Tashi Dolma

Interviewers: Barbara Clavan (BC); Margaret Bradford (MB)



Tashi Dolma

J. SMITH

Tashi Dolma is the wife of Ven. D. Ontul Rinpoche, who is a Drikung Kagyu lama and the most recent of the Ontul tulkus. The first Ontul, born in the 19th century, was recognized as an emanation of Grob Ban Klu Chung Lotsawa, one of the twenty-five main disciples of Guru Padmasambhava. Tashi Dolma lives with Rinpoche at the Drikung Kagyu Monastic School at the holy lake of Tso Pema, in Rewalsar, India. The monastery and school, founded by Rinpoche, is home to monks ranging from age six to age seventy-four, supported and educated entirely through donations. Tashi Dolma teaches young monks at the school. She was interviewed in Berkeley, California.

BC: Where were you born? What was life like for you as a child?

TD: I was born in Kham, in Eastern Tibet. I had three brothers and four sisters. My family, Luthog Tsang, were farmers, and nomads, too. They had lots of land. Actually my whole family, all the ancestors, were very holy. My mother and grandfather said that sometimes they chanted the mantra of Avalokitesvara so much that they had new teeth coming out. Our family's house was very big, with many big rooms full of texts and statues. We also had very big stupas and prayer wheels. My father went far away to trade, to China I think, and he brought back a lot of texts and made prayer wheels. Usually families don't have so many, but my ancestors and mother and father were very holy and very much interested in Dharma. They liked to do lots of practice. Also, every year we invited many monks from different traditions to perform rituals, pujas. There were Kagyu, Nyingma and Sakya. They stayed many days, sometimes even a month. Two or three were always chanting.

I never went back to Tibet. But my brothers did. They say about thirty families are living in our old house now.

BC: Was anyone in your family a Dharma teacher?

TD: I don't remember. But some were very good practitioners. Like one aunt, who lived with me in Tso Pema. She was three days in samadhi. She lived many years in Mandar-

ava cave. This I remember. She died about five years ago.

BC: What is your strongest memory from Tibet?

TD: I remember that often my parents would take me to the monastery nearby to do *nyung-ne*. I remember this very well. Many people gathering. It was very nice to be together and pray.

BC: How long did you live in Tibet?

TD: When we came to India in 1959 I was about eight years old. I joined school in Dharamsala about 1961. From there we were sent to Simla, and then to Musoorie, where I finished my 11th class. Then we went to St. Bede's college in Simla. It's a convent, a very good college. At St. Bede's I did the first year of teacher's training. Then I did a teacher's training course for two years while I was teaching in Dharamsala. Actually, my college education is equal to a B.Ed., a B.A. plus teachers training. I like to teach, especially the lower classes. I taught up to class five, English, Tibetan, social, math, general science, in Tibetan Children's Village in Dharamsala.

BC: What goals did you have at school?

TD: At that time, it wasn't our vision. Schools for Tibetan children were run by the Indian government. Our parents had nothing to do with our education. Someone just came to collect the children to go to school.

BC: Was it difficult to be separated from your parents? Did you miss them?

TD: I don't remember. I must have missed them.

BC: Did you have some expectations of the kind of person you would marry, and your family life? How did you meet Rinpoche?

MB: Very romantic!

TD: (Laughs) Romantic. I don't know.

BC: When growing up, did you have any idea that you would be marrying a Rinpoche?

TD: (More laughter) I think not.

BC: How did that happen? When did you meet Rinpoche? Were you introduced by family?

TD: (Pause) What other questions do you have? (Everyone laughs)

BC: But this is what we really want to know about! (More laughter)

BC: Well, how old were you when you got married?

TD: When I was 25 or 26.

BC: How long did you know Rinpoche before you got married?

TD: Actually I didn't know Rinpoche very much myself, personally. But my parents knew him quite well. They had been saying, "Oh, this Rinpoche from this monastery there, with five brothers..." They had been talking about this and telling me things. And sometimes my father used to ask Rinpoche to do predictions. But I had been to school and was teaching, so I didn't know him very well.

BC: Did you have a ceremony?

TD: No. Nothing.

BC: Where was the first place you lived with Rinpoche?

TD: Before I was living with Rinpoche, I did all my *ngöndro*. I went to Rewalsar and my sister helped me with cooking. Rinpoche taught me how to do [the *ngöndro*].

BC: Before you got married?

TD: Yes. Actually, "married" is [not the right word]. Rinpoche was living in the monastery. I just rented a room in Tso Pema and did *ngöndro*.

BC: Had you done any Dharma practice before that?

TD: Before that I did quite a lot of practice. My sister and I lived together and taught in Dharamsala and we did Tara, and some other practices together.

BC: How old were you when you had your first child?

TD: My daughter, Wangchug Lhamo, was born in 1978. Karma Ratna was born in 1980. And the little boy was born in 1988. His name is Kunchog Aka.

BC: What makes being the wife of a Rinpoche different from being the wife of an ordinary person?

TD: I think maybe if I were the wife of some other person I would not have so much time to get teachings and to practice and also to meet many people, like many Western Dharma practitioners. So I think this may be different.

BC: Do you think it's different for the children also? Do they have more opportunity to practice Dharma?

TD: I don't know. I think the children feel good, feeling, "Oh, my father is a Rinpoche." They feel very good. Also, my older son is now a monk. He does quite a lot of studying and practice. He was studying at Changchubling, but now he is at Dzongsar Shedra in Bir, where he will learn only Buddhist philosophy. And Aka is really good. He is still young, but he likes to do practice. He is in the Tibetan Children's Village. My daughter lives with my sister, who is also very good. Actually she is really my cousin's sister, but I call her sister because we lived together at school and convent, and taught together. She was also a wife of a Rinpoche, a Karma Kagyu lama. But Rinpoche died. So my daughter goes to school and stays with my cousin's sister. She knows quite a lot of prayers.

BC: Do you miss your daughter and sons? Do you wish they were living closer to you?

TD: I would like to live with them. But I think it's important that they should go to school and learn something. It's no use if they stay with me. Of course I would be very happy with them. We would have a good time, be very happy. But for the future, it's not good at all. Therefore, I thought it's okay. It's impor-

CHRISTMAS RETREAT

WITH Ven. Tsok Nyi Rinpoche

DECEMBER 27, 1997-JANUARY 5, 1998, MERIGAR, ITALY

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.

tant that they get some good education. I hope very much that, being the son of a Rinpoche, if my older son becomes a good practitioner he can help some other beings. I very much hope and pray he can be of some help to others. Who knows? But you hope and pray.

BC: What supports you the most in your personal practice?

TD: I think I learn very much from Rinpoche. He is very much patient and he is so good, he is so wonderful. Sometimes it's very difficult, but I really learn very much from Rinpoche. Everything in daily life.

BC: Do you mean applying the teachings in daily life?

TD: You know, like wherever I go, whatever I do, is a teaching for me. But I'm not really good enough for [this practice]. Rinpoche is really very kind-hearted, and very nice as a person. Actually I'm a really spoiled child. I'm the youngest. I was very much spoiled by my parents and my brothers and sisters. Now I'm 46 or 47, and I think, it's very nice, now, this age, you know? I don't feel so old. I think it's because I was the youngest child. Maybe, I don't know.

MB: Do the children practice with Rinpoche? How old were they when they started?

TD: They don't have much time to spend with Rinpoche. Only during vacations when they come [to Tso Pema]. They do their own things, by themselves a little, not always with Rinpoche. I don't force them. From living around the monasteries, and all, the atmosphere, they like to go to the monasteries and burn butter lamps and things like that. It's just natural. I try to advise them a little bit. Not so much.

BC: Do you have any advice for Western Dharma practitioners?

TD: (Laughs) I am not a good practitioner. How can I offer advice? I do my own practice continually. I don't stop. I can always practice some place, when I'm traveling or wherever. But you Westerners don't have that much time. We have to go according to our daily life. We are not in a cave or in a monastery always praying or something. So I think it is most important to be kind and to help each other. I cannot advise.

MB: What about Western women? We have a lot of freedom here, but there's still a lot of control by men.

TD: In Tibet much more. Women are put down a lot. They can practice. Practice is not like that. But in family life, sometimes. It depends, from family to family, person to person.

BC: Do you find Western

women different from Tibetan women?

TD: I think they have a lot of freedom. Sometimes I meet Western people and they say, "We are equal, the men and women." But my daughter feels the same. She says, "Why can't girls do [the same]? I am so happy to be a girl!" But for me, I think "Oh, my daughter," (puts her hand to her heart). I feel for her really. Because women have to have the children, and then if they don't get a good education or something, then their husband looks down on them. Sometimes it happens.

MB: It happens here, too.

TD: Yes. I feel I want to protect my daughter more than the sons. I think, boys, okay. But girls I feel for really. But she says, "Why? We are equal. I don't want to depend on my husband. I want to work." I just laugh. Very funny.

MB: Even if we don't have the time to do mantras and formal practice, we can still focus on loving kindness and practice that.

TD: Yes, that is really good. Whatever help you can give. I always do like that at Tso Pema. Whoever comes to me, I help. Like writing letters, or if they have a problem, they call me and I go and help. I like to help.

BC: What would you like to do in the future?

TD: For the future, as I'm growing older, I would like to spend more time in practice. I would like to do that. Yes. I'm always thinking that now Rinpoche looks after the monastery, but we have some young Rinpoches who will take over the monastery when they grow up. Then Rinpoche will be older and maybe we will have some time to do some more practice together. I wish Rinpoche's previous reincarnation was almost always in retreat. Rinpoche would like to do longer retreat, but he has no time. For Rinpoches, though, I think it's almost the same. It's just from our side. We feel very good when they stay [in one place] and do something. But maybe for them it's the same. I feel it's also very important that Rinpoche travels. He always wishes that even one word of the teachings will be helpful for beings. He wishes and he prays. So when he can travel I think it is also very good for spreading Dharma. I don't plan very much. I just think okay, we have some projects now, and after we finish these projects, maybe our young Rinpoches can look after things. Then Rinpoche and I can just have some rest and do some practice together. Maybe that would be good. But not much planning. (Laughs)

BC & MB: Thank you very much.

Lives of the Great Masters



Srisimha

by Jim Valby

This hagiography of Srisimha (sometimes spelled Shrisingha, Shrisimha, Sengha, or Shrisengha) is adapted from Longchenpa's account in his *"ndzogs chen snying thig gi lo rgyus chen mo rin po che"*. If the timeline details of Longchenpa's account are correct and if Buddha Shakyamuni's Parinirvana was 488 BC, then Srisimha was born in 289 AD.

At that time in the Chinese town Soshailing, the householder Dewa Denpa and his wife Nangwa Selwa Rabtu Kyenpa had a son Srisimha. He had an amazing capacity for learning. He grew up in the town Shoaangjom Nagpo. At age fifteen under the Chinese Bodhitree with the Chinese teacher Hatibhala, for 3 years he studied all five branches of learning—grammar, astrology, literature, logic, and Dharma—and became undisputedly accomplished.

Deciding to journey to Serling west of the Chinese Bodhitree, he rode a large and powerful black female camel. While gazing into the horizon along the way in this barbarous region, the very compassionate Great Being Avalokitesvara appeared with his smiling countenance in the sky, and exhorted Srisimha with assuring gestures saying:

"Oh you fortunate son of a good family! If you really desire the goal, travel to the Chinese town Sosoling. So go there, son of a good family."

Quite satisfied, Srisimha thought to himself:

"Since I am still quite young, I can easily make a thorough study of the Mantrayana goal. So for seven years I will familiarize myself with the various outer and inner aspects of the Mantrayana."

So he journeyed to Riwotsenga in eastern China and studied various Tantras, commentaries, oral instructions, and ritual practices on the outer and inner aspects of Mantrayana under the low caste teacher Bilekiti for seven years.

Then he sat for 72 years in a meaningless void. After that he became a monk named Yatha and observed the vows for 30 years in China. Once in the morning, while bathing peacefully and quietly in a pond east of Riwotsenga, Srisimha suddenly became agitated and lost consciousness. When Srisimha came to his senses, he was exhorted by the Great Compassionate One himself radiating from a halo of light in the sky.

Srisimha thought to himself:

"From now on I will travel in China, but since there are so many hindrances along the way, I must attain some magic power before setting out."

So Srisimha delayed his journey for 10 more years through diversions and procrastination. After that he made some progress in his meditation for 3 years. In particular he achieved the Rigzin ability to control life span. After this he spent 19 years in a place where Rigzin meet.

After these 19 years he made use of his magical powers and traveled to Sosaling carried along by the wind without any steps on the ground. Meeting with Manjushrimitra, he prostrated, circumambulated, offered a mandala, and imitated the Guru. Srisimha said:

"Kindly agree to this. Accept me as a disciple."

Then for 25 years he requested instructions and meditated.

When 830 years had elapsed since the Buddha's Parinirvana, at the tip of the Stupa in the middle of the cemetery, Manjushrimitra made his body disappear. Lights and sounds arose in the sky, and the earth rumbled. As Manjushrimitra demonstrated the method of passing beyond misery, Srisimha fainted and fell to the ground. When he regained consciousness and looked up, he saw that Noble Being sitting in a circle of radiant energy. He wept bitterly:

"Oh, alas! If the teacher—the Vajra light—goes out, who will remove the darkness of the world?"

Manjushrimitra stretched out his right hand and placed a jeweled basket with his last testament entitled Six Meditation Experiences into the palm of Srisimha's hand. Srisimha opened the basket and saw letters written with ink made from one hundred one jewels on paper made of five different jewels.

The moment it touched his hand, Srisimha became filled with direct understanding like an overflowing flask. Unobstructed by excessive verbiage, he made no mistake about the subject matter.

After Manjushrimitra had passed away, Srisimha took the condensed essence of the Secret Mantra teachings out from under Budhgaya. Then he set out for and arrived in the place where Buddhahood arises—the Chinese Bodhitree. In the living room above the temple's shrine, he assembled the actual letters which gave rise to the teaching.

He divided the Dzogchen Thigle Instructions into four cycles: outer, inner, secret and unsurpassably secret cycles. He placed the first three cycles belonging to the extensive subject matter inside a copper box and hid it within the fourth pillar holding up the shrine's eaves. He concealed these teachings for the benefit of later generations. After sealing the books with the marks of the Dakinis and a Dharma Master, he made them disappear until the appropriate time.

The especially profound essentials of the completely unsurpassable Dzogchen cycle he constantly carried on his person, just as the heart and the body are never separated. The Guru Srisimha preserved this mystical experience and his bodily practices somewhere in a sky realm. Then his mother came to him in a dream. A beautifully adorned woman said:

"Hey, I am your mother. If you hide the condensed essence of the very secret Innermost Essential Teachings in the middle of the shrine room of the Tashitriggo Temple, you will realize Buddhahood yourself. Later generations will benefit from the teachings."

Exhorted by the Dakini Nampar Rolpaigyen, Srisimha, 3 days later, hid this 4th cycle in a crevice of the pillar in the shrine room of the Chinese Temple Tashitriggo. He sealed it in succession with the marks of the Dakinis and a Dharma Master and made it disappear until the appropriate time. Furthermore he entrusted it to the female Mantra Guardian Eka-jati and offered the prayer that it be found by a fortunate son of his heart. Then he made it disappear.

After learning innumerable charms for unfortunate circumstances including the great charm-producing seal, the magically transforming syllables, and the syllables for intellectual inquiry and robbery, he fastened them together and concealed them in the Trawatawa Shrine at the side of the Chinese mountain Riwotsenga. Then he made them disappear.

Srisimha settled in the Chinese cemetery Siljed which was surrounded by numerous trees of paradise. The paths within these were lined with oleander flower trees. Between these there were groves of bamboo and sugarcane. In the midst of these was an innumerable mass of hearts from fresh and decayed corpses. Dakinis made many weird sounds and beings flitted around eating flesh, drinking blood, and gnawing on piles of bones. There were different types of human-like forms and different types of human-like colors, as well as various resounding noises like trumpets blowing, and so on.

At the top of a multi-storied house of skulls there was a blazing fire with smoke rising. Fog hung about the middle section and Naga girls bathed at the base. Inside, in his world of knowledge, Srisimha sat in lotus position together with

continued on next page

BOOK REVIEWS

PASSIONATE ENLIGHTENMENT: Women in Tantric Buddhism

by Miranda Shaw

Princeton University Press, 1994

Winner of the American Historical Association's 1994 James Henry Breasted Prize and 1994 Tricycle Prize for Buddhist Scholarship

Seeing a delightful woman

An enlightenment spontaneously appearing in embodied form

A Buddha gazes with passion and playfulness and

Desire for pleasure and bliss arises.

Sahajayoginichinta



I'd advise all dharma practitioners who are reading this article to immediately drop everything and go to your local bookstore to order a copy of Miranda Shaw's brilliant, instructive, erudite, in the most delicate fashion, *Passionate Enlightenment: Women in Tantric Buddhism*. If you are not a practitioner the injunction is the same with the added reservation that some of the terminology, references and practices involved in this highly original elucidation of the theme may be somewhat foreign.

This is a book which, in the mind of the reviewer, culminates and opens up once again, but at a higher octave, the preoccupations of the last twenty years (in America at least) with the 'redemption' of the female on social, political, sexual and here at last, spiritual and poetic (sic.) levels. Miranda Shaw's poetic rendition and direct translations from the original texts are flawless in their precision, musicality, dexterity and linguistic clarity.

One can only image her arduous research, in forgotten Himalayan monasteries, and refugees, her long conversations with her mentors and with the living exponents of the Tantric tradition, as it survives in the Himalayan area. One assumes her brilliance in both Sanskrit and Tibetan, for without a thorough knowledge of the grammatical constructions and Tantric vocabularies involved in these beautiful translations, which transmit both the linguistic form and content of the medieval texts, it would not have been possible.

Ms. Shaw proves that a scholar can be a poet and practitioner (Miranda Shaw is an Assistant Professor of Religion at the University of Richmond, Virginia, USA) and that the walls of the Academy are translucent for one who has understood the essence of this material. In her book, we are given a wide view of the Pala era in North Western India, 8th-12th century AD, and a microscopic inspection of certain original figures, such as the yogini and guru Sahajayoginichinta, who determined the cultural and spiritual level of Oddiyana, hub of the Tantric whorl at the time.

There are practical instructions as well. Here, the Tantric practitioner will realize that literal descriptions do not replace the living lineage and the blessing of an oral transmission. Such practices are not likely to take root without the latter, but it is very helpful to know about them and to seek the lineage blessing which would activate their complete potentiality.

Miranda Shaw shows the female presence behind the scene ("cherchez la femme") at crucial moments of Tantric development. She gives us the poetic statements of many of the actual practitioners, such as the Arrow-Making consort and teacher of Saraha "The Buddha's meaning can be known through symbols and actions, not through words and books." (translation by H. Guenther, Shaw, pp.131), as well as utterances and songs by other female practitioners, and in some cases, their consorts and pupils. From the eleventh century Niguma, "legendary founder of the Shangs-pa lineage",

"In the state of cosmic equilibrium

There is nothing to abandon or practice

No meditation or post meditation period"

and from "Tree-Leaf Woman", this Dakini song or symbol (Dakini-Nimitta)

"sung at a feast held by the Dakinis at the Attahasa Cremation Ground",

"Who speaks the sound of an echo

Who paints the image in a mirror

Where are the spectacles in a dream,

Nowhere at all,

That's the nature of the mind."

As a woman of the late 20th century, Ms. Shaw has made an invaluable contribution to studies of the female and to cross cultural transformation which are now a rule of thumb in every area of the globe. She has done this through skillful means and not through aggression, which would fail on its journey toward re-education and stimulation. This book is written carefully, with exquisite sentence structure and unique and beautifully fashioned vocabulary of inner, outer and secret experience.

Contrasting secular and sacred traditions of 'pleasure', androcentric and her own highly original and liberating view, Ms. Shaw brings the Pala dynasty to life and its most articulate, extreme personages into our modern world, as a challenge to those who cling to traditional male-oriented scholarship (which in her view vastly underestimates the role of women in Tantric development and the nature of the women practitioners) or to the secular interpretation of, in fact, sacred and highly useful information.

This book teaches by refinement, research and the enlightenment of its exponents. Although the theme is gender oriented it is not limited to gender orientation, but uses the twinning vales of these potentials to instruct the reader and to help the Tantric practitioners of the 20th century to ingest ever more deeply the recipe of methods which has arrived to our plates. It will, also, of course, open the portal of this vast tradition to those who are not practitioners of these methods and allow scholars to review and renew traditional scholarship in the field.

"Human pleasure, with its identifiable characteristics

Is the very thing that

When its characteristics are removed,

Turns into spiritual ecstasy.

continued on next page

Masters

continued from previous page

Vishnu's naked daughter on a throne supported by elephants. At that time, Gods, demi-gods, and others served and bowed before him with parasols, standards, ensigns, silk tassels, and so on.

At that time there were 1009 towns, and in the western Indian town Langpoytsal, the householder Deden Korlo and his wife Dagnid Selma gave birth to a son, Vimalamitra.

And in the eastern Indian town Kamalashila, the low caste man Shantilappa and his wife Gewai Semma gave birth to a son, Jnanasutra.

Later they lived together amidst 500 Buddhist scholars in Budhgaya in India. From among them, these two were the most intelligent and properly used their minds. In a previous lifetime they had taken birth as children of the Brahmin Srata. Because of karmic connections in that previous life, the two now lived in great harmony.

Once, in the heat of the day, walking within hearing distance of Budhgaya through Dambuitsal adorned with sweet-smelling flowers, they grew tired. Proceeding on the beaten path, they heard a voice in the sky. Simultaneously looking upward, they saw Glorious Vajrasattva sitting there like a radiant rainbow. He exhorted them:

"Hey you two sons of noble birth! Even though you've had the bodies of pandits for your last 500 births and have practiced the noble teachings, still you have not realized the goal of the Secret Mantras. If you desire to achieve the goal of Buddhahood and not have the conditioned aggregates continue to arise in this life, go to the Chinese Bodhitree shrine.

Greatly enthused by this exhortation, Vimalamitra immediately returned to his house in town, picked up his alms bowl, and set off. Arriving at the Chinese Bodhitree shrine, he met with the learned Srisimha. The Holy Master was extremely delighted and for 20 years gave him the Oral Instructions and the teachings of the outer, inner, and secret Tantras. He did not give him the actual texts. Then with a satisfied heart, Vimala returned to India.

Meeting with the learned Jnanasutra on the outskirts of the Indian town Gajedgitsal, Vimala related his experiences. Jnanasutra asked:

"Where is this authentic manifestation of the Tathagata living?"

Vimala replied saying where he lived.

Thinking to himself "I have little energy", Jnanasutra set out for the country of China and traveled the nine-month journey in just one day through his magic powers. Walking around the Chinese Bodhitree, Jnanasutra became quite disappointed because the Guru was not living there. He looked all around, but Srisimha was not sitting anywhere. He remembered what Vimalamitra had said, but Srisimha just wasn't there.

A very tall black woman, looking directly at Srisimha's former residence, was carrying a load of water on her back. She was blessed with snow-white teeth and wore a turquoise which did not cover her eyebrows. The wrinkles in the middle of her forehead carved out a crossed Vajra. She had a beautiful complexion and held a parrot in her hand. This Dakini Gonsem Jampa

exhorted him:

"Oh you fortunate one! If you should desire the supreme ultimate teaching, it will arise within you in Tashitriga."

So Jnanasutra journeyed to this greatest of towns in the middle of China. Tashitriga had 2005 gates in each of the east, south, west, and north directions. One shrine amidst 10,000 was multi-storied and had 10,000 monks of the Buddhist community within it. There were 10,000 horses, elephants, and other animals. Birds and musical instruments were also present.

But Jnanasutra did not meet with the Guru and grew very despondent thinking:

"I lack the good fortune of sufficient merit."

While thinking about his not finding the Guru, on the shrine's northeast roof projection, a lion's body with a peacock's neck, an ugly face, the body decorated with spots, and holding in its hand a staff with three skulls on top of each other, addressed him, saying:

"Hey you lucky one! Right now the Guru is walking through the Danti territory. You are extremely fortunate, because he'll be in the Siljed Cemetery due north of here. The Dakinis are loving and concerned with those who have work to do. You should go there. In all good time you'll receive the Secret Mantra Teachings."

Thus Jnanasutra was encouraged by the Dakini Jodma.

Arriving there, he met Srisimha, offered a mandala of jewels, prostrated, circumambulated, and requested:

"I pray to be accepted."

Srisimha rose from his throne as naked Brahma, emerged from his room of piled-up skulls, and kept silent. Raising 3 fingers of his hand upward, he gazed into the sky. At that time Jnanasutra thought that he was accepted for 3 years. When Srisimha intuited this, he scratched his head 3 times. Then for 3 years, Jnanasutra sat imitating whatever the Guru did like offering a mandala, rubbing his skin, ringing his bell, or positioning his hands. After the 3 years had elapsed, Jnanasutra prostrated before and circumambulated Srisimha, offered him 38 measures of gold dust and requested:

"Guru, please accept me."

But for a period of 9 years, Srisimha did not give the Oral Instructions.

At that time Jnanasutra had an idea. Thinking there must exist some texts providing access to these teachings, he again made his request. Srisimha granted the request by showing him the books under the Bodhitree Shrine. For 11 years he explained the Explanatory Teachings. Then when Jnanasutra had a satisfied heart and seemed quite happy, Srisimha asked:

"Are you really satisfied?"

Jnanasutra replied: "I am really satisfied."

The Guru said: "There's nothing to it."

Jnanasutra had the idea that there must exist some very profound instruction showing the path of these teachings, so he again made a request. The Guru said:

"One must have initiations for these."

So within the Tashitriga Temple, Srisimha completely bestowed the ordinary extensive empowerment. And for a period of 3 years he gave the unsurpassably secret instructions. The Guru said:

"There is a book about these. You will be given it when the time is ripe."

With the teachings deep within his heart, Jnanasutra decided to make a request. He had been thinking of returning to India, but subsequently realized that returning to that country might make the Buddha's teaching meaningless. Experiencing this within himself, he decided to attend to his Guru and made his request:

"I wish to really experience it."

The Guru replied:

"You must fully possess the empowerments to really experience it. This is a step-by-step process."

So in a place devoid of towns, Srisimha completely bestowed the non-extensive empowerment. Then on the peak of the great mountain Kosali, Jnanasutra practiced the separation of samsara and nirvana for a period of one year.

After Srisimha had completely bestowed the very non-extensive empowerment, Jnanasutra experienced an extraordinary realization. And after thoroughly practicing the super non-extensive empowerment for one month, he had control over his own mind.

So for a period of 16 years, Jnanasutra experienced these things and saw the practices performed by his Guru. On one occasion Srisimha performed the exercise of retaining his breath and on another he behaved like a tiger and a buffalo with his naked body anointed with blood and grease. He stuck feathers in the very long hair on his head and carried a sword in his right hand and a blood-filled skull in his left. Drinking the blood, he wandered about the cemetery.

Once he covered his body with a tiger's skin and rode a bull. And he would wear the hat of ordinary people with a skull-drum beating in his hand. He performed various practices while roaming about cemeteries. Sometimes he practiced with the many interdependent relations of earth, water, wind, and fire for the benefit of sentient beings.

Invited one time by the Khotanese King Paljin, Srisimha lived in a silk house for the six-armed lion-headed Karmo goddess. When he entered the three silk parasols on the second story, six powerful sons of the Nodjin demons stamped their feet and ran away.

Seven days after returning from there, a great noise resounded. Jnanasutra looked upward and saw the Holy Man sitting within a circle of radiant energy in the sky. Fainting, Jnanasutra collapsed to the ground. As he recovered from his fainting spell, the circle of radiant energy in the sky became even more brilliant. Noises rumbled from everywhere in the bright sky and resounded with immeasurable strength. On top of the trembling, agitated, rocking earth, Jnanasutra saw immeasurable quantities of gold, silver, flowers, and cymbals. Thinking "These events indicate the passing beyond misery of my Guru", Jnanasutra wept bitterly saying:

"Oh, oh, alas! If the teacher—the flame of the lamp—goes out, who will remove the darkness of the world?"

Srisimha himself passed down his last testament entitled "Seven Nails" into the palm of Jnanasutra's hand saying:

"The books on the Innermost Essentials are in a pillar in Tashitriga's Samle Shrine. Go live in the Bhasing Cemetery." ■

Book Reviews

continued from previous page

Free from conceptual thought,
The very essence is self arising-wisdom."

Sahajayoginichinta

"Saraha heads the transmission lineage of the Chakrasambava Tantra and is identified by Taranatha as the founder of the Anuttara-yoga Tantra"

Shaw, pp. 131

Louise Landes-Levi

THE HOUSE LAMPS HAVE BEEN LIT

BUT...

By Louise Landes-Levi

Published by Supernova, Venice 1997

Louise Landes-Levi's latest collection of poetry has been published in a bilingual edition by Supernova, a prestigious Italian publisher of world avant-garde poetry. Among others, Supernova has published Kathy Acker and Robert Creeley from America, Tom Raworth from Britain and Wole Soyinka from Nigeria. The present volume was translated and edited by Rita Degli Esposti. The title of the present collection is taken from The Royal Songs of Saraha, an eighth century Indian Mahasiddha and the full quote is "The house lamps have been lit but the ignorant continues to live in the dark." The collection opens with a number of epigraphs that point to the areas the poet is about to explore: karma and what is beyond karma, the grief of alienation, and the fragmentary nature of poetry and by extension consciousness where we live in our broken-down world when separate from the knowledge that Saraha indicates is always present and of which we remain in ignorance. Finally, the quote from Rene Daumal whose work the poet has translated and published is a declaration of the poet's search for integrity and reality and a steadfast refusal to compromise her art.

In previous collections such as *Extinctions* and *The Highway Queen*, Louise Landes-Levi has constructed her poems with a use of space much like the Concrete Poets of earlier decades of the century. This conveys the sense of space and silence that surround the words—an aesthetic reminiscent of the poet/composer John Cage, who is equally uncompromising in his search to communicate mystery and chance. Louise Landes-Levi continues this use of the Concrete form in the current collection and at times further fragments the poems by a heavier use of punctuation—the nails and hangers of language—than in previous works of hers. The structures play into the musicality of the words, words that swoop down the page or make pyramids or hieroglyphs of themselves.

The book opens with two love poems and we have the sense that like the Indian mystic Mira Bai, the lover, even when love is unrequited, finds a revelation of Saraha's dimension beyond karma. Throughout the poems references are made to the Kama Sutra—the lost Kama Sutra recorded by Nandin, the servant cow of Siva. In the poet's opinion, the version of the Kama Sutra that remains to us is, "a Brahmanic appropriation of material otherwise conserved in the Sankti and Tantric traditions."

Memories of lovers, chance meetings with elderly suitors in Italian bars, unknown old ladies on the streets of Arcidosso, a fearful attack upon her in the streets of New York, the appearance of a hunter on a mountainside where she meditates, fragments of dreams take us through a poetic landscape that is haunted, angry, grief-stricken, comedic and always ready to embrace the unexpected with an air of love and wonder. The collection ends with a poem called "Long Term" where the poet unleashes her voice in a rhythmic, fast-paced chant that after the hesitancy suggested by the collection's title and the fragmentary nature of the shorter poems ends on a note of dramatic and ecstatic affirmation.

Des Barry

FREE

Your choice of a hand painted decorative box or crewel embroidered tote bag (\$10.95 to \$17.95 value)



With Any Purchase From Eastern Elegance
Specializing In -

- ☸ OM Jewelry & Malas ☸ Prayer Wheels, Bell & Dorjes
- ☸ Original Thangkas - Fine Detailed Mandalas, Life of Buddha, Others
- ☸ Copper & Bronze Deity Statues & Masks
- ☸ Decorative Boxes - Handmade Walnut, Brass, Silver & Papier-Mache
- ☸ Tibetan Wool Rugs - 3' x 3' Truly Beautiful Dragon and Border Designs

We take orders for any size rug. Available in many designs & colors, 60 to 100 knots per square inch.

Created by Newari craftsmen, Tibetan weavers & artists of the Kathmandu Valley

FREE COLOR CATALOG

Eastern Elegance
Dept. R
1934 Johnson Creek Rd.
Barker, NY 14012

Phone (716) 795-3012
Fax (716) 795-9938

e-mail Eastemelegance@hotmail.com

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

by John Bellezza

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

RTA MCHOG DGON PA

In the middles of the northern shoreline of gNam mtsho is another long headland called *Ngang pa do*, where rTa mchog (Superior Horse) dgon pa is situated. The most distinctive and sacred features of this promontory are two pyramidal rock formations which resemble horses' ears and give the site its alternative name of rTa chog. In the reddish formation closest to the base of the headland is a narrow fissure, inside which is a stone staircase leading to the apex of the horse's ear. Unfortunately, recently the staircase has become so damaged as to preclude its use. On the ground a short distance away from the formation, stone walls on its summit are plainly visible. Given the size of the summit they cannot be more than a few square meters in area, but size alone says very little about its ancient utility. Local 'Brog pa affirm that in pre-Buddhist times rTa mchog was an exceptionally sacred place and that the ruins here represent the vestiges of a Bon monastery. Undoubtedly something was located at rTa mchog, but whether or not it was a pre-Buddhist religious monument remains to be proven. Other not necessarily mutually exclusive possibilities include a fortress and astronomical observatory. This is suggested by the limited access to the site and its commanding position. A rTa mchog or Ta mchog dgon pa is also found at the headwaters of the Brahmaputra river in Western Tibet which likewise is said to belong to the ancient Bon period according to local authorities (Bellezza 1993: 41-44).

LUG DO

Still further west around the expansive gNam mtsho is Lug do (Sheep Headland) and more ruins which the native pastoralists casually call Bon po. In front of a series of caves, on a rocky terrace overlooking the lake, are traces of foundation walls of formidable dimensions and the remains of other kinds of structures. The diversity of structural forms at Lug do make it most appealing in reference to its archaeological value, because a seemingly rich heritage is enshrined here. It was not possible to estimate the size of the structures that once stood at Lug do because most of the foundations are obscured by ground cover. In some places, however, the walls are exposed slightly above the level of the earth, thus permitting a rough assessment. These walls are about one meter thick and very skillfully built. Near these foundation walls are three hemispherical mounds two meters, three meters and five meters respectively in diameter. These tumuli may be composed of rubble or waste product middens but it is more probable that they are

barrows (*bang so*).¹⁵

Also at Lug do are several stone circles. The smallest of these may be old tent rings (*nang ra*), long since disused. Disused *nang ra* of varying ages dot the Byang thang and are often constructed with a circular ground plan. Below the largest cave on the site is a stone ring seven meters in diameter with a crescent-shaped arrangement of stones in the center which might have a funerary function, based on its similarity to Eurasian graves of the nomadic cultures. The largest of the circles is 17 meters in diameter, built of stones embedded in the ground and lying on the surface circumscribing the periphery. In the center of this ring is a circular nucleus of stones nearly three meters in diameter. This structure, like the other ones at Lug do, is apparently of great antiquity, attested to by the manner in which it has been reabsorbed into the rocky ground. It requires centuries generally for a structure to attain this degree of integration in the poorly developed soil horizons of the Byang thang. This largest stone ring especially resembles the Mongolian and Altaic *kurgans*.¹⁶ In the 1940s Professor Tucci documented round structures which he opined were tombs belonging to a megalithic culture.¹⁷ Modern Chinese archaeologists working in Tibet have verified that certain circular arrays of stones are funerary in nature. In one recent classification of archaeological sites on the Plateau, round graves are recorded as on the five major types of monuments found.¹⁸ Not all stone circles on the Byang thang are necessarily tombs, according to the local 'Brog pa informants. One legend attributes them to being the places where giant tents belonging to potentates were erected in ancient times, and it calls them *tshor shul*. The largest stone ring at Lug do has a particular role in the sacred geography of the Divine Dyad and is called *Thang tha'i 'bon zhon* (the Measuring Tray of gNyan chen thang lha) by pilgrims. This name refers to a vessel the size of which fulfills the appetite of the holy mountain Thang lha. Although it is plausible that the stone rings at Lug do are tombs, they may also have cosmological and astronomical significance of ritual importance.

MKHA' GRO'I BRO RA

At bKra shis do, one of the most important of the sacred sites at gNam mtsho, is an unusual cave called mKha' 'gro'i bro ra (the Dancing Concourse of the dakinis). In the sacred geographic conceptions of this important headland, it is believed that dakinis descend from the sky to dance around a pyramidal cairn in the middle of the cave floor. This cairn is called *rdö mchöd* locally, corresponding to what is commonly referred to in Tibet as *lha tho*.

mKha' 'gro'i bro ra is oval shaped, about 14 meters long and eight meters wide. Its semi-circular-shaped entrance faces north on to the lake. The walls of the cave are for the most part sheer expanses of rock, four meters to seven meters tall. The roof of the cave is open to the sky; however, the north wall tapers inward towards the top, creating a partially-enclosed space below. The cave is situated at the western end of one of the two sections of the bKra shis do headland called *bKra shis do chen*. It receives sunlight from its open roof, not from its entrance. After several earlier visits, during the summer solstice in 1995, an occasion that can only be described as serendipitous, the possible ancient utility of mKha' 'gro'i bro ra became known.

On the summer solstice at midday and to a lesser degree on days bordering it, the sun pours in from the open ceiling and illuminates the entire *rdö mchöd* cairn. This is the only time of the year that the *rdö mchöd* is fully bathed in sunrays. The shadows that fall on the *rdö mchöd* at other times lengthen and change shape throughout the year. This is because the aspect of mKha' 'gro'i bro ra and its steep walls prevent complete illumination of the *rdö mchöd*, except when the sun is at its maximum elevation in the sky. The most reliable informants explained that the cairn in the mKha' 'gro'i bro ra was originally erected in ancient times. Due to these observations it is very plausible that in deep antiquity mKha' 'gro'i bro ra was used in ritual astronomico-astrological calculations, with the *rdö mchöd* acting as a register of solar cycles. Further archaeo-astronomical investigations are required to confirm the calendrical functions of mKha' 'gro'i bro ra and to explicate the exact mechanisms involved in its usage. Other calendrical parameters connected to sidereal, lunar and solar cycles may be implicated. Unfortunately, none of the lamas nor *sngags pa* who frequent bKra shis do could verify the possible archaeo-astronomical value of the site.

In the contemporary period virtually every 'Brog pa encampment uses natural landmarks such as rock faces, gorges, clefts, large boulders and mountain tops to keep track of time. Sidereal, lunar and solar cycles are marked in this way and are used to order patterns of migration and other periodic events in the pastoral economy.¹⁹ There is every reason to believe that such a tradition has its antecedents in the distant past. According to Bon history, at the time of King gNya' khri btsan po there were 12 Bon sages (*Bon shes pa can bcu gnyis*). One of these, named sKor rtsis mkhan, is attributed with describing the four seasons on the basis of the movements of the sun, stars and moon (Dunkar Rinpoche: 57). It is also

worth noting that in the neighboring China an unbroken astronomical tradition goes back to at least 1450 B.C. according to oracle records (Sivan: 56), and that the first system of calculating the ephemerides was developed in 104 B.C. (Sivin: 57). These scientific innovations in China might have influenced the development of astronomy in Tibet, although how this could have been effected is unknown.

BRA GU RTA RA

Bra gu rta ra (the Horse Corral of Bra gu ngom ngan) is associated with the legendary progenitor of the *A po hor* pastoralists of gNam mtsho, who is probably the most important *mtshun lha* (ancestral deity) in the gNam ru province of the Byang thang. His corral, located between sNying do and Ngang pa do according to the oral history of the region, is ascribed to the prehistoric period. It is a huge stone wall enclosure much more massive than any that have been built in the contemporary period. 'Brog pa say that they lack the skill and manpower to build something this large, which adds to its mystique. The walls of Bra gu rta ra are 2 to 2.5 meters tall and over one meter in thickness. It is rectangular in shape, approximately 55 meters long from east to west and 30 meters wide from north to south and covers the top of a ridge that bisects the valley of Ma ra ri des. It suffered severe damage during the Cultural Revolution but was rehabilitated during the Communist collectivization period and used as a holding pen for sheep and goats. Bra gu rta ra has now reverted to a ritual function as a shrine to the 'brog pa genealogical gods. Against the southern wall in the middle of the enclosure are ruins of an unknown function. Also, against the southern wall, to the east of the ruins, is a *lha tho* more than two meters tall consisting of heaped up stones with prayer flags strung across them. This is the ritual heart of the site. To the east of the compound is a two-meter-tall boulder called *Thang lha'i rta phur* (gNyan chen thang lha's horse stake), an important shrine where the veneration of horses is conducted. At this juncture the archaeological value of bra gu rta ra is unknown; however, it is a very important sacred cultural site.

DANG RA G.YU MTSHO SITES

PHYUG 'TSHO GROG PO

Less than eight kilometers from the agricultural village of Phyug 'tsho is a spectacular site of three major arrays of ruins. The largest group of ruins is known as *Phyug 'tsho grog po rdzong*. At its zenith it must have been as large, or larger, than Lha rtse chos lde rdzong of the old fort at *Phun tshogs gling* in gTsang province. It covers the summit and the sides

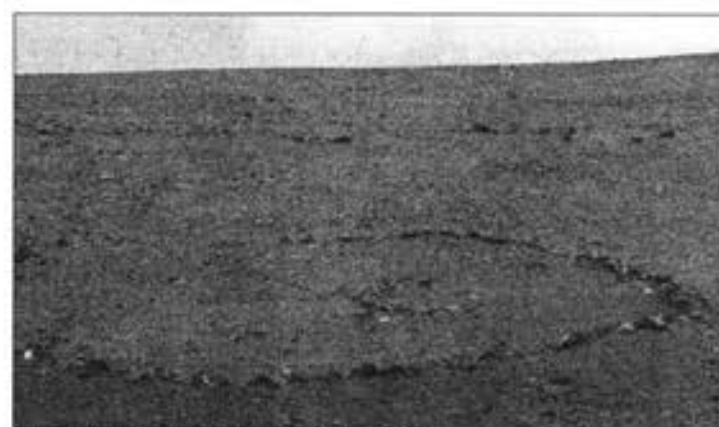
of a rock outcropping which exceeds 180 meters in length. There are no fewer than three dozen dilapidated structures many of which were multi-roomed and probably of more than one story in height. These structures are primarily built in stone with a small percentage of them constructed of mud bricks. Most of the walls are built in a square fashion but some also exhibit rounded corners, a fairly unusual building technique in Tibet. (cf. Tucci 1973: 75, 76).

Along the southern base of the outcropping is an edifice of four or five rooms with two of the rooms still intact, complete with roofs. These remarkably well-preserved rooms afford a fascinating window into ancient construction techniques and ecology of space. Passing by a large boulder, which acts as a gateway, one of the ruined rooms is entered.

Immediately adjacent to it are the two rooms with roofs. Each of them is small—about seven square meters in size. One of these rooms has two small windows called *khra ma* by the native pastoralists. The other room is windowless. The interior and exterior walls are made of unplastered, raw stone blocks. In the room with the windows there is a one-meter-tall fireplace made of adobe with a sophisticated ventilation system built against the outer wall. The 'brog pa predictably call it a *thab kha*. The rooms each have a smoke hole in the ceiling called a *skar khung*. The most unique architectural feature of the rooms is the all-stone roof. The slabs of stone composing the roof are supported by stone braces resting on the wall plate, two or three per wall. These stone braces act as the structural template for the radial arrangement of roof slabs that lie on top of them. In the room with the windows two of these stone braces span the entire length of the ceiling and thus function as rafters. A parallel to this style of construction is found in the villages of Gangs lung and 'Om bu further to the north, where the roofs of the homes are also built of stone slabs, the difference being that they rest on wooden beams rather than stone ones. According to the resident 'Brog pa these rooms functioned as *gzim khang* (sleeping quarters) for the old fort.

Despite enquiring from many within the most knowledgeable people in the region, nothing concrete could be learned about *Phyug 'tsho grog po*. The most informed opinions assert that the fort was founded in Zhang Zhung times but that it remained viable until the time of the Fifth Dalai Lama when it was destroyed by his governor, the Mongolian dGa' Idan tshé dbang, during his military campaign in Nag tshang.²⁰ The historical validity of this claim could not be verified, but the tall precariously perched walls of the ruined edifices do indicate that at least certain portions are not more than a few centuries old, because more ancient structures would have been leveled by now. If it was older, more disintegration of the structures should have occurred, especially the mud brick variety. Also at *Phyug 'tsho grog po* is a large complex of dark colored stone chortens called either *mchöd rten smug rang* brown stupas) or *Brum bu nag dpal*, which

continued on next page



Kurgan-like stone ring at Lug do. (gNam, mtsho)

JOHN BELLEZZA

fell into a state of disrepair an untold number of centuries ago. Among the most curious sets of ruins at Phug 'tsho grog po are the ones situated on a mount above the fort commonly called *Zhang Zhung dgon pa* by the local 'brog pa. The ruins extend for about 2,000 square meters in a dense agglomeration, an index of their erstwhile size and importance. The buildings were oriented to the compass points and were built primarily of stones. When they were built and who built them are unknown.

15 *Bang so* are funerary mounds found throughout Tibet chronologically spanning the Bronze Age to the Imperial period, and have been the subject of research and speculation since the early part of the 20th century. They are treated in a wide range of Tibetological works. Good sources of data on the bang so include: Haahr 1969.; Chayet 1994; Hu Xu Tru 1993.

16 *Kurgans* are burial structures found in Mongolia, the Altai region of Siberia and Turkestan and consist of earth and stone heaped over ancient graves of the cist type. It was George Roerich who first appreciated in the 1920s the parallels which exist between the kurgans and barrows on the Byang thang. *Kurgan* is a generic term referring to burial structures over a wide range of Central and North Asia and inclusive of many cultures. This diversity is also borne out chronologically, with *kurgans* striding a time span from the Afanasyevskaya culture dated to the end of the third millennium B.C. to Hunic times in the early centuries of the Christian Era. For a description of kurgans see, for example, Paulinskaya: 30-32; Lubo-Lesnichenko: 47,48; Vainshtein: 57; Gryaznov 1969: 46, 52, 89-91, 93, 102; Roerich: 19, 20.

17 Professor Tucci discovered what he thought were either graves or ritual sites, consisting of circular areas enclosed by boulders piled on top of one another with one or more monoliths in the center. These included monuments at *Seng ge rdzong* and *Dop tra rdong* (Tucci 1980: 225, 244, 245). Tucci distinguished between the circular stone sites with or without a central stele. An example of the latter is found near Rwa sgreng (Tucci 1973: 51, 56).

18 A summary of the five kinds of archaeological finds in Tibet would include rock art, megaliths, round graves, slabstone graves and Xin duo spur ruins, according to Hu Xu Tru 1993: 224-226.

19 This corroborated by sLob dpon btsan 'dzin mam dag, who spent over four years at *Byu ru mtsho* near gNam mtsho between 1945 and 1950 with his master, sGangs ru tshul khrims rgyal mtshan. During his many interactions with the 'Brog pa he observed the system of using natural features to tell time.

20 The invasion, subjugation and consolidation of *Nag tshang* during the reign of the 5th Dalai Lama is mentioned in a history of the province (cf. La stod 'jam dpal 1989 [?]: pp. 259). ■

AUGUST MOON PILGRIMAGE REFLECTIONS

by Des Barry



The author in Tso Pema with Tibetan nun

P. BARRY

This October, Norbu Rinpoche and probably some members of the Dzogchen Community will undertake the classic Buddhist pilgrimage to the sacred places associated with Buddha Sakyamuni's life: Lumbini, where the Buddha was born; Kushinagar, where he died; Varanasi where he first taught; Bodhgaya, where he awoke to his Enlightened Nature; The Vulture Peak Mountain near Rajgir, where he first taught Mahayana; and Nalanda, the University where Buddhist philosophy flowered. Four years ago, my wife Paula and I undertook the same pilgrimage on Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche's suggestion. As

a Westerner who has adopted an Eastern religion, my own pilgrimage to the major sites of significant action in the Buddha's life was certainly inspirational and the journey also raised and answered a number of questions about how a Westerner follows a spiritual path that originated historically in the East with Buddha Sakyamuni's enlightenment. I can't pretend to answer the questions raised for anyone other than myself but the description of the circumstances that Paula and I encountered on our pilgrimage might provide a kind of travel guide that won't be found in a bookstore for those making their own way.

We left Kathmandu bus station on our way to Bhairava, also called Siddharthanagar, a main border station between India and Nepal on our way to the birthplace of the Buddha. The journey is spectacular and uncomfortable. In the distance the fishtail peak of Macchupuchare rises snow-capped above the green hills. The journey to the Terai, the Nepalese lowland takes ten hours on a crowded bus that broke down twice as it wound through the steep, scrub-covered Nepalese foothills with great drops down into the Trishuli gorge below, squeezing by the Tatar trucks that belch poisonous exhaust into the valley air. We get off the bus on a crossroads close to the Hotel Yeti in Bhairava. The hotel is clean but every bus that passes through or originates in this town revs its engines outside the hotel to attract passengers from about five in the morning to midnight.

After breakfast, we walk fifty yards down the main road and search out a jeep to drive us to Lumbini. Two young boys run the jeep, a battered green affair with a plastic tarp over the top. The road goes out of town through rice paddies. This early in the morning fog lies in a blanket across the flat land. Out of the fog appear tired horned heads that swing in front of bony humps, yoked bullocks drag a cart piled high with straw, firewood and grain sacks. It takes about an hour or so to reach Lumbini. Monasteries representative of the Buddhist countries of Asia rise above the flat fields. We haul our backpacks to the 'restaurant,' a thatched roof beneath which the Nepalese owner cooks snacks. The restaurant owner also is in charge of the dharamsala, a two-story building with rooms for rent if you are lucky enough to find one vacant. A major Kagyudpa teaching has just ended and so many pilgrims have left. He promises us a room that evening and lets us leave our bags with him for safekeeping. We also give him an advance order for an evening meal.

We walk through the remains of temples and Stupas and monastic cells that were all destroyed during the Muslim invasions of this area. A small building houses ancient statues of Mayadevi, who clutched the branch of a pipal tree as she gave birth to the Buddha. This symbol is as old as humankind. It resounds through unconscious channels Western or Eastern. Paula, being a midwife, is particularly moved by this place of primal birth. A place that celebrates the mother as well as the child. The temple of Mayadevi is swathed in tarpaulins because the Archaeological Commission of Nepal is restoring it. One of the archaeologists ushers us inside to see their work. I have mixed feelings about what they are doing. They are using new brick, it seems, to rebuild parts of the structure and I wonder if it wouldn't be better to leave things as they are. We come out into the sunlight again.

Ahead of us is a huge pipal tree that grows next to a bathing pool on the site of which Mayadevi gave birth to the Buddha. The tree is full of raucous green parrots, black crows, white-winged finches. In the nooks of the roots, pilgrims have left images of Mayadevi and the Buddha. This early in the morning there are few other pilgrims so it is possible to sit and practice completely undisturbed. Across the empty gardens is a gazebo to which we make our way and where we can sing the Song of the Vajra. We pass the day in practice, conscious that we are on the site where Buddha Shakyamuni began a journey that affected the lives of millions throughout the following three thousand years.

At sunset, while eating at the restaurant, a Nepalese Theravadin monk harangues us, trying to convert us to his style of Buddhism and disparaging Tibetan masters. There is, even here at this sacred site, no escape from sectarianism. Late in the evening—the moon is bright, one night away from full—we walk through the excavated ruins where a ground mist swirls. The moon and the pipal tree reflect in the waters of Mayadevi's bathing pool. Ten white geese sit on the pool's terrace. As we leave the archaeological site, the policeman guarding it strikes up a conversation with us. He tells us how, one month previously, four Indian dacoits came

there to steal the statues and treasures from the small building close to the site. "They tried to kill the guard," he smiled, "but they failed. We are much better at killing than they are. We're trained how to do it."

We stayed for another day of practice and for the night of the Full Moon. Hundreds of Tibetans arrive for a teaching by Choje Trichen Rinpoche, a Sakyapa master. That evening, an old Tibetan woman, her lined faced framed by braids, eyes behind broad thick glasses, sets out hundreds of butter lamps on the stepped foundations of the Mayadevi temple. The full moon is reflected in the

bathing pool. The ten geese enter the water and little ripples across the pond. From the roof of the monastery, horns and shawms fill the night air as we lay down to sleep.

The following morning we take the bus into Bharava. As we get off, we are surrounded by rickshaw wallahs like mechanical vultures riding in front of us, bells ringing, calling out. We hustle past them and get to the stop where the bus arrives to take us to the border crossing. No one stops us at customs and our passports are duly stamped by a gray-bearded Sikh immigration official after he has checked our names against his ledger of undesirables. Sunauli is a wide swath of yellow-brown dust flanked by stores selling motor oil and engine parts. Buses wait and rev their engines threatening to leave at any second, which they don't. We choose a bus for Gorakhpur. After a long journey through wheat fields and mustard fields, we reach a village and the driver announces that he is going no further. In the small riot that ensues, I grab back some of our money and we set off for the main road to see how we can get to Gorakhpur. I imagine we are about sixty miles away. Paula is upset and a small crowd gathers. "Why is she weeping, sir?" someone asks. I explain the situation. "No problem, sir. Another bus will come." While an increasing number of passers-by argue as to the best location to find another bus, a jeep pulls up and the driver yells, "Gorakhpur, Gorakhpur." Ah beautiful unpredictable India. The jeep is soon crowded with half the population of the previous bus and someone has saved Paula a prime seat close to the tailgate. I sit on the tailgate. We arrived in Gorakhpur just in time for the evening rush hour and the driver lets us all out in a bazaar of chai shops, fruit stands, and stalls with bright orange pakoras piled next to mounds of triangular samosas. We take a rickshaw to the railway station to make reservations for a train to Varanasi, two days hence—essential for the pilgrim to do when traveling in India—and then we take a rickshaw to the Hotel Ganges situated in a quieter part of town between two dueling muezins.

Our next pilgrimage place is Kushinagar where the Buddha passed into parinirvana. In the morning, the hotel owner gets us a rickshaw and tells the rider to take us to the bus station. The bus journey takes a couple of hours. Kushinagar is very different from Lumbini. Everything seems more organized. The gardens and archaeological sites are well tended. In the Parinirvana temple, there is a huge fifth century statue of the Dying Buddha. It is such a contrast to Christian symbology. The Buddha passed away in peace, Christ in terrible agony. Perhaps a reflection of the many ways we can meet our end but with transcendent knowledge always the victor over death.

We walk out to the cremation Stupa about 1.5 km. away and it is surrounded by a beautiful garden. There is a strong "sense of Presence." Three Indian gardeners watch us as we walk around the Stupa. We sit under a tree and settle down to do some practice. It begins to rain. Immediately, we are joined by three Indian gardeners who want to use the same tree among very many to "shelter from the rain." Westerners immediately attract attention in India. Sometimes one feels as if in a zoo. Doubtless, Indian people experienced the same sensation in Britain and America when they were fewer in number and probably still do in areas away from major cities. At a pilgrimage site one hopes to be left alone and one's practice respected but as one's otherness as a Westerner makes one stand out one is not accepted simply as another ordinary pilgrim.

Because we are to leave for Varanasi on the following day, we decide to go back to Gorakhpur for the night. This is a little disappointing after our experience at Lumbini where we stayed long enough to let our minds relax more deeply into meditation and appreciation of where we were. In Gorakhpur, the hotel owner tells us we don't need to check out until we are ready to catch our ten p.m. train.

We have a first class compartment to ourselves for the journey to the city known as Kashi, the City of Light, Varanasi, Benares. With the clack and rattle of steel wheels over rail and the carriage laterally rocking, the train lurches out of Gorakhpur station and we sleep fitfully until we arrive at our destination at four thirty in the morning. It is still dark. We take a motor rickshaw to the Hotel Temple. The driver has a companion. Both men are wrapped in shawls and hunch up front over the steering bar. We crash and bang through deserted back streets, these men taking us who knows where. Finally we arrive on the banks of the Ganges and the Hotel Temple. Considering it is now five thirty in the morning, the owner, a pandit, cheerfully tells us that someone has checked out fifteen

continued on page 16



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

THE STUPA PROJECT OF TSEGYALGAR

Ontul Rinpoche's Dedication for the New Stupa of Tsegvalgar

The following was written on September 3rd, 1997 in Tsegvalgar by Drikung Pontrul (Ontul Rinpoche) as a dedication for the long life stupa of Tsegvalgar being constructed for the long life of Choegyal Namkhai Norbu.

Even if there are many kinds of stupas, they can all be summarized in the 'Eight Stupas of the Mind of the Sugata'. They belong to the stupas which were built in different places by lay patrons to commemorate special actions of the Buddha when he was alive. The glorious Nagarjuna, in fact, praised and explained the nature of these famous Eight Stupas, one of which, for example, being built in Vaishali when the Buddha empowered his long life, is known as the Stupa of Complete Victory.

Today, especially to make the life span of Choegyal Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche lasting and stable so he can complete his sacred activities, and also in a more general way, to pacify all unfavorable conditions and to increase favorable conditions and general well-being, the Dzogchen Community of Tsegvalgar is planning to build a stupa on the Tsegvalgar land. Rejoicing with respect, I am sure that all those who will have a positive connection to this special 'support' for accumulating merits will definitely accumulate merits and have good results.

This is dedicated with confidence in the reality of the infallible interdependence of cause and effect.

Written on September 3, 1997 in Tsegvalgar by Drikung Pontrul.
Translated from the Tibetan by Jim Valby and Adriano Clemente



M. Logroschino

A Stupa Dedicated to Health and Long Life of Choegyal Namkhai Norbu

by Jim Smith

The construction of the stupa for the health and long life of Choegyal Namkhai Norbu is open to participation from all Gars and practitioners of Dzogchen. The location is in Western Massachusetts, but the purpose of the stupa goes beyond location and borders.

We are building the stupa solely on the strength and support of the students and spiritual friends of Choegyal Namkhai Norbu. The stupa will stand on the site specifically selected by Rinpoche himself on the land of Tsegvalgar, and it is on that very same land that future retreat cabins will be built. The presence of the structure and its intention will greatly support and benefit the practice of the retreatants now and also through future generations.

This land is also the same place where Choegyal Namkhai Norbu received the transmission of the Vajra Dance, so it is the same place from which this sacred Dance originated.

The necessary permissions from the local government have been received. We hope to set the foundation for the stupa before the winter closes off the land.

We are asking for help in two areas. Before we can begin construction we need financial support. We need to purchase materials. Of course money is of concern but we shall make any effort to work with what will be contributed by students and friends. We shall continue to work at the rhythm dictated by the moneys offered for the purchase of materials.

Secondly we hope for the physical participation of those interested—we need many hands to complete this vision. We shall organize times for collective work on the construction of the stupa.

The size of the stupa will be 12 feet square diameter and 21 feet high. It will stand on this land for all the generations to come. Imagine it being a presence on this land for a thousand years or even many more.

We have the good fortune to have a living Master like Rinpoche, whose health and long life is imperative in the continuation of this invaluable lineage of the Dzogchen teachings and the completion of his precious Santi Maha Sangha program. It is for Rinpoche's health and long life that we are constructing this stupa—it symbolizes in some small way his students' participation in his vision.

We have the land and skilled professional members of the Community who can see this project through to completion. There have been a number of Lamas who have visited the Gar recently and are wholeheartedly supporting the project.

In order to construct the stupa we need the heartfelt support, financially and otherwise, from all the members of the Dzogchen Community, supporters and spiritual friends.

Santi Maha Sangha Update

During last September, 1997, in Pokhara, Nepal, Choegyal Namkhai Norbu worked with Adriano Clemente primarily on the new version of the base and third levels of Santi Maha Sangha. The base level book should be ready in the New Year. Interested students are expected to read this book and check the new list of required practices, because there have been more changes. Also the questions have changed, and for the next exam the new questions will be used. The translation of the third level book should follow soon after. Also, the first and the second levels have to be revised and will be done as soon as possible. For the moment, the translation of the tantric practices of the first level are available, which were not included in the previous edition. We are trying to set up a network of communication among responsables in each Gar or nation, so that all doubts about practice or teachings can be resolved and news disseminated in a timely manner.

Passages



Paolo (center) J. Valby
Died: Paolo Pagni died at home in Siena, Italy peacefully on October 4th, 1997. He was 33 years old. Paolo was assisted well by the Community. People from Merigar went to his home in Siena during the last few weeks and sat by his bed, helped his mother, chanted the Vajra song and practiced for him. Paolo was loved by everybody.

He was a Vajra dancer and one of the toughest karmayogins; there's nothing in Merigar that has not benefitted from his hands. This year he finished a very nice, big cupboard for Rinpoche and Rosa's home in Merigar.

Died: Sergei Uspensky of Riga, Latvia died on the 15th of August, 1997. Sergei was a student of Buddhism since 1989 and became interested in Dzogchen in 1990. He met Norbu Rinpoche in Riga, Latvia in 1992, and took Santi Maha Sangha training in Moscow in June, 1996. Sergei was cremated on the 27th of August in Riga.

WEST COAST DZOGCHEN COMMUNITY

by Margaret Bradford and Barbara Claven

August 20, 1997

We sat in a circle on the soft carpet of Jodi's suburban family room in Brentwood, California, trying to understand immeasurable loving-kindness and all of its ramifications. We were sharing personal experiences and insights after reading about this Mahayana antidote to the disturbing emotions from the Santi Maha Sangha texts. Wonderful smells from the kitchen let us know that we would soon be enjoying another of Reid's gourmet meals. Later that night we tested our loving-kindness kindness with a loud, competitive card game called Hearts. Interestingly, those of us who were the least attached to winning and who cooperated as a team won the game.

It was the first practice weekend of the year for the West Coast Dzogchen Community, and similar scenes would occur monthly in homes scattered among the four directions of the Bay Area as we continued practicing our way through the base requirements of the Santi Maha Sangha together. Gathering places included Lynn's rustic home, with its big, homey kitchen, overlooking Sonoma and the North Bay, Paul's apartment on the top floor of a vintage farm house at an old dairy farm in Point Reyes, and Helen's redwood house, built by herself and her teenage sons, overlooking the ocean in Big Sur. All the locations in which we gather add their ambience to our practice.

Intensive in nature, these retreats usually begin on Friday night with a medium Tun. We're up at 7:30 the next morning for the first of three or four Tuns that day, and after dinner we often do the Chöd. Sunday, we usually complete two Tuns and then finish the weekend with a Ganapuja in the afternoon.

Sometimes we need help in keeping ourselves from becoming too intellectual or idealistic about our practice. Last year, some of the kids lent a hand by throwing practitioners in Helen's swimming pool in Big Sur, and wrestling or beating us at a game of Magic at my house in Pleasant Hill. Many people from the Los Angeles community have participated in the weekends, and Melinda and her daughter Maile from Hawaii were here for one of our Vajra Dance retreats.

continued on next page

NORBUNET

Norbunet is an internet mailing list for students of Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche developed to expedite and enhance intercommunity communication. By using Norbunet you can receive the most current Community bulletins, announcements and schedules; as well as have access to creative, topical and often lively discussions of interest to practitioners. Norbunet is administered by Loek Jehee, Amsterdam, The Netherlands (Email: loekjehe@xs4all.nl).

Norbunet is not an open mailing list. The mailing list is meant for students of Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche and those clearly related to his teachings. After your request for a subscription is submitted, a verification by the administrator of the list will take place and you will be asked certain questions to obtain validation as a member of the list.

After approval of your subscription to Norbunet, you can publish messages to the entire subscriber's list (at the moment the number is around 200) by sending them to a specified listing. Norbunet is not an "open" mailing list but is moderated by the administrator to prevent useless or harmful messages from appearing.

To subscribe to Norbunet you need to send an email message to major-domo@xs4all.nl with the "Subject:" - line empty and in the body of the message: subscribe Norbunet(your email address).

There is the possibility of receiving Norbunet in a digest format which means after a certain time period you receive a consolidation of a number of messages that were received within that time period, so more messages are sent less frequently. If you would like to receive Norbunet in this way you must replace the word norbunet in the message box with norbunet-digest.

Norbunet is valuable tool of communication for Community members and can keep you up to date, informed and entertained.

CLASSIFIEDS

Astrology

Bhampa 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/~shanemanj/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

On the Brink of Becoming the Victorious Gar

A Personal View of Namgyalgar

Elise Stutchbury (President: Blue; Namgyalgar Gakyil)

It is Spring. The brilliant yellow wattles are in bloom, and the parrots are searching for tree hollow nests. The laughter of the kookaburra fills the air. Namgyalgar is awakening from winter slumber. A small group of practitioners have gathered for a week's Longde practice retreat. Some have traveled about eight hundred miles or so, from Adelaide and Brisbane to participate. For others the distance is not so great. At the Easter retreat earlier this year, Choegyal Namkhai Norbu taught us this series of teachings in detail, and we are now studying these teachings in greater depth and putting them into practice to remove doubt.

Preparations are well under way for our summer teaching retreat between Xmas and the New Year, when we shall once again bask in our Master's presence, as well as in the strong sun, cooling off in the ever rising and falling ocean waves of the nearby coast. It will be two years since the first joyous retreat at Namgyalgar. Before Rinpoche left with Rosa for his travels in Tibet, and India, he compassionately asked us to look at how we are moving ahead, to examine our behavior. This 'Wake Up Call' was for some, a shock, particularly if one's focus is on material results, rather than on process and practice. It has also provided a great opportunity to cut through obstacles, and to consolidate as a Sangha with the great responsibility to our transmission and our Master of creating a Gar, a place for practice, not only for ourselves, but for all those who follow the Dzogchen teachings, and for future generations.

This is not a light endeavor, nor is it one which will flourish if we bring our habitual and limited ways of behaving with us. In a very short period of time it seemed that we had accomplished a great deal at the material level under difficult circumstances. Namgyalgar was purchased just two months before Rinpoche became ill in 1994. For some, great uncertainty and stasis prevailed. For some, a much deeper appreciation of their transmission and the preciousness of their Master arose. Namgyalgar hovered on the brink of becoming. We simply did not know...

When Rinpoche announced his intention, after his triumphant return

to Italy, to hold the first retreat at Namgyalgar at the end of 1995, a few individuals stepped in and pushed ahead with preparations, despite seemingly insurmountable obstacles. The shed, with bush pole supports and corrugated iron roof, was enclosed with canvas tarpaulins. With old pieces of carpet on the earthen floor, some prayer flags, red cloth over trellises, a teaching throne and a few thangkas, the structure was transformed into the Gonpa. A small bush kitchen, primitive bucket showers and drop toilets were quickly built. Work was begun on Rinpoche's house, a project on a scale too great to be completed in the few short months we had to prepare. A very wild piece of Australian bush happily and generously accommodated all the practitioners who came from near and far, and somehow, despite serious lapses in preparation, coordination and cooperation, a joyous and blessed atmosphere prevailed. Many people entered into the moment to moment arisings and simply did what was necessary, and so the energy spun. The influx of practitioners from across the globe certainly helped, and many Australians who have not traveled to other Gars, experienced their first taste of the international flavor of the Dzogchen Community. Marvelous!

A new Gakyil was formed in Rinpoche's presence and we began in earnest to develop the focus for the activities of the Dzogchen community in Australia around the Gar, with another teaching retreat three months later, at Easter, exactly two years after the retreat with Rinpoche when we had decided to move ahead and purchase the land on the slopes of Gulaga mountain. Namgyalgar no longer hovered on the brink of becoming, or so it seemed. Members of the Gakyil grappled with many aspects of organization and confusion, particularly around our financial situation. Dedicated individuals continued to push ahead, but the old and familiar habits of working independently, often with little or no consultation with others continued to dominate the modus operandi. Slowly we began to clarify our

situation, set the records straight, submit tax returns and take care of our legal responsibilities at many different levels. We sought inspiration

in Rinpoche's vision for Namgyalgar: Vajra Hall here, retreat cabins here, a Gonpa with walls and a floor, Gekos house, car parks and roads, a large pond or dam and facilities for dining, washing ...so much to be done and no time to loose. There's no guarantee that our Master will be with us in the future, so we had better meet his vision soon. We also began to change the energy of the Community's operation, the fragmentation resulting from pushing ahead by some and then the reaction of others in the face of decisions apparently made without consultation. We began to develop methods in our Gakyil meetings for decision making which allowed us to plan ahead, rather than always be in crisis control, and to trace through time our decisions and our actions following these decisions, or the lack of them. We began to encourage and include more people in the processes of the Community, through developing our communication, hearing ideas, planning and revising plans, working with our circumstances.

At a more essential level we as a community have not made the transition from several small and isolated practice groups, mainly associated with the cities, and separated by great distances, to a cohesive community, centered and grounded in the teachings and transmission, focused on the presence of our Master, and situated, the material manifestation of this piece of land, the buildings and so on were not effortlessly and spontaneously arising as a display and an adornment, the mandala of Namgyalgar. Rather they have been forged and pushed into being by a small number of pioneers, strong and independent individuals exerting much effort and bringing the considerable mundane skills of their ordinary political workaday existence to bear on the situation. In many ways formidable, but certainly not the embodiment of enlightened activity!

And so it is that we still hover on the brink of becoming a Gar, in the real sense. Rinpoche advised us to practice together, to enter into the very basis of the teachings, and gave very precise instructions. Small groups of practitioners have gathered at Namgyalgar since his departure. Over a long weekend in June in the middle of winter about twenty practitioners came from near and far for a group retreat focusing on the Six Paramitas, and then for a wonderful, wintry week in June a small group came together for another group retreat on the Four Immeasurables. Now in this week of warmer spring weather a group practices Longde. The handful of locals meet in regular practices on special days, and for Santi Maha Sangha study groups. Similarly, the regional groups continue across the continent, providing a regular basis for practitioners to meet together. In some of these groups there seems to be an increased understanding, individuals and groups feeling their way into relationship with each other, and with the place which may yet become Namgyalgar Gar—the Victorious Gar. ■

CHÖD RETREAT IN THE ADELAIDE HILLS, AUSTRALIA with Tsultrim Allione

Tsultrim Allione will give transmission and teachings on the Chöd practice from January 9th- 14th, 1998 in Crafers, South Australia. The five day practice retreat will be held at Gyuto House, with indoor sleeping or outdoor camping available, and meals will be catered optionally.

For further information about registration and prices PH (08) 8 3734537; fax +61 8 3592656; email: eyespin@box.net.au

Shang Shung Institute PHOTOGRAPHS OF TIBET Conway, Massachusetts

Tibetans and Tibet:
Photographs by Dr. Mary Gendler
of her 1995 trip to Tibet and India

Shang Shung Institute
Conway, Massachusetts
October through November.
Hours: 10am - 5pm daily.
Call 1-413-369-4928, or 4153 for driving instructions.



Issue 8 includes:

- The Path is under your Feet
David Schneider,
Director of Shambhala Europe
- Emotional Intelligence
Daniel Goleman
- Tea-time reflections
Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche
- Special Feature on the 'Death, Dying and Living' Conference
- Subscription for 4 issues
UK £12,
Europe £16,
World Wide £18.
Dharmakosha
31/39 Redchurch Street,
London E2 7DJ, UK.
Tel: +44 171 739 8533
Fax: +44 171 739 8695

VIEW

WEST COAST COMMUNITY continued from previous page

So many events and practices have been at my house this year that the Sangha sometimes feels like a large extended family. Friends sleep in different rooms on the floor, set up tents in the yard, coming and going, sometimes staying weeks at a time to do practice on the Dance mandala that is the focal point of this suburban back yard. Anastasia and others come almost every week to dance for a number of hours, and Vajra Dance has been a regular part of other gatherings as well, including community pot lucks and Gakyil meetings. Also, four times a month Sangha members come to celebrate and make offerings at the Ganapujas. We usually begin at 7:00 in the evening, and some people come a couple hours earlier to dance.

We were also blessed by a visit from Wangdor Rinpoche at this house in August, when he stayed two days and nights to give *Man-ngag-sde* teachings on the "Three Words" of Garab Dorje, using a commentary by Patrul Rinpoche. We were able to share meals, conversations and insights, generating a peaceful, cooperative and loving atmosphere despite the heavy, 106 degree heat. Being close to Wangdor Rinpoche embodying the profound Dzogchen teachings touched everyone deeply.

We are now beginning to develop plans for the upcoming year, having elected our new Gakyil in August. First, we will host Ontrul Rinpoche in San Francisco this September. After that, we will explore various ideas on enhancing our practice, cooperating with other Sanghas with whom we have a connection, contributing to the long life of the Master and the teachings, and strengthening the already deep spirit of collaboration within our own Community. ■

Now Available! THE RANGJUNG YESHE TIBETAN-ENGLISH DICTIONARY

OF BUDDHIST TEACHING & PRACTICE
More than 90,000 entries in an electronic version on PC/MAC disks. Compatible with all known word-processors and data-base programs.

* Extensive compilation of terminology used by present day translators. * Selected definitions and clarifications from classical literary works. * Details of places, people, and titles of scriptures. * Verified entries from existing dictionaries, word-lists and glossaries. * Special introductory offer: US \$50 (includes shipping and handling).

Rangjung Yeshe Dictionary,
attn. J. Wagner,
P.O. Box 4796,
Boulder, CO 80302, USA
Email: cdd@nyp.wink.com.np



Make check or International Money Order payable to Mr. E. Schmidt

FIRE OX YEAR 2124 SPECIAL PRACTICE CALENDAR



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

Choegyal Namkhai Norbu

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

8th Month, 25th day Sat. 25th Oct. 1997 This is a Dakini day, and also the anniversary of two great Dzogchen masters, Rigzin Kumaraja, who transmitted the Dzogchen teachings to Longchenpa and to the third Karmapa, and of Rigzin Tsewang Norbu (1698-1755), a great Dzogchen master of the Nyingmapa school. It is therefore an excellent day to do Agar Lama'i Naljyor, the Guruyoga with the White A. If you can do it in the morning, that is best. Then, if you have the time, you can do a Medium or Long Tun later in the day, with an intense practice of Simhamuka, or a Ganapuja, if you have the possibility.

This month the 27th day is doubled. **8th Month, 27th day Mon. 27th Oct. and Tues. 28th Oct. 1997** This is an important day for the practice of Ekajati, so try to do a Long or Medium Tun in the usual way, reciting the heart mantra of Ekajati as many times as possible.

8th Month, 30th day Fri 31st Oct. 1997 DARK MOON. This day is excellent for practising the "Purification of the Six Lokas". Otherwise you can do the Medium or Long Tun.

9th Month, 3rd day Mon. 3rd Nov. 1997 This is the anniversary of Rigzin Jigmed Lingpa (1729-1798), a great Dzogchen master who was the author of many books, among which is the Longchen Nyingthig, which he wrote after having contact with Longchenpa through visions. Therefore, on this important day, you should try to do Agar Lama'i Naljyor, the Guruyoga with the White A.

9th Month, 9th day Sun. 9th Nov. 1997 There is no 10th day in this month so we celebrate the day of Guru Padmasambhava on the 9th

day. This is the anniversary of the 16th Gyalwang Karmapa and also the anniversary of Tertön Tsogyal, a previous reincarnation of Sogyal Rinpoche and discoverer of many Termas. It is therefore a good day to do the Long-life practice of Guru Padmasambhava "Universal Wisdom Union", which is included in the Medium or Long Tun. You can do this in the usual way or, if you have the possibility, you can do a Ganapuja.

9th Month, 15th day Fri. 14th Nov. 1997 FULL MOON. This is a good day to do the Long-life practice of Amitayus, "Union of Primordial Essences", either collectively or personally according to your possibilities, early in the morning and in the evening a Ganapuja.

9th Month, 22nd day Fri. 21st Nov. 1997 This day is the important celebration of Buddha Shakyamuni's descent to earth from the realms of the Divinities. It is called "Lha bab dus chen", the Great Time of the Descent of the Divinities. It is an ideal day to do a Ganapuja with your Vajra brothers and sisters. If there are none nearby, you can do a Short or Medium Tun on your own.

9th Month, 25th day Mon. 24th Nov. 1997 This is a Dakini day and the anniversary of the very important Dzogchen master Adzam Drugpa (1842-1924). He was a disciple of Jamyang Kyentse Wangpo and a master of some of Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche's masters, including Changchub Dorje and Ayu Kadro. He was also a previous incarnation of Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche. It is therefore a very important day to practise Agar Lama'i Naljyor, the Guruyoga with the White A, according to your possibilities.

9th Month, 30th day Sat. 29th Nov. 1997 DARK MOON. This is a good day to do "Namchos Shitroi Naljyor", the Yoga of the Peaceful and Wrathful Manifestations, in the morning. It is also an important day for the practice of Ekajati, so try to do a Long or Medium Tun in the usual way, reciting the heart mantra of Eka-

The Tibetan Elementary School of Dang-che

continued from page 1

ware packages.
3. Plans for a junior high school for Dang-che.
4. The establishment of a small hospital of traditional medicine to guarantee basic medical assistance to the population of Dang-che.

There is no hospital in the entire valley and the nearest is the County Hospital. Many lives are lost due to the lack of emergency medical attention. ASIA in conjunction with the hospital of the district council of Zho-lho has already sent three Tibetan doctors to Dang-che.

Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche and the Governor of Qinghai Province signed a general cooperation agreement for the development of the economy, education and health of the province. The main points of the agreement are:

1. The twinning of the Province of Qinghai and that of Grosseto.
2. The establishment of a junior high school for Dang-che.
3. The establishment of a school for machinists at Yu-shu.
4. Study scholarships for eight young Tibetans to learn Italian and to take a course for machinists at the professional school of Roccastrada.

The Day of the Inauguration

The day of the official inauguration of the Dang-che elementary school finally arrived, June 23, 1997. For days, hundreds upon hundreds of Tibetans dressed in their traditional costumes gathered from all the surrounding valleys to camp close to the campus for the major event where everyone came to affirm the importance of Tibetan Culture and the necessity of passing it on to future generations. Everyone seemed to be aware of this and showed it by wearing their best costumes and traditional jewelry. There were so many children all dressed up in bright colors. It was their school and finally their party. The authorities, the band, the leaders of the village, the County, the District Council, the committee of the Village Development Association and all those who had been actively involved in the project and in the last few months guarded the school grounds day and night so that nobody could enter before time and ruin anything.

Slowly everyone began to gather: the teachers with their pleasant-natured and intelligent director, the many children, future scholars and everyone else. Just everybody came, babies at the breasts of proud, strong and beautiful women, old people carried on the

jati as many times as possible. The best time for this practice is around eight o'clock in the evening.

10th Month, 10th day Tue. 9th Dec. 1997 This is a special day of Guru Padmasambhava, therefore do a Ganapuja with the Guruyoga and the Long-life practice of Guru Padmasambhava "Universal Wisdom Union" collectively. Otherwise you can do a Medium Tun on your own.

10th Month 11th day Wed. 10th Dec. 1997 This is an important day for the practice of Ekajati, so try to do a Long or Medium Tun in the usual way, reciting the heart mantra of Ekajati as many times as possible.



Enjoying the day at Dang-che

L. MARDER

backs of their sons and grandsons, nobody wanted to miss out. The sun was powerful and sweltering but everyone stayed in their places hour after hour so that they would not miss anything of the ceremony. Some people managed to defend themselves from the brutal heat under umbrellas whose colors added grace and beauty to that fantastic sight, women wore straw hats decorated, as is traditional in Amdo, by flowers of different colors. There were people everywhere: in the courtyards of the school, in the gardens, in the entrance halls, on the balconies, on the roofs, on the branches of trees, on the fences, just everywhere. A stage had been built for the authorities and for the friends of ASIA. There were a number of Westerners who came for the occasion and the Tibetans were amazed, many of them had never seen so many white people together at the same time.

Finally, Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche took his place on the stage and everyone ran up to him wanting to see the great Teacher of whom they had heard so much recently but who had never yet been in that area. The local people knew that he was a great lama, a great Dzogchen Master and also a great scholar who had written many books on the ancient culture of Tibet. The school where they were gathered and all the others under construction in various regions of Tibet had been conceived by him. They knew that he had lived for nearly forty years in the west where he had taught at "the University" in Italy and had brought many Westerners close to Tibet, but it seemed as if he had never moved from his current home. Now, dressed in a traditional gown of brown silk and with an air of both great presence and joy, Rinpoche was seated on the stage in front of them.

The ceremony began. The children (more than a thousand of them) were lined up in different

columns at the center of the great courtyard. They began with songs and then marched in a parade, each child raising great paper flowers, each group with its distinctive color. The choreography was simple but effective for those traditional dances in which the children were all well-versed. Truth to tell, the littlest ones with their bright red cheeks, who were all about three or four years old, were not that sure of their steps and some of them went in the opposite direction to their groups to the laughter of the tightly-packed audience.

Then came the various official speeches of the inauguration. The speakers included: the head of the County, the head of the Province, the teachers' representatives, the village representatives, Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche and Andrea dell'Angelo (ANDERATO to everyone). All of the authorities had words of gratitude for ASIA and hope for the future. It was impressive to see how Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche's speech on the fundamental importance of not forgetting and the preservation of Tibetan culture was received with such enthusiasm by everyone including the high government officials. It is a topic of essential importance and the newly constructed Tibetan school and those children all lined up on the square ready to begin their studies bore witness to crucial value of this work.

Then the real party began with banquets and dances to lighten up such an important day that had gone on so long. By the end we were all exhausted and had the clear perception that this was only the beginning of the work. It was a marvelous beginning with the best possible auspices for the future. It was however just the beginning of a road that everyone knows would be very difficult. The day's celebration and those children present confirmed that it was a road really worth trying to travel. ■

The Crystal and the Way of Light Sutra, Tantra and Dzogchen The Teachings of Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche



Compiled and edited by John Shane
has been re-released by Penguin Arkana
and is available at local bookstores.



INTERNATIONAL DZOGCHEN CONTACTS

- ARGENTINA**
Tashigar*
C.C. No.1-5155
Tanti
Pcia. de Cordoba
Tel:0054-70384036
Fax: 54 541 98300
- Marissa Alonso - Gaikyil President
Montevideo 1255
5000 Cordoba Tel: 54 51 234669
- Nelida Saporiti-Secretary
Virrey Loreto 3616-1 "A"
1427 Cap. Fed. BA
INTERNET:
nsaporiti@interlink.com.ar
- AUSTRALIA**
Pamela Oldmeadow
3/12 Fox Place
Lyneham ACT 2602
Tel: 61 6 2571177
Fax: 61 28 661185
- Namgyalgar Dzogchen Community
of Australia*
Vicki Forscutt - Secretary
PO Box 14 Central Tilba,
NSW 2546
Tel. and Fax: (02) 4476 3446
Email:INTERNET:
namgyalg@acr.net.au
- Amare Pearl
55 Burringbar Street
Mullumbimby NSW 2482
Tel & Fax: 61 66 845570
Email:INTERNET:
apearl@om.com.au
- Laurence Mills
Bodhi Citta Buddhist Centre
PO Box 8177 Cairns, QLD 4870
Tel: 070 568253
Email:
INTERNET:bodhicitta@iig.com.au
- AUSTRIA**
Irmgard Pernwieser Kriemhildplatz
1/17 1150 Vienna
Tel/Fax 43 1 9857367
- Edition Tsaparang:
Oliver Leick
Gschäier 139
8265 Gross-Steinbach
Tel & Fax:03386-571
Email:INTERNET:
oliver.leick@telecom.at
- BELGIUM**
Katia Lytridon
16, rue Paul Goedert L.
3330 Crauthem Luxembourg
- BRAZIL**
Muriella and Washington Malaga
Rua Raul Vicente 19
fundos tremembe
02370-010 Sao Paulo S.P.
Tel: 011-69523919
Email:INTERNET:
wmalaga@uol.com.br
- BYELORUSSIA**
Rousland Malakhouksi
Ul. Odinstova 29-35 Minsk
- CANADA**
Peter Dimitrov
305 - 11806 88th St.
Delta, BC V4C 3C5
- DENMARK**
Jorn Strufe
Nørrebrogade 64/4 2200
København N
Tel: 45 31392530
- ESTONIA**
Maret Kark
Sade T 9, EE2400
Tartu. Tel: 372 7479 454
- FINLAND**
Kaisa-Liisa Puonti
Visantie 19
05400 Jokela
Tel:+358 9 4172818
Fax: +358 9 140321
Email:
INTERNET:puoka@myy.helia.fi
- FRANCE**
Saphran Weiss
19 Rue de Bagnolet
75020 Paris
Tel: 33 1 43710203
Fax:33 1 43710203
Jocelyn Carasso
Route De Pernin 74160
Les Mouilles Neydens
Tel: 1 33 50351142
- GERMANY**
Dzogchen Gemeinschaft
Helga Betz
Lindemannstr. 12 40237
Düsseldorf
Telephone & Fax: 49 211 682657
- Gerhard Manusch
Oberwohnstr. 8 84034
Landschut
Tel: 49 871 670521
Fax: 49 871 670599
- GREAT BRITAIN**
Cheh Goh
28 West Park
Bristol BS8 2LT
Tel: 44 117 9737622 (evenings)
Off: 44 117 9228777
Email:
INTERNET:cng@hplb.hpl.hp.com
- GREECE**
Panayotis Stambolis
Marinou Antypa 38
14121 N. Iraklio, Athens
Tel: 30 1 2713765
Fax: 1 3411856
- HOLLAND**
Dzogchen Community
Holland De Kempemaer 62
1051 CR
- ISRAEL**
Noa Blass
Biltmore Street 15
62194 Tel Aviv
Tel & Fax: 972 3 457543
- ITALY**
Merigar* Comunita Dzogchen
Arcidosso, 58031 GR, Italy
Tel: 39 564 966837
Fax: 39 564 968110
Secretary- Rita Reni
Email:
INTERNET:merigar@duffie.it
- Azamgar
Giuliano Casiraghi Via Sempione
14-B 24125
Bergamo BG
Tel: 39 35 225159
- JAPAN**
Tsugiko Kiyohashi
5-11-23 Shimomeguro Meguro-Ku
Tokyo
Tel: (office) 81 3 3712 7507
Fax: 81 3 3716 7248
- Tetsu Nagasawa
7-17-14 Higashi Oizumi Nerimaku
Tel/Fax 81 3 39248965
- John Munroe
Email: INTERNET:djmunroe
@mail.chabashira.co.jp
- LATVIA**
Padmaling
Galina Kuznecova, Riga Maskavas
287-36, LV-1060
Fax: 7 4698828040
- LITHUANIA**
Antanas Danielius
Str. Baltupio, 47-69
Vilnius, 2057
Tel: 37 2 776824 Fax: 37 2 221618
Dorjeling
PO Box 1183, Vilnius
- MALAYSIA**
Tham Wye Min
8669C Klebang Kechil 75200
Melaka
Tel: 60 3 56162
- Kwok Kee Chang
11-A Jalan Jujur, 1/5
Taman, Bakti Ampang
Selangor, W. Malaysia
- Tel: 60 3 9847167
MEXICO
Lennart Astrup
Nino Artillero 33
Tepoztlan, Morelos
Tel: 52 73950192
Fax: 52 73951059
- NEPAL**
Angelo Fontana
GPO Box 4102
Kathmandu
Fax: 97 1 225184
Email:INTERNET:
angelo@mos.com.np
- NEW ZEALAND**
Rosemary Friend
7 Radnor Street, North East Valley
Dunedin S. Island
Tel: 64 3 4730886
Fax: 64 3 4779463
- Alastair Gager
8 Riki Rd., Pt. England, Auckland
- NORWAY**
Gordon Cranmer
4157 Utstein Kloster Mosteroy
Tel: 47 4 514705
- PERU**
Comunidad Dzogchen de Lima
Juan Bustamente
Calle E. Palacios
1125 - C.
Milaflor, Lima 18
Tel: 51 14 791274
Fax: 51 14 472984
Email:INTERNET:
kungsang@hotmail.com
- POLAND**
Cezary Wozniak
31-510 Krakow
Ul. Rakowicka 21/3, Poland
Tel: 48 12 21 7835
Email:INTERNET:
cwozniak@bc.krakow.pl
- RUSSIAN FEDERATION**
Helena Antonova
Dzogchen Community
Kornychukha Str. h. 44, f.17
127543 Moscow
Tel: 95 405 46 64
Fax: 95 9546040
- Buryatian Community
"Kundrolling"
c/o Maria Fedetova 50 years of
October prs. 44-26
Ulan-Ude 670034, Buryatia
- Olga Tsvetkova
Kostromskoi Prospect 58/31
St. Petersburg 194214
Tel: 7 812 5538121
Fax: 7 812 1307070
- Denisova, Tatyana
2-Y Micronaion-14 apt.3
Elista, Kalmikiya 358000
- Vladivostok Dzogchen Community
Kuleshova Natalia
Tobolskay 12, KV.20
Vladivostok, 690066
Email:INTERNET:
putnik@figaro.vlg.marine.su
- Russian Email addresses:
Vladimir Karpinsky:
INTERNET:vk@azpubl.msk.ru
Vladimir Maikov:
INTERNET:maikov@glas.apc.org
- SERBIA/EX YUGOSLAVIA**
Zoran and Jelena Zagoracic
Koste Jovanovica 9
11000 Beograd
Tel: 11- 467437
Voglar Slavica and Nereo Marussig
Danice Markovich 4 11000
Beograde
- Edition Ati:
Zeljka Jovanovich, Zeleni Venac
11000 Beograde
Tel & Fax: 38 111 687123
Email:INTERNET:
zeljka@zamin-bg.ztn.apc.org
- SINGAPORE**
Ian Gan
- 98 Thomson Green
Singapore 574965
Tel & Fax: 4530387
- Keng Leck Tan
110 E. Arthur Rd.
Singapore 1543
Tel: 65 447 2596
Fax: 65 532 6349
Email:INTERNET:
kalatime@singnet.com.sg
- SLOVENIA**
Changchub Ling
PO Box 19 SL-62250 Poetovio
Tel: 386 62 222523
Fax: 386 62 29874
- SOUTH AFRICA**
Darryl Van Blerk
82 New Church St.
Tamboerskloof 8001
Capetown, Tel: 27 21 221265
- SPAIN**
David Ruiz Loredan
C/Esponceda 30-C*- DCHA
28033 Madrid
Tel. 34 1 4422325
- SWITZERLAND**
Christina Von Geispitzheim
Haus Fontana 12
3920 Zermatt
Tel: 41 27 967 38 26
Fax:41 27 967 01 85
Email:INTERNET:
zermatt@wallis.ch
- THAILAND**
Pierre Wittman
P.O. Box 37
Hua-Hin 77110,
Tel & Fax: 66 32 515511
- UKRAINE**
Valery Botsula
Komandarma Korka St.42-59
Kharkov
310186
- USA**
Tsegalgar*
Sara Handley - Secretary
P.O. Box 277
Conway, Mass. 01341
Tel: 413 369 4153
Fax: 413 369 4165
Email:
74404.1141@compuserve.com
- Lynn Sutherland
423 W. Webster
Chicago, IL 60614
Tel: 773 477-7280
Fax: 773 728-9556
Email: lynnsmith@aol.com
- Dzogchen Community West Coast
Carol Fields
755 Euclid Ave. Berkeley, CA
94708
Tel: 510 559 9753
Fax: 510 524 0933
Email:INTERNET:
carol.fields@ucop.edu
- Dzogchen Community of New
Mexico
c/o Lidian King
25 B Big Tesuque Canyon
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501
Tel: 505 988 5995
Email: INTERNET:
garuda@roadrunner.com
- Tara Mandala
P.O. Box 3040
Pagosa Springs, CO 81147
Tel: 970 264 6177
Fax: 970 264 6169
Email:75402.1127@compuserve.com
- New York Dzogchen Community
PO Box 734
Peter Stuyvesant Station
New York, NY 10009
Tel: 212 560 7209
Email:
INTERNET:goldberg@acf2.nyu.edu
- Susan Indich
129 Kaelepulu Dr. Kailua
Hawaii 96734
Tel: 808 261 3469
Fax: 808 524 4342
- VENEZUELA**
Pablo Lau Rivera
Lhundrubgar
Pba. Res. Pedernales Av.
Paez Montalban II
1021 Caracas
Tel: 58 2 4421434
Fax: 58 2 340643
- Elias Capriles
Apartado Postal 483
Merida 5101
Tel & Fax: 58 2 74447550
- Dzogchen Community
Apartado Postal 483
Merida 5101
Fax: 58 2 74 447 550

We would like to keep the International Community Contacts as current as possible. Please check your listing and update it so we can maintain a functional list for everyone. Thank you !

The Mirror

TIBETAN BUDDHIST ARTS

- Over 500 hand-painted thangkas in stock
- Hundreds of statues
- Dharma ritual items including:
incense, malas, and mandala sets
bells, dorjes, and covers
damarus and chöd drums with cases
and much more...

Wholesale and Retail

Continuing the tradition of quality items at low prices
(Business and inventory formerly Charles O'Hara of
Susquehanna, PA)

Visit our Showroom Gallery by appointment!
Conveniently located close to I-95, I-81, I-70,
I-270, and MD-15



K-F
P.O. Box 1971
Frederick, MD
21702
(301) 631-5663

Introduction

Living in the relative world invariably means that we have to organize ourselves to achieve something. Even a basic task of taking care of our hunger is not trivial: we need to acquire food, cook it and eat it, or go to a restaurant. Before that we need to make enough money in order to do these things. This is, of course, a simple example because we know precisely what we want, and we often know how to achieve it. However, a large project which involves many people, and relies on contribution of different skills need similar focus. I will show below how the teachings actually reflect the principles of project management.

THE VIEW: PURPOSE AND VISION

The Principle of Archery: identify the target

As have been mentioned several times already in my previous articles, "shooting an arrow without knowing where the target is" is a waste of time. Yet it is often amazing to see ourselves unclear about the purpose and direction of a project when we embark upon it. If we want to start a land project for the community, what will the property be used for? If we want to embark on a series of workshops with invited speakers, what do we aim to achieve? These questions are not always easy to answer, especially if we are sincere with ourselves, and are willing to probe deeply. Without having a good answer that generates a sense of confidence and conviction, the leader or manager of the project can easily fumble half way through the project when the goings get tough and members of the project become doubtful, insecure, and low in spirit. While the emotion associated with "wouldn't it be a great idea to..." can be exciting at the beginning, if it is ill thought through, we should be very careful about starting the project.

The Principle of River Crossing: share the vision.

Having decided that there is great benefits to be had or that there are

compelling reasons that we want to do a project, the initiating person must be able to share her vision with others in the team. While purpose and direction appeals to the reasoning mind, vision appeals to the emotion. Often it is the leader who has to convey both to the team. Why is the emotional commitment of people in the form of a shared vision so important? This is because we have the full qualification of our passions. Emotional energy is that which creates the determination to succeed. Human beings can both reason and be passionate, so we need to become committed in both ways. It is vital that the vision is truly shared. The project manager should lead a group to create a common vision. This creation is a very powerful way of bonding, which goes a long way in making sure that everybody feels her contribution and participation. Nobody should feel that she is just an anonymous and neglected pawn in a huge battle field. Creation of shared vision is what the project manager can do to ensure involvement from the beginning. In the process of sharing vision, it is also vital to share the value. What is the common denominator for the people? Does everybody feel that the teaching takes top priority over all other activities? Can people agree to showing up in project meetings sober and on time? Will people commit to the date of completion regardless of personal circumstances? Both spiritual and relative considerations need to be shared. It may not be as significant as samaya we know about, but unless people can fulfill little promises, it is rather ludicrous to think that the same people can meet the Bodhisattva commitment for the good of all beings. With this sort of "buy-in", the manager of the project can now proceed with the tasks. She must, however, frequently revisit and realign the shared values and the shared vision, because

Relatively Speaking

Some basic principles of project management

by Cheh Goh

everything is impermanent, and we all change. It is like rowing a raft cross a river: the leader must keep the crew focused on the shore opposite by gently bringing them back from the distraction of a nice sandy island in the middle of the river.

The Practice

Now that everybody in a project is fired up to carry out the task in hand to achieve the vision, it is similar to the situation when a Bodhisattva having generated the good intentions and is ready to do the altruistic training for real. For that, watch out for the following:

Develop a shared plan

This has to do with the awareness of the situation in which the project is being developed. Rushing into a job without much consideration can easily cause problems. We have noticed how the many construction projects in the community have been preceded by preparations in the form of offerings to the local guardians, establishment of good relationship with the local officials, workmen and traders, and drawing up of complete plans. When people take part in the same project, it is essential to inform everybody so that all can share the knowledge, and become aware individually. It is foolish to feel "important" by withholding information from others: it is none other than one's ego at play. Also, common awareness is key because plans can never be rigid: circumstances change and adjustments are often necessary in order to progress. It is, therefore, really important to communicate well the plans, so that everybody in the same boat can make a concerted, rather than scattered, effort towards the shore.

Develop shared responsibility

This follows directly from the sharing of vision and plan. People feel

the responsibility when they are committed, which happens only when they feel they are part of the commitment.

While it is not the same as the commitment of a Bodhisattva who is motivated by compassion, it is still very good training to recognize that having made a promise one must be responsible for it. Sharing responsibility also means that one is willing to take on the difficulties of fellow workers in the project. If we are able to help each other out in a project, then there is a better chance that in the sea of samsara we can work with fellow practitioners to reach liberation.

Help others succeed

The best way of making a project succeed is to encourage people in the team to help each other succeed. It is well known that selfishness and individualism, some aspects of which disguise themselves extremely subtly and well hidden, are the common source of obstacle to success. As practitioners in the community, it is vital that we use our awareness to catch these unhelpful characteristics in ourselves, and practice the relative path of generosity and diligence. In the same way as running an organization, it is important to provide the right tools and training to help people do a good job. Exactly the same consideration applies here. Team member must be treated with respect, given the right things to use, and trained according to the need of their role in the project. Kindness and discipline must work together to make things happen.

Review progress

Giving and receiving feedback is a topic that has been discussed previously and has great importance here. We know that in the teachings, we are advised to listen, reflect, and practise, before going back to the teacher to report on our experience in order to ensure correct progress. Similarly we identify the purpose of

our project, we reflect and share the vision, get on with the task, and we must review our progress. What has gone well, and what has gone wrong? How to improve the positive and how to correct the negative? With or without the help of outsiders, try to abandon any importance we give to our ego, honestly check the team's work and make adjustments where necessary. Repeat this regularly until project completion and there is a good chance the project will achieve its intended purpose.

Recognition and setting example

The Buddha's behavior and life is an example for all Buddhists to learn from and to emulate. Any positive outcome of a project should similarly be duly recognized, and be cited as example so that we can learn from it. Recognition also encourages the continuation of effort and will lead to even better outcome. Judicious celebration of the completion of significant stages of a project is also vital, because it helps to relax the tension that inevitably builds up.

The Behavior

There is no secret in good project management that is not already well known in the Mahayana principles. The paramitas of generosity, patience, diligence and perseverance combined with acute awareness invariably play an important part. Maintaining the spirit of continuous learning like that of a Bodhisattva will improve the prospect of success further. It is all a matter of applying what we have learned!

Summary

I have borrowed the three-fold division of view, practice and behavior to illustrate what is needed for a project to be run smoothly to a successful conclusion. As already mentioned, apply the many Mahayana principles, use the training of Bodhisattva, and sharpen our awareness without going lazy; in this way, our many project will be accomplished and many benefits will be wide spread. ■

The process of death described in the Tantras involves a gradual dissolution or serial collapse of energy wind currents that support various consciousnesses.

There are said to be 72,000 channels that act as pathways for the wind currents. During the death process winds that serve as the foundation for consciousness dissolve into the winds of the right and left channels and with the deflation of these, movement of wind within the central channel takes place. At the center of the heart is the indestructible drop, called so because it sustains life and remains until death. It is into this pea sized entity (colored white/red; semen/blood) that consciousness entered in the mothers womb at the beginning of life. It is the same place that the final winds gather at death and from which consciousness departs.

It is from this moment that the clear light of death dawns following on from white, red and black appearances (a state of unconscious). Whereas outer breath is no longer detectable with the dissolution of the 4th element (of wind) actual death occurs only with the appearance of clear light.

This luminosity remains up to three days or until the expulsion of pus or blood from orifices. This indicates the final departure of consciousness. Prior to this time consciousness remains within the body which should be handled delicately to avoid disturbance.

A reverse process of augmenting the elements now begins which is the commencement of the Bardo.

In May 1997, I asked Choegyal Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche a number of questions regarding the way in which practitioners could

respond to each other at the time of their own and others' death. These were

only preliminary questions that came to mind in the course of writing to him in Singapore. I had suggested that a great deal of benefit might be had if a practical handbook were produced especially for those Buddhists who like myself live at such a distance from Lamas who might otherwise act as guides and mentors.

Q: How important is it to be free of all possessions and the distraction of family members leading up to and at the time of Death?

NNR: It is a question of attachment. But if we feel free with our capacity of contemplation then it doesn't make any difference. We should act appropriately to protect the level of practice. It is generally said to be important to avoid creating experiences of desire and hatred around the dying person. Instead the goal should be to create a positive environment resulting in a sense that the practitioner is passing from darkness into light free from anxiety and imbued with pleasant experiences.

Q: Is familiarity with the gradual dissolution of elements important?

A: This is very useful if you remain present during the dissolution and are able to recognize the real condition. It can be used as experience, as a basis for insight into the continuous state of contemplation. Without presence it is not useful and can more likely cause fearfulness.

Trungpa Rinpoche says in the Tibetan Book of the Dead: It is valuable to give some kind of simple explanation (of the process) finally end-

The Process of Death

by David Sharp

ing up in the luminosity principle. You need to relate this luminosity with

the basic ground of the solidity of the person. Your friends know you are going to die, but they are not frightened by it, there is nothing suspicious going on behind your back. Because uncertainty has developed between body and mind it is important to provide some solid ground. Being fully present just relating with nowness is extremely powerful.

Q: Should the Tibetan Book of the Dead be read in English?

A: Yes. Its benefit lies in recollecting the processes of death.

Trungpa Rinpoche explains that one should make a meaningful conversational style. Although deteriorating at one level the dying person is at the same time developing a higher consciousness of feeling. It is therefore very important to provide a basic warmth and confidence that you are telling him/her the truth. Relating with the person is very important: We know that you are dying. You know that you are dying. We are really meeting at this point. This direct approach is said to be the best demonstration of friendship and communication creating a rich inspiration for the dying person.

Q: When should A be remembered?

A: You should try to be in the presence of A at all times during the dissolution and then with the last breath the sound of A will come naturally.

Relax into the white A....relax as deeply as possible resting in the nature of mind....don't be

distracted by what is happening in your body; the nature of your mind remains as always, sky-like, radiant, limitless and unchangingtrust in the nature of your mind, trust it deeply and relax completely...there is nothing more to do....just allow your practice to blossom inside you and open at greater and greater depths.

Anne Clarkson, Mirror, #40.19.

Q: When should the Vajra Song be sung?

A: If there is a group of practitioners then they can sing this during the dissolution. This enables the dying person to integrate all experiences in the sound of the song.

Q: Is the primary support for the dying person to rest simply in the natural state (gnyug ma)?

A: Yes. It's natural state is just the state of A.

Q: Ideally how long should the body be left....a minimum of three days?

A: If the practitioner remains in the state of contemplation continuously, being in position (thugs dam) then it is better to keep until the head falls to the right or left and drops of semen come from the nose...or at least three days.

Q: What value, if any, is there to have Lamas of other lineages do ritual?

A: If the body has remained in position it is best to make no disturbance. But if someone wishes to do so ritual can be done. With a lesser practitioner it is good to use more ritual with Lamas and practitioners.

Q: What is the best or most auspicious time to place the *btags grol*?

A: It should always be with the person. Certainly it should be placed when the body is moved (placed facing outwards for practitioners; inwards for ordinary people). ■

Environmental Projects in Riwoche

continued from page 1

as they did in many other areas of Riwoche. Valley grounds of the middle reaches of the Ke Chu are wide, but already too high up for agriculture. The higher peaks are barren and rocky. Yak husbandry is the main means of local sustenance of the Khampas. Their houses are not two - storied as in more fertile areas of Kham, but very low, one - storied flat roofed houses. Before 1976, a herd of 60 Red deers was captured and is kept in captivity, now counting 120 deer. Yet herd growth is stagnating for many years due to fodder shortage in winter and the limited space allotted. The antlers of the deer are used as Chinese medicine and thus make keeping the herd a profitable business.

The forest department, which also is in charge of wildlife, asked ASIA to assist in finding a deer farm expert to train local people in order to improve deer keeping and breeding as well as antler production. In addition a better fodder base is required, a well needs to be dug within the compound, and the compound itself needs to be enlarged. Future plans include looking into the possibility of processing the antlers into medicine within Riwoche. In regard of the wider preserve we intend to carry out a scientific study on the status of wildlife in the Chamoling preserve and we want to map out the area to ensure good protection of the most important wildlife habitats. The core issue, besides poaching, seems to be the intensive use of the area by pastoralists. The wildlife might be marginalized by domestic livestock, but at least they have coexisted for centuries.

I was very much looking forward going to Yiri. Yiri is not only known for its beautiful scenery of densely forested valleys and steep mountains, but also famous for its hot springs. I was asked to evaluate the touristic potential of the springs. Word had spread that I am working on a guide book to the hot springs of Tibet. The 95km drive to Yiri district (Xiang, ca. 3200m to 5100m) took us a whole day. Driving time alone was over six hours, in many locations the road deserves its name only due to the fact that a jeep is not blocked from progressing. In these places walking is surely more comfortable and probably faster. Lunch was served to us in a black tent by very hospitable nomads, consisting of salty butter tea, tsampa, yogurt and a dried hind leg of Yak, from which we were invited to slice off our favorite chunk. Once in Yiri (3800m) we were housed in the newly built hot spring guest house located below the springs. The 43 C hot water wells up on both sides of a creek, which at this point undercuts a 200m cliff of vertical limestone. The only drawback to enjoying the springs was that I was permanently stared at by dozens of friendly people. Hundreds had been ordered to Yiri to work on the road. Being the first foreigner they have ever seen, clearly incited their curiosity. Many houses in Yiri are two storied and people engage in farming, growing barley, rape seed and vegetables. But the backbone of the local economy is keeping livestock. Human settlement does not seem to date back as long as in other areas, the spruce forests in the valleys and around the villages were in relatively good condition. Most of Yiri's



Tibetan Red Deer

D. WINKLER

forests, which still cover about a third of the area, are used as grazing grounds and thus undergrowth is clearly reduced, not allowing the impression of true primary forests. Spruce trees (*Picea balfouriana*) reach 25 to 30m in height with a circumference of 2m at an age of 300 years. Besides spruce there are junipers (*Juniperus tibetica*, *J. wallichiana*; 8-15m height), which dominate dry sites or especially degraded southern facing slopes. Otherwise they form the secondary canopy in less disturbed southern slopes. In several sites forest fires had fragmented the forest cover, some of these sites now boast young stands, others have been converted into pastures. Remote areas of Yiri should contain undisturbed forests, predestined for conservation. Forests below 4000m are bounded by bands of Macaques monkeys and Leopards. Otherwise a similar range of wildlife might be encountered as in Chamoling. So far Yiri, which has a school since last year, has not been used as a source for commercial timber due to the bad transport conditions, but the neighboring Sankar district was started to be exploited, thus it is only a question of time, as to whether or not the forest industry will reach Yiri.

So far Riwoche's forest department prefers designating more easily accessible areas for fulfilling the cutting quota issued annually (1997: 5000m³) by the prefectural forest department in Chamdo. The felling is carried out by local people, organized by the county's sawmill, which also manages timber transport and marketing; 60% go to Nagchu's timber market supplying the forest-free areas of TAR, 40% to Chengdu accessing China's timber market. The sawmill's profits go to the county. Since the forestry industry was introduced in the 60's, the forest department relies mostly on natural regeneration, by retaining some trees in felling sites as a seed source. But natural regeneration is a very slow process, which does not guarantee regrowth of dense forests, especially when livestock is present as everywhere. Only in the last year saplings have been imported from Payul (near Derge) and planted. Also a tiny nursery was started in Riwoche in 1996. Upon inquiring the local forest administration had no idea about the amount of standing timber in Riwoche and its annual increment, two figures, which are an absolute prerequisite for any sustainable forestry.

The headman of Yiri district asked ASIA to help develop Yiri's timber resource. He suggested improving the road, building a hydro-electric plant to supply power for a future local sawmill. The forest department also expressed interest in supporting nature and wildlife protection, besides developing a local tourist industry, based on the beautiful environment and the hot

springs. ASIA's intention in Riwoche is to help establish sustainable forestry with a strong nature conservation component, based on ecological and economical principles. The project's long term intention is to benefit the local population, empower them to manage their local resources in a sustainable way ensuring the survival of their chosen way of life, as well as their resources. As a first step we need to evaluate the ecological and economical potential more precisely and involve the local people as much as possible in shaping the project. We need to classify the forest area into categories: such as intensive use (timber production), extensive use (ie. grazing) and protection, to produce a land use map for the district. ASIA will help training local people to establish a tree nursery and start reforestation of selected sites with bought saplings. To guarantee economical sustainability the project should partially be financed out of timber sales, thus creating a model for other areas, which might not have the fortune of foreign assistance.

Having had the experience of crossing the whole of northern Central Tibet and Kham from Lhasa via Nagchu, Chamdo, Derge and Kandze to Chengdu, my former assumption was verified, that extensive areas of Tibet had been deforested in historical times. Wide, wide areas of Tibet are in actuality a cultural landscape shaped by pastoralism through millennia. In addition nowadays serious overgrazing has taken its toll in many areas. For example the hill sides of the Kyichu valley around Lhasa presently nearly resemble the barren hill sides of Ladakh. Yet going up the valley at first grasslands and a little further up shrub vegetation reappear. Around Truldar village before Dri-gung Monastery there are last stands of northern slope birch forests and even one stand of junipers. Otherwise all forests are gone. The last three days of the drive from Lhasa to Riwoche I was scanning valley after valley along the road for traces of forests. In most valleys all I spotted was a lost single tree here or there on steep cliffs or a small stand of juniper high above the valley ground. These relics were testifying to the former presence of forests in areas which are today nearly completely free of forests. In Eastern Kham the situation was a little better regarding historical deforestation, yet there modern timber extraction has speeded up the process of deforestation enormously. Historical deforestation impacted especially the areas around settlements, the southern facing slopes and the high altitude summer grazing grounds. They have been intensely cleared everywhere. They all had to give way to pastures, which are

of much higher value to herders than forests. Of course at a certain point in history when the forests start to disappear, people realize their preciousness, but then the need for fuel and timber perpetuates forest reduction until total elimination. In addition the Tibetan way of life is very well adapted to a treeless environment and planting trees is not part of the traditional lifestyle of common people.

In Riwoche forests are still covering about a fifth of the area, but they are clearly declining. The summer pastures - many of them below the tree line - are forest free, nowadays yaks transport fire wood up to the summer camps. The slopes are losing more and more of their forest cover due to timber extraction and

grazing. ASIA hopes to be able to help stop the degradation and reverse the process. It is crucial that any changes actually benefit the local people.

Daniel Winkler (M.S.) is a geographer who is specialized in the ecology of Eastern Tibet's forest region. He is a longtime member of ASIA for which he is coordinating Riwoche's environmental projects on sustainable ecosystem management.

Contacts:

D. Winkler, 7840 126th Ave. NE,
Kirkland, WA 98033 USA
phone/fax: (425) 822 5080
ASIA headquarters:
Via S. Erasmo 12, 00184
Rome, Italy
phone: 39-6-77200880
fax: 77205944

NOTE ON THE MIRROR

Even in a burning house without exit
there is a cool spring.

The waters of forgotten wells lie ready
to receive and encourage us
to bear the unreasonable suffering of self and other.

But we must allow pride and fear to relax
and dip, naked and shivering, into the dark pool
that waits beyond blame and regret.

It is not so hard to find.

Go now, slip into yourself!
Along the whole length of futile recriminations,
Past the numbness of arrogance and self-pity,
Through hidden hypocrisies and self-deceptions of all kinds
To the fount of wakefulness.

Touch with the tenderness of your own breath the broken-
open heart
And pray like mad
That your heart will never be sealed again.

Ken Bradford, August, 1996



DHARMAWARE

Gallery of Sacred Arts

OUR
20TH
YEAR



STATUES
HANDCRAFTED
BY THE FINEST
TIBETAN & NEWAR
ARTISANS

Dharma Practice Supplies

www.dharmaware.com

our internet address

erik@dharmaware.com

e-mail & orders

DHARMAWARE

54C TINKER STREET WOODSTOCK NY 12498

OFFICE 914 679 4900 FAX 914 679 4995

SEND \$2 FOR COLOR CATALOG

LARGE SELECTION OF THANGKAS NOW IN STOCK

CUSTOM ORDER FROM OUR THANGKA STUDIO IN NEPAL

Autumn Moon Pilgrimage

continued from page 9

minutes previously and so he has a room free. After a few hours sleep, we walk along the riverfront ghats.

Varanasi is a city that was in existence at least since the time of Babylon. The Buddha came here to bathe in the sacred waters of the Ganges before he set off for Sarnath where he first taught or, as it is said, first turned the Wheel of the Dharma. Here people come to die. To guarantee salvation. Varanasi has to be seen. Of all cities, the experience is intensely visual. Its buildings break all

sense of plane and symmetry: broken domes, carved pilasters, curved flights of stone stairs that disappear under sculpted arches. Herds of buffalo splatter the stone with flat pats of dung that are scooped up and plastered on the walls to dry for fuel. Heavy skiffs bob at the water's edge under the eyes of boatmen eager to row you down the river. Piled high against the square cut stone, logs, stripped branches and split kindling stand ready for the dead. Greasy smoke rises from the smoldering pyres. Orange flame flickers among the thick logs where straw catches light beneath the unwrapped bodies. Dead faces lie flat to the sky. For two thousand years they say, the same fire has burned on the cremation ghat, and the flow of bodies never stops. The piles of black wood throw heavy shadows on the mourners who squat on the stone steps.

On the following day we go out to Sarnath in a motor rickshaw. The rickshaw driver is dressed in black silk from turban to kurta to lungi. The engine of his infernal machine stalls out at every major crossing and there are many of them on the way out of town. A travel tip: go by car, far more expensive but worth every rupee.

After the exasperating journey we arrive at Sarnath's Deer Park and immediately, there is a sense of peace. Beautifully kept lawns surround the excavations of monasteries and temples. The great mass of the main Stupa dominates the entire park. We sit in the shade of a pipal tree and look directly at the monument that marks the place where Buddha Shakyamuni gave his first discourse on the Four Noble Truths. Here I sense the humanity of the Buddha: an ascetic who wandered around and found places to sit in meditation and so realized himself. A way of utmost simplicity. A man who looked into the depths of his own mind and discovered the nature of being. All these buildings now in ruin came after the Buddha himself who simply sat in the park and spoke. The Stupa itself was built in the time of Ashoka and added to by the Gupta kings. It is testament to the influence of Buddhism on an empire that stretched right across the Indi-

an sub-continent. It is also testament to the law of impermanence as this empire has long since disintegrated and the Muslim armies that swarmed across Northern India destroyed every image and building they found that was Buddhist or Hindu. It echoes in the present where temples and mosques are destroyed by fanatics of various persuasions. As Lopon Namdak told us in Kathmandu, "Religion can be the greatest medicine or the greatest poison."

Sitting here in Deer Park, with an audience of curious Indian youths who stare at us as we sit in the place where Buddha walked, talked and meditated, we have a sense of the peace that a spiritual path can bring despite the ravages of the past and the insanities of the present. Here



The author at retreat cave

P. BARRY

'reality' is like a dream, a filmy veneer over vastness.

It's too bad that our rickshaw driver seems all too real as we leave the park but he does succeed in getting us back to our hotel.

After a week in Varanasi, we set off by train for Bodhgaya. This time we travel second class sleeper in a carriage crowded with men totting bundles of clothes and chromed pots for their morning ablutions. We travel through the night again, arrive in Gaya just after dawn and take a bus down to Bodhgaya, the place of the Buddha's enlightenment. We find a hotel and walk back to the main temple that has been built on the site of the Bodhi tree beneath which the Buddha sat and experienced total realization. The temple is a tall tower alive with images from the life of the Buddha. Buddhists of all nationalities walk around the building: Tibetans, Sri Lankans, Burmese, Thai, Japanese, Europeans, Americans. It is said that the original Bodhi tree was destroyed but a cutting of it had been planted in Sri Lanka. From this offshoot of the original a cutting was made and brought back to Bodhgaya so that the tree there now is a direct descendant of the original.

We approach the temple and walk around it to the Bodhi tree. The sensation is of walking into the vortex of an immensely powerful explosion of Enlightened energy that may have happened three thousand years ago but whose effect rolled out through time and space and dimensions unseen and continues to reverberate in the present and on into the future. Such a statement is one of faith perhaps but direct experience nevertheless. A sense of grace received.

We are in the peak of pilgrimage time. The temple grounds are

thronged. Once again, but on a much bigger scale than at Lumbini, the terraces around the temple are being covered with brass lamps and young Tibetan monks are filling them with ghi. As the sun sets, tapers are lit and pilgrims light the wicks of the lamps. The air is filled with light and heat and smoke that stings the eyes and assaults the lungs. The entire grounds glitter with flames.

Over the next few days we sit and practice among pujas and ngondro practitioners who do prostrations on strange boards that bounce them back up to a standing position after they have flung themselves prone.

The final journey on our pilgrimage is to Nalanda, the site of the largest Buddhist University in ancient times and to Rajgir where the Buddha taught the Mahayana in what is known as the Second Turning of the Wheel on Vulture Peak Mountain. We hire a van and a driver. Our first stop is Nalanda. Once more, we see a site of immense destruction but also have a sense of the immense learning and practice and flowering of Buddhist civilization. For the first time in our pilgrimage, we see images of

yogis and yoginis in various postures on the surviving stone sculpted friezes and images of Tantric deities preserved on the artifacts in the museum.

I understand concretely the connection now between the physical place of the man, Buddha Shakyamuni, in history, and the survival of Buddhism in Tibet. The Buddha entered into the full realization of primordial wisdom at a place just south of here at Gaya. And he began to teach and his words were recorded in the sutras. What he taught was put into practice and the experiences of the masters of meditation were likewise recorded in the texts and in the forms of Tantric art. The texts that existed in Nalanda were copied and taken to Tibet and when the Muslims finally destroyed this Buddhist seat of learning hundreds of texts were safe in Tibet and so survived to the present day. To stand on the grounds of Nalanda was to experience a link in the chain from Buddha Shakyamuni to the present time. To feel the survival of a tradition that began a few

Tibet Awareness Day Amherst, Massachusetts

by Verena Smith

The Second Annual Tibet Awareness Day, organized by the local Tibetan community and the Shang Shung Institute, took place on a sparkling bright day on the main common in the town of Amherst, Massachusetts.

The morning began with Tibetan vendors setting up tables to sell their goods. All was done in "Tibetan time", as also the Tibetans themselves refer to their more relaxed sense of schedule and timing.

The event opened with the Tibetans who are part of the Tibetan resettlement project talking about their own history in these last few years in the US. They spoke of their homeland, about what they had to leave behind and what they are hoping for. Since they are the Tibetans living in exile in the United States, their presentation is much more eloquent and moving in the relating of their first hand accounts of life in Diaspora.

With this second Awareness Day, a new format was explored that seemed to work very well. Seven different local bands were invited to alternate with the Tibetan musicians to celebrate the four hour afternoon concert.

The highlight of the day was a big circle dance where we were patiently taught Tibetan folk dances. There was plenty of laughter. Much to everyone's delight, the Tibetans had cooked a seemingly endless stream of momos.

There was a small photographic exhibit of Tibet in a local restaurant. The Amherst Library featured an exhibit of Tibetan travel books and antique religious items for the month preceding the event. On the town common there was a display of Tibetan medicine with a local Tibetan doctor answering questions. We had a Dzogchen community table with books for sale and we informed those interested of the Shang Shung Institute. Many people showed strong support and deep interest. The winner of the raffle walked away with a lovely thangka of green Tara and the general feeling was of a very successful event.

miles away from this monastic and Tantric university and was brought by Padasambhava walking all the way through Nepal and into Tibet.

From Nalanda we drive down to Rajgir, where Japanese Buddhists have built a chair lift that rises almost all the way to the top of Vulture Peak mountain. No one can watch you or hear you as you sing the Song of the Vajra while soaring through space in mechanical flight. The chair lift leaves you off at a huge Stupa also built by the Nam Mhyo Renge Khyo sect; but the place where Buddha taught is on the mountain adjacent and was totally deserted when we climbed it. We investigate the small caves that are dotted all over the slopes and the small shrine at the top of the mountain. The Heart Sutra was the first Sutra I ever heard read and here I stand with Paula in the place where Sariputra and Ananda and the great bodhisattvas sat at the Buddha's feet and heard it themselves for the first time. It is a perfect final stop. It brings me back to the beginning of my own search. There are certainly moments in my life when unfamiliar iconography, traditional parables and textual language seem difficult to comprehend, but here on Vulture Peak Mountain we taste how East and West merge without conflict in direct and open experience. ■



THE MIRROR
NEWSPAPER OF THE
INTERNATIONAL
DZOGCHEN
COMMUNITY

founded by Chögyal
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: 100530.527@
compuserve.com

EDITORS
Naomi Zeitz, Tsegalgar
Liz Granger, Merigar

LITERARY EDITOR
John Shane

ADVISORS
Anna Eid
Des Barry
Barbara Paparazzo
Jim Valby
Adriano Clemente

DESIGN AND PRODUCTION
K. Dobbs

ILLUSTRATION
Glen Eddy

PRINTERS
Turley Publishers
Palmer, MA

DISTRIBUTION
Tsegalgar at
Conway, Massachusetts

SUBSCRIPTION RATE/6 ISSUES
\$35 available through Tsegalgar
\$5.000 lt. lire through Merigar

All material ©1997 by The Mirror.
Reprint by permission only.
We reserve the right to edit
all submissions.

Call Toll Free 888-884-KONA

Aloha Fresh Flowers

Fresh Hawaiian Flora
Shipped Nation-wide \$49.95

<http://www.hitrade.com>

KEOKEA KONA FARM

Certified Organic
100% KONA COFFEE
First Prize Winner

COFFEE \$20.95/pound
Whole Bean
Latate Packaged

Time brought ripening. The culmination of a four year cycle manifested as a maturation, a celebration of the potency of Tara Mandala as a center for practice, wisdom and activity. Rain came and the drought broke. The land basked in a pool of water, face turned gloriously upward to a cloud spangled

Much activity was humming in the background during this time. Precariously perched on the Dragon's Back, Tsultrim's retreat cabin is now complete, stucco, outhouse and rainwater tank all in place. Already empowered by many a retreat, the cabin aglow, is now a self-contained and largely self-sufficient little world. A

Tara Mandala's Summer Ripening

by Elle Loudon

sky. Sage and Yarrow born with the melting snow, seeded at knee height. Strewn by nature's deft hand, wildflowers of sky rockets, daisies, sunflowers, Mexican Hats, bee balm, wild mint, gum weed and biscuit root became a mosaic to wade through. Chipmunks played, turkeys wandered and coyotes yipped into the night. This truly is how it was on the land this summer. Lush and very beautiful. The abundance provided by our natural environment reflected like a mirror the cornucopia of dedicated teachers present during the summer period.

The Ute Indian people of this area are strongly connected with the mountains and meadows which have become Tara Mandala. As our connection with this environment grows, the Ute elders, Bertha Grove and her husband Vincent, foster this connection, like their own family.

Heralded by those who attended as "Much-needed" and "Ground-Breaking", the family retreat offered spirituality to each member. Held by council circle and led by their spirits, parents, children and teens explore the place of ritual marking transition within the family. Younger kids tied themselves in knots with yoga, made prayer flags from rubbing of leaves, and talked about their own ideas of spirituality. Parents shared and compared ideas and obstacles within the framework of teachings on Bodhicitta. The teenagers, led by Sparky Shooting Star and White Horse Hubbell, dedicated much time to prayer wrapped bundles. They then moved through a tear drenched, heart wrenched cord cutting ceremony, their cord cut, taken by a warrior from the womb-like yurt into the realm of Vision Quest, alone on the hill for 24 hours and return into young adulthood.

Drawing the season to a close, Tara Mandala hosted Tsok Nyi Rinpoche, followed by Wangdor Rinpoche. Both retreats complimented each other perfectly, held magically by the seclusion and expansive views offered by this powerful yet nurturing land. Tsok Nyi Rinpoche led us clearly and precisely into Dzogchen mind and experience. Wangdor Rinpoche masterfully guided us through the Khorde Rushen, answering questions and pushing us with expert sensitivity. During the final three days of this summer's schedule, Wangdor Rinpoche taught on Nyala Chang Chub Dorje's Maha Ati, the three words of Garab Dorje and the Trechog from the Yeshe Lama. A perfect ending to an amazing season of teachings.

sight has been cleared for the next hut, with vast views east, south and to Chimney Rock in the West.

Mary Thunder came by on her way to the Lakota Sun dance which would see her husband, Horse, made chief. The day she arrived, the hand carved snow lions had been carefully set in place on the Stupa. The ceremony to celebrate and dedicate this momentous occasion was spontaneously and appropriately led by Thunder, offering blessing and prayer to the four directions and passing the sacred pipe. We hope to complete the throne of the Nyala Padma Duddul Stupa by early October.

An amphitheater with seating for about five hundred people has been fashioned out of an area of high erosion, thus minimizing the erosion and providing space for theater and music although it is primarily for the practice of the Vajra Dance and Yantra Yoga. It has a view through the valley to the mountains, to the yurt and the Prayer flags but is hidden from view of the road. It is as though the land showed us where to place this special piece. When you dance it is as though the potential for the Dance has always been held there and by dancing you gain access to it. Everything just clicks right in and even if you are fumbling your way through the moves, it still feels really amazing.

Many retreatants and precious guests passed through the entrance to Tara Mandala this abundant summer, twice the forecast number. Many came eyes wide with curiosity, searching minds eager and left one short retreat later, satisfied, filled with practical information and experience to mull over and integrate in the coming weeks, months ahead. The staff were an inspiration. Practitioners all, dedication strong and motivation pure, their sincerity and honesty with each other created a subtle but firm undercurrent, a transparent mattress upon which the energy of each retreat could rest.

The summer is now memories, fading as dreams do into the hazy past. The imprint remains. Residual traces leave impressions in each and every being who was fortunate enough to experience some aspect of the transforming energy which was at play here in this bountiful time.

Ontul Rinpoche and his wife Tashila stopped by for a brief visit and passed on this special prayer which should be shared. It comes from Drigung Kyoppa Jigten Sumgon upon beholding Tara's presence. Through practice we will aim to incorporate it into the mandala which is Tara Mandala.

The Seven Stanza Tara Prayer

Ma kye wa may pay cho ying na

In the Dharma Expanse of the unborn mother

Yum jetsun lhamo drolma shuk

She, the holy goddess Tara, resides

De sem can kun la de ter ma

Bestowing happiness to all;

Dak jik pa kun lay kyap tu sol

I invoke her protection from all fear!

Rang cho ku yin par ma shay nay

My mind is Dharmakaya, but I don't know it

Sem nyon mong wang du gyur pa yi

So it gets into trouble;

Ma khor war cham pay sem can la

For the sake of my mother and sentient beings in samsara's trap

Yum lha mo chödkyi kyap tu sol

Oh Mother, Goddess, I invoke your protection!

Cho nying nay gyud la ma kyap par

Dharma, heartfelt, isn't in me

Tha nyay tsik gi jay trang nay

So common wordy systems

Grup ta ngan pay lu pa la

And noxious philosophies deceive me

Yum yang tak gi lha moy kyap to sol

Oh Mother, Righteous Goddess, I invoke your protection!

Tok par ga wa rang gi sem

It's hard to know my mind;

Tong nay gom par mi jed pa

When glimpsed, but not deepened

Ja wa ngan pay yeng wa la

I get swept up by bad things

Yum tren pay lha moy kyap tu sol

Oh Mother, Mindful Goddess, I invoke your protection!

Sem rang jung nyi may ye shay la

Self-arisen mind is non-dual wisdom

Nyisu dzin pay pak chay kyi

Yet habits of seizing onto duality

Ji tar jay kyang ching pa yi

Cause entrapment in whatever occurs

Thuk nyi may kyi lah moy kyap tu sol

Oh Goddess of Undivided Heart, I invoke your protection!

Yang tak gi don la nay jay kyang

I've been in the actual state, but

Gyu dray kyi ten drel ma shay pay

Didn't get the link between cause and effect

Shay jay don la mong pa yi

So I'm confused about the meaning of things

Yum kun khyen lha moy kyap tu sol

Oh Mother, All-knowing Goddess, I invoke your protection!

Tu dral nam khai tsen nyi chan

The thought-free state is like the sky

Tam chay day tang yer may ching

All are inseparable from it

Ta dung lop may kang sak la

So now and forever, for the sake of disciples,

Yum dzok sang gay kyi kyap tu sol

Oh Mother, I invoke the protection of your complete realization!

These seven stanzas, which carry a protective blessing, were bestowed by Tara the Protectress, in the E Chung Cave, to the Dri Kun Master Jikten Sum Gon, when he directly beheld her presence.

Translated into English, at the request of Ontul Rinpoche and Tsultrim Allione, by Steven Goodman at Tara Mandala, Summer 1997

ANSWERS

I threw my mala into the river today
the river close by
that I often cross without notice
the river I sat with questions unanswered
100's of times and counting
listening but hearing only noise

My mala went over the wall
like a small intestine
a digestive part of so much prayer
guttured from so much prayer
to meet the waters below
a ragged lightning knowing no obstacles
that swept it over around and between
dwarfed by all the rocks
rocks that I used my mala to crush
without success
over the years

Gene Balicek

A DREAM BOOK

Please send in your
dreams of Chögyal
Namkhai Norbu to include
in a book to benefit
The Mirror.

The dreams will be printed
anonymously. Please send them

by email:
102121.130@compuserve.com

by disk
for Macintosh or Dos saved in
text format,
or as a last resort,

typewritten to:
The Mirror,
PO Box 277,
Conway, MA, 01341 USA.

SHANG SHUNG INSTITUTE SCHEDULE NOVEMBER 1997

MERIGAR

8 - 9 November 10.00 - 15.00
Massage Course by Andino "Qhaqoy"

14 November 17.00
Introductory Conference on Traditional Tibetan Astrology
by Dr. Jampa Kalsang

15 - 16 November 10.00 and 15.00
Course on Tibetan Astrology of the Elements (b Yung-rTsis)
by Dr. Jampa Kalsang

17 - 20 November
Astrological Consultations
by Dr. Jampa Kalsang

29 - 30 November 10.00 and 15.00
Course on Physical Harmony
by Prof. H. Huarache Mamani

REFLECTIONS

ONE DROP TOO MUCH

by Glen Eddy

I'm a sober person and I don't take drugs, nor do I smoke. I try to take care of myself. However, I wasn't always like this, it's been a long battle. I was a drug addict and an alcoholic. I started drinking when I was twelve years old, often I went to school with a hangover, sometimes so sick that the teachers would tell me to go home. Early in my life, I showed signs of being out of control. When I was a little boy I would steal money from my mother's purse and run to the store and buy candy. And that would be the pattern of my behavior for the next forty years. Later I would steal whatever you had and sell it and run to the connection and buy heroin. I'm not embarrassed to say these things, because I'm a different person now. I've tried in most cases to open the way for putting right the wrongs I have done. Of course alcoholism and drug addiction are symptoms of deep seated problems. I knew that in order to get at the problems, I had to stop drinking and taking drugs and I had to get honest. With me, I had to stop taking drugs to get clear enough to even consider that honesty was important. I remember being kicked out of an addiction treatment facility for not being honest. Funny thing, I had just spent my whole life being dishonest, now in a few short months I was supposed to be a model of honesty. Honesty came but it took years. I think maybe most people are honest, but we don't generally think about honesty as a spiritual principle. If we can't be honest, how can we be honest when we observe ourselves? Or when one of our brothers or sisters is in the grip of drunkenness or stoned and they're life is becoming opposed to dharma, should we just play like it isn't happening, or should we confront the situation? For most addicts and alcoholics, drinking and taking drugs is a life threatening situation. Sometimes we just don't know what to do. Of course if someone was going to jump off a building we'd try to stop them. But we let people drink

until their health is ruined. I think we have to somehow try to help even if it means losing a friendship. This is where honesty comes in and being able to look at the situation clearly. I still lie sometimes, it just happens. It's kind of shocking when it does. Sometimes I lie for a joke but I think that I've lost my ability to be a productive liar. I think that I'm honest enough to see my own problems and honest enough to confront you if your problems are taking you out of control.

I was like a lot of children growing up in an alcoholic family, never knowing what to expect, I learned to lie early on. I learned to always be OK and to hide my feelings.

I wanted to be a good person. This was my mother's influence, she always told me that I was a good person, she never gave up. Later in life when I entered art school and the whole world seemed to open up and I started taking drugs on a regular basis, I actually considered myself to be on a spiritual journey. We all make decisions in our life about which way to go. I didn't become a heroin addict by accident. And I didn't stop taking it by accident. It took a great desire to have a different life. Once I made the decision to change, it took a few years to really get out of the life style. And I didn't stop taking drugs by myself, other drug addicts who had stopped, and changed their lives, helped me. And since then I've helped others. I didn't completely stop until I was forty



Glen in his studio

W. Harding

seven years old. I'm now fifty seven, it's been ten years. At my first Dzogchen community retreat I had been without drugs and alcohol for thirty days. I was feeling very vulnerable and raw and a little apprehensive, as there were people there who knew me quite well. When our master began teaching every word was like medicine. People were looking at me because I was so excited I kept saying, "Do you hear what he's saying?" I could scarcely believe my ears. Rinpoche was giving Dzogchen teachings in such a clear and precise manner, he proceeded through the whole three series. I was completely excited, one minute laughing, the next almost crying. Finally everything began to come together in my heart. This was a real turning point in my life. Since that first retreat our community has changed a lot. Then there was a lot of drinking. At the end of the retreat, just before the puja, Rinpoche gave a little talk about drinking. He said, "We must know our capacity, and for some of us one drop might be too much, for then we'd want another and another. Then one bottle would

not be enough, we'd have to have two, and so on. If you are a person like this, then it is better that you don't even take one drop!" I felt that he was talking directly to me, he was even looking at me as he said these things. I had been worried all day about this, and when I saw the offering table with so many bottles of wine, I wondered how I was going to deal with the situation. So when Rinpoche said, "For some, one drop is too much". I knew for myself, that this was true. Even still today I don't take one drop. I know for myself that if I lose my sobriety, I lose the teachings. Being clean and sober is very precious to me.

Our Community has changed a lot, I don't see the drunkenness that I witnessed at my first few retreats. We've become a little more serious, and have lost a few of the diehard drinkers. I feel sad about this because, underneath they were good people. I hope, like me, they'll be back. I feel that it is important for me to say something about this problem in our Community, because I have experienced it myself, and I know what despair someone with these problems goes through. All of the years that I was involved in taking teachings from various masters, since I was 29 years old, my life was in turmoil, and I must say that none of it did me much good. They were all kind, and loving toward me, but I really couldn't be reached, I just wasn't there. Of course, I didn't

know that I wasn't there. I was dishonest and self centered. I do know that there are normal people who drink and might on occasion drink too much, and it does not control their life. I'm not talking about normal people. However if you do have problems and you want to clean up, and change your life, and be free, besides all of the other reasons, like for your family or for your children, the best reason would be for yourself. Give yourself the opportunity to feel well and develop your capacity to understand the teachings.

My life has changed completely since cleaning up. When I first met Choegyal Namkhai Norbu, he was giving a teaching in my house in Berkeley in 1983, and as a favor to some old friends I agreed to allow a short retreat in part of the house. I was addicted to heroin and could not participate, the only thing I wanted was more drugs. How sad I was to be in this circumstance, with this wonderful master right there in my house, and unable to participate.

Naomi asked me to write something about my experiences with drugs and drinking in relationship to the teachings. It is not easy to do. Not because I am embarrassed about having been a drug addict, but because the idea is to help someone and that's the hard part. What to say to someone who may have problems like this. Nothing worked for me until I wanted to stop. Wanting to stop and knowing that if I didn't I was going to die, having lived a useless wasted life.

I realize my good fortune, few people as deep in the trenches of everyday heroin addiction as I was, ever get out. These days I'm happy, and it's easy to forget this dimension of human suffering. So writing this is a safeguard against complacency. Knowing that few ever escape the grips of active addiction, I hope these words serve as a cause for a moment of clarity. ■

My name is Gendun Sakyal and I am thirty-two years old. I was born in Kham, Southern Tibet in 1966. Our life in Tibet was very difficult, there was not enough food and we were very poor. We were working for the government. I was born into a nomadic family. I took care of one hundred and twenty yaks from the age of ten years old until I was thirteen. My family was my mother and my younger brother who lived in the tent with me and my father who lived in the village taking care of the farm. Also I had two sisters who each went to live with their husbands' families. Sometimes my father would bring barley flour and milk, but still it was very difficult to have enough to eat.

We would wake up at two in the morning and do the milking. We had seventy female yaks and around seventy male. My mother would make the butter and my little brother took care of the baby yaks who drank all the milk so we couldn't make enough butter to fill our quota for the government and they took the butter in tax. Life was too hard.

When I was thirteen years old I just quit and left. They told me I could study when I was thirteen, but I couldn't stay anymore. In the middle of the night I left and started walking to Lhasa. I thought maybe

to be a monk. It took me three and one half months to get to Lhasa. I slept under trees, in caves, in boxes and sometimes people would give me food or sometimes I would be very hungry. At this point I didn't think of returning home because all I could see as my future was the yaks.

When I first arrived in Lhasa I went to the Potala. It was amazing! I walked around it three times and made three prostrations. Then I went to the Chokang. I was very happy to reach Lhasa and thought maybe I could make some money and return home. I slept with the beggars on the street. Some people started paying me to carve Om Mani Padme Hum in the stones. Everyday I would spend all the money I made, but one night I couldn't because all the shops were closed and it was a worry for me. I ate my meals in restaurants. I lived in a cave below the Potala for four or five months.

One day a man wanted to buy a stone from me and he told me I should go to India. He lived in Nepal. He said the Dalai Lama was

LIFE IN AMERICA

The Story of Gendun Sakyal



in India. I didn't really know that the Dalai Lama was a real man when I arrived in Lhasa. I thought he was some kind of statue. Then I wanted to go to India to see him. I went to a travel agent in Lhasa and they said it would be impossible for me to go.

So, I started walking. Sometimes people gave me rides. I would tell them I was going to Mount Kailash. At the border between China and Nepal there was a big bridge and many guards. I went up into the

mountains in the snow and almost died there. I had very little clothing on. Then I decided to go down little by

little and saw a big truck and realized it was a Nepali truck and I had arrived in Nepal. It took me two days to go over the mountains. My life as a nomad was good training for this journey.

In Nepal I couldn't speak with anyone because I didn't know Nepali. They would talk to me and give me food. Finally I found some men who spoke Tibetan and I had some Chinese money left so I took the bus to Kathmandu. I stayed for two days in the street, it was much warmer there but the mosquitoes almost killed me. I had never encountered them before. Then finally someone spoke to me in Tibetan and took me to the Tibetan Refugee place and I stayed with them for a week and had some food, sleep, a wash and some rest.

I went to work washing sheepskins and making carpets for 35 rupees or 75 cents per day. I lived in a dormitory temporarily with other refugees. Then I got into a bad fight with some Nepali and Tibetan guys

and they almost killed me so I fought back and got fired. I was relieved. It was a very hard job.

Then I was homeless and went around. I met a monk who hired me to make medicines. I stayed in a monastery and started to do decorating and wall painting. I stayed there some months.

In 1995 there was the Kalachakra in Bodhgaya with His Holiness the Dalai Lama and everyone was going and I also wanted to be a monk. So I went to Byalakupe and harvested corn and helped the monks. I realized that I didn't want to be a monk, there were too many rules, so I went to Dharamsala and studied thangka painting for seven years.

Then I won the lottery when the US government decided to allow in one thousand Tibetans. I came to Santa Fe, New Mexico in December of 1992. I now have a family, a wife called Thinley Wangmo, and two children - one girl three years old called Tenzin Sangmo and a baby boy seven months called Tenzin Nangche. I have been working as a housekeeper and caretaker for two years and sometimes still do thangka painting.

I wished to be a nomad no more and I sure got what I asked for! ■

The Mirror: Can you tell us about your life and what happened that led you to the teachings?

Costa: My whole life?

M: Maybe a point in your life or childhood that impacted you or the events that happened in your life that brought you here?

C: One thing that changed my life was a car accident I had. I nearly died in this accident. It wasn't until a few days after the accident that I realized that I could have died. Suddenly my life could end, something I had never thought about before. I thought that death wouldn't be something that happened to me.

After I experienced this I appreciated life more. I was focused less on the security of life, like a house and a job. I began to develop a feeling about something else. I went on with my study of law and found a job in an office in Rome.

I saw the difference in the theory I was studying at the university and the actual practice of law. I was realizing the concept of rights; in the theory it was very apparent but not in the practice. I had a hard time managing this difference. I didn't know what to do. My family wanted me to be a lawyer. But they were stuck with me and my principles, and I wanted to study about rights....

M: So your intention in being a lawyer was to help people know and preserve their rights?

C: Yes, of course, and to have a better world where rights are respected.

Then it was very nice, the sensation then to be free and having to choose another type of life and realizing I could do anything. I discovered in myself a very big excitement from this realization. It was very hard for my family to share this excitement because they were worried for me and my future.

M: How old were you then?

C: I was nearly twenty-three years old.

They said they could accept that I didn't want to be a lawyer, but they said 'What do you want to do then?' and I said 'I don't know. There are so many things I could do'. They appreciated this and tried to support me to discover. This was a big challenge in my life; to face the world like it really is outside. I maintained a relationship with my family.

Six months after I left my study I discovered I could draw. When I was younger I always had problems in school with the drawing teacher, but when I was free of that, one day I took a pencil and paper and made a drawing. I was very surprised at what I saw in the end, it was really what I was looking at. Then I chose to study painting.

M: Were you still living in Rome?

C: No, I was living in England. I had traveled a bit around Europe and ended up in England. After this I worked as a street painter. I painted the streets to make my living. I appreciated the good relationships with the people. In the street you can meet anyone. There are many possibilities. You can meet a policeman who just kicks you away and you can meet someone who would give you a job. I met someone who offered me a job and I took it and I learned to work with it. This was very good. I developed this and became a professional decorator. I worked with many different styles of paintings in private houses in different places and this gave me enough money to develop

my own painting. Sometimes I had to compromise a lot and what I really wanted was to do my own art and get a contract at a gallery.

In 1992, by chance, I met a gallery dealer from Los Angeles who thought I was good painter and gave me this chance to work and live in Los Angeles painting for his gallery. The gallery was a high quality gallery and good opportunity to make money with my paintings, so it was a good situation. I found I was judging the people who were buying my paintings because the paintings went well with their furniture. It wasn't why I painted. So, I didn't sign a contract and went back to Italy. So I was working for a decorator in Rome and was getting involved in a Social Center.

M: What is a Social Center?

C: It was a group of people who occupied an area, a squat mainly, a place of radical leftists. I lived and worked there for six years.

M: What did you do there?

C: I got involved in several different levels, nearly all the levels that existed there. I started with what I could do. I still was doing my decorator work because I needed money to live. Then I began to teach about drawing and as a part of drawing about creativity. Then I began to paint.

M: Did you formally study painting?

C: No. I wanted to study at the Academy of Art in Rome but was too late to enroll, so I applied at an Academy outside of Rome. I showed my work to get admitted to the Academy and the teacher told me I shouldn't try to work before I finished the Academy. So, I realized maybe it was better not to study in this way and face the difficulties myself. I would find and discover how it worked and solutions and how the masters worked, etc. It took me about two years to become satisfied with my painting and drawing. Then after I developed my skill I realized I was lacking ideas, so I would go around and visit and discuss with people and discovered how to come up with ideas. I was very happy with this and wanted to share these things with other people. So then I started to make workshops on this. This was very good because when I was explaining my experience I would get benefit and had good responses from people. I did this for six years and this is the first year I'm not running this workshop.

M: Do you still live at the Social Center?

C: I live near there but it has now been one year and a half that I am traveling a lot with the theater and I just stop there in between. Maybe something is changing in my relationship with this place. I attribute a lot of my development to this place. I was judging the society when I arrived there. When I first arrived there I was a very reactive rebel against everybody, about jus-

HOW I MET THE TEACHINGS

Interview with Costantino Pucci
Namgyalgar, Easter Retreat, April, 1997



Costa the Clown

PHOTO BY G. CIARALLO

tice all around the world. There I learned to live in a common place with other people. Sharing an anarchist place where no one is telling you what to do, you have to develop an awareness of what to do, and if you develop this awareness you will find less problems and if you don't you will find lots and lots of problems. It was a very good experience for me living there.

M: Good training for the Dzogchen Community. Were the relationships there very difficult?

C: Yes, in the beginning it was quite difficult. It was a very radical place so the people were supposed to be aware of what they were doing and I did not have any political experience in this way so I made a lot of mistakes. In political and maybe religious experiences when you are new stepping into something you can't have the full experience. So maybe something you understand you can work with the circumstances, but with something you don't understand you are always asking why. Just reacting in this way. Maybe I experienced this a bit attending the retreat. I didn't know any of the practices or had never met a master of this kind before. I never thought about it really. It was completely new for me. I felt a lot, of course, even if it is a completely different from what I know, I find that the spirit of the research or exploring of the people is basically the same. It's a reaction to the injustices and suffering of life. If you take action, political or whatever - not just to be stuck and blindly following the rules of society - maybe you will reach somewhere else. At least you are moving, you're alive.

M: So you never had any interest in any kind of spiritual life?

C: Not really. But one year after I arrived at the Social Center I had the chance to study theater work, the clowning. Some comedians came for the Winter, to study there. They called a master to study with and he came there. They asked me to join the group. This master is a professional actor and a clown. His work was based in Kundalini yoga and that's when I first started to hear anyone talking about energy in another way I had never heard

before. At first I didn't understand. I never heard about this, but I had a feeling, and I follow my feelings. What my senses tell me I go after. I also try to be careful because sometimes in my life I have found difficulties in this way. I didn't take care, or go slow into things. After this workshop I took from this master I started to play as a clown. I also worked on something I didn't really understand, but I felt a very big sensation, and I had a relationship with a mate in the company so in this context it was a very complete landscape of emotion and sensation to work with. I had a very quick development into this thing. I found it very familiar, something that wasn't difficult, it was natural to enter. I had a very

deep experience during the first tour we had. Maybe something very strange, a feeling like you can hear stones talking, a very strong sensation and experience. I didn't really know how to handle it, and got frightened a bit. I went along with the work of a clown because for another time in my life I felt something more and more greater growing and I gave up the painting and became a clown.

Somebody told me 'You are not serious because you are always changing your mind'. But I feel like I'm not only changing, I'm developing. It's still me. It's one line going. I don't refuse my past. I love my past. It brought me here. And with the clowning and the other master and playing in the street, the experience became stronger and the interaction with the people; when you are clowning in the street, you have to stop your work and interact and handle this thing that's happening and play with the people. This is a very big teaching I learned very quickly, because if you do something wrong the audience will just disappear. You remain alone. That's a bad situation for a clown.

I traveled all over Europe and South America with the company. It was basically the same company. It was a very great experience.

I realized after a while I was working with energy and I asked myself what is this energy and, even for example in the Social Center we were working with energy but we never spoke about it properly, we talked about politics. I wanted to understand this energy more deeply. Going around I met people who talked about energy in a different way and this made me careful in my investigation. Then I met someone who told me about Rinpoche and that he could be helpful. Like other times in my life I took the decision quickly and decided yes and I came with this person here and met the Master. I never met a master like this before, I never met a Rinpoche and didn't even know what the word meant. It has been a very great experience. The practices and everything have been a different kind of feeling than I

felt before. It's very deep.

M: When you did this Kundalini work before did you have any exercises or ways of working with energy when you were working with the theater master?

C: Yes, we did meditation and chanting mantras but he never really explained. He used this part to make us ready for the second part, the theater work, which is why we called him to work. He said he had learned this with effort and was using this to help us develop energy and a relationship with the body, working with the body and intuition. But he didn't really explain to us what it was about.

M: Did you ever have any conflict with your political life which was very important to you for a long time, and this spiritual life that maybe carried a different view? Or did you feel it was a natural evolutionary process? Were others involved in the Social Center comfortable with this energetic and Kundalini work?

C: For me it is a matter of development, of evolution. I learned enough about the solutions with political means that is very useful and some other things I found meaningless. No effect. I even felt my energies were going for nothing. This is not only because of the politics. First I was thinking of revolution in the society. Now I am stepping into personal revolution. That has to happen first. Otherwise even if I could reach the society to make a revolution, I would still have to reach the person within the society. It's something that nobody can do FOR you, everyone has to do for themselves. This would bring a real change in the society. I have only this for a short time and maybe I still have to do it. It's something I see more clearly and is an important passage and is a stepping into another level. I will be sorry for someone who would mind about my decision, it is a free decision, and I don't mind what other people are doing. I really respect what people are doing and not to judge something that is personal for someone and is helping ourselves and our energy.

M: So this is the first time you've met Norbu Rinpoche coming here to Australia and the first time you have done Dzogchen practices. How does it feel to you?

C: Yes, I don't feel some dramatic experience of change. I feel an understanding of something that was already inside me. I feel confident in some part and some part I don't understand. I feel good for this and respect the Dzogchen. What I like about what Rinpoche says is that the practice is not for the sake of the practice itself, but to reach the state. I agree very much with this, and feel it's very important. I would like to practice more and study more and see. I didn't feel like this before coming here and feel more clear about things, about energy and about my mission in life. Even if I still don't know anything. I was more foggy before.

M: So will you continue to do your clowning?

C: Yes, I also like teaching clowning as well. I would like to do both directions; for people who want to be professionals and for people who don't. I like to relate to people in this way.

M: So maybe one day you could come to Tsegalgar in America and teach us clowning?

C: Yes!

M: Thank you very much, Costa!

NAKED IN NEW YORK

by John Shane

Tall, thin, clad in black jeans and a black denim shirt, Rick's gray hair is shoulder length, his face is pale, and his eyes are gleaming out at me from behind the silver metal rims of his glasses.

"OK, let's roll 'em," he says with a sly grin, and turning to face the console with its row on row of knobs and faders, he hits a button.

Music swells into the control room: an intricate tracery of unaccompanied acoustic guitar, the breathy sound of a melodica, the swirl of a violin, then drums. Rick turns back to me with a wide grin:

"There you go!" he yells over the music. "No problem! It's all there. No sweat! Nothing wrong with that!"

I grin back at him, a sense of surprise and relief replacing the tense anticipation of the preceding few hours. Then my voice comes out of the big wall mounted speakers, my voice from twenty years ago, singing a song I wrote almost thirty years ago, one of the best songs I ever wrote, recorded in 1976 and released on a record album of songs with the title 'Cross My Palm With Silver'—at present no longer available.

Now I'm in New York, and I've brought the huge, heavy reels of the original 24 track studio tape to the city to see if there is anything still on them after all this time. I had been warned that this type of tape usually decays after 15 years, even if stored in perfect condition, and my tapes had been treated rather casually, to say the least. So I had been more than concerned: I had been worried the tapes would be blank, and that I would not be able to recover the material on them.

Rick is a top mastering engineer, and I had to book his studio weeks in advance to get to be able to use the 24 track analog machines he still has installed there. Most studios don't use that kind of equipment any more. I wanted to find out if there was anything left on my tapes that could be transferred to digital, firstly to preserve the songs, but also to remix the music so that I could put it onto a CD. Old analog recordings don't sound right when they are transferred to digital without being remixed.

As the song booms out into the studio, Rick is staring at me.

I'm filled with intense emotion. The music I wrote pours like a storm over us, and I sit down in one of the two swivel chairs and roll it on its little steel wheels towards the mixing console, until I can reach the faders. I reach out and push the sliding controls tentatively up and down, getting the feel of them. The balance of the instruments changes as I move the sliders, and I can emphasize different players.

Rick reaches over, and pulls all the faders down except one, leaving only my voice singing without any other instruments. How strange: now I can hear every nuance of what I was thinking as I sang twenty years ago—not the actual thoughts themselves—but the feelings that I am experiencing behind the words of the song. My voice on the tape is higher in pitch than it is now that I'm 50 years old. I'm not a particularly good singer, but on the tape, I'm really delivering the words of the song with power and precision. Listening, I'm caught between wonder and embarrassment. That's me, revealed all running off these huge heavy reels of Ampex tape spinning on the now vintage Studer tape deck.

Sitting on the other swivel chair, Rick flicks the faders back up and the music of the whole band swells to put the emotional punctuation around my voice again, dotting the i's and crossing the t's of what I'm singing: a mysterious song, a song of prophecy and revelation, a song of a spiritual quest that perhaps prefigured things that later happened in my life.

How did I write such a thing at the age of twenty?

Sitting in the studio in New York with Rick, a huge wave of memories comes sweeping down on me with the music. I see myself—way back before I met Rinpoche, before I got married, before I had kids—recording the song and singing it on a tour of the UK—that's the time that I met my wife Jo. But I also remember everything that went into the writing of the song—my travels as a young man in England and Ireland meeting with gypsies, researching what was left of the oral gypsy culture. There are so many layers of associations relating to the song for me that I wonder how it must sound to someone who has never heard it before.

I turn and look at Rick, seated beside me in his studio chair. His shoulders are hunched over the console, his concentration is complete.

When the music stops, he flicks a switch and the tape reels cease spinning on the old tape deck behind us.

He turns to me with his sly grin again.

"That's you singing isn't it?" he asks.

I hadn't told him that I was the artist. I had booked the studio as a producer.

"Yep," I say, and he nods, looking me straight in the eye.

"Good song," he says emphatically. "Kinda touch of Leonard Cohen, touch of Dylan in there, but it's your own thing all right, too. My kind of music. You know I used to be Leonard Cohen's mixing engineer? I mixed a whole lot of his albums, and also mixed his live concert tours for him."

I didn't know that, I tell him. Standing in the lobby waiting for him to show up that morning—he was fashionably late—I had time to take in the gold records he has hanging there on the walls. But none of them mentioned Leonard Cohen.

"Well," says Rick, in his New York drawl. "These tapes are in good shape, as far as I can see. We'll have no trouble transferring them to digital. How soon you need them?"

But he doesn't wait for me to answer. He hits the button that sets the tape machine spinning again and the intro to the next song—louder and faster this time—chimes out, as his fingers leap to the faders to tweak and adjust this and that.

"I really need them ready by tomorrow evening at the latest!"

I have to yell into the music, as if shouting into a strong breeze.

Rick yells back:

"Might be able to do it. Akira

said you wanted to do the remix at his studio; but you could do it here, long as you don't want to add anything new to the tape."

"Thanks," I shout. "But I want to make a few changes. So it's got to be done at Akira's."

Akira Satake is a Japanese guy I met when I was in New Orleans. In my piece in the last edition of *The Mirror*, I wrote about my trip down

could see a large man with a pony tail of graying hair who we would learn was Scott Knoll, the engineer. Sitting next to him was a tall young guitar player who was running through some changes while Scott tried out variations of the recorded sound of the guitar.

Akira said matter of factly:

"This used to be John Lennon's private recording studio. All custom design by George Martin. Neve equipment, very expensive to maintain."

Matteo and I looked at each other, grinning. John Lennon's personal studio? We felt good about that. And Neve, which Akira mentioned, made some of the best mixing consoles, now considered vintage and much coveted by engineers.

"Akira," I said. "What if I came in here with some old analog 24 track tapes from the early seventies? Could you work on them, remix them, add to them, and so on?"

I had the idea there and then on the spur of the moment; I hadn't really thought of it before. I knew I was going to Italy for the

summer, and that I had the old multitrack tapes stored in our house there, near Merigar. So I would be able to get the tapes and bring them back to New York in the Autumn.

"No problem," Akira replied. "Except we don't have analog tape deck here. You must transfer tapes first to digital. Then we remix with you."

Which is how, after spending a glorious summer in Italy and taking the family back home to resume school, I came to be in New York in Rick's studio making the transfer to digital prior to going back to Akira's.

But why am I returning to this music after so long?

I remember giving a copy of the record to Rinpoche when I arrived in his apartment in Formia the summer that we began to work on his book 'The Crystal and The Way of Light'. And I remember how, when I told him it contained my songs, my music, he almost grabbed the record from me. After quickly looking at it, he immediately stuffed it away, hiding it in the bottom of his living-room shelf units. It seemed to me, as a European, to be an odd gesture. But I guessed that in Tibetan culture stashing a gift away like that was a sign of how much the gift was valued. I never got to listen to the record with Rinpoche, but years later his son Yeshe, who was eight at that time, told me that, throughout his childhood, whenever he felt down, he listened to my record, and it cheered him up.

Before I met Rinpoche I had already turned away from music, from the whole idea of myself as a singer songwriter, or even as a professional writer at all, considering anything like that to be a distraction from my path as a 'meditator'. Then, when I met Rinpoche I decided to try to put such talent as I had at his disposal, at the service of the teachings. My own work seemed too prone to the subversion of the ego. Rinpoche tried to dissuade me from this attitude, but I didn't have the will to take the risks involved in being engaged full-tilt in the creative arts any more.

That was then, and this is now; so how do I feel about all this so many years later?

It's not so easy for me to divide the 'spiritual' from the 'secular' any more, or to separate what is 'contemplative' from what is 'artistic'. The practice of the arts has become, in fact, just one more part of my life now—not so much of a big deal.

'What took you so long?'; you might ask. 'Isn't that what Rinpoche has always taught—not the path of Renunciation, but how to integrate everything on the Path of Self-Liberation?' That's true, I know. But the human heart is always a mystery, and it takes its own sweet time to open. ■



there. What I didn't say then was that I went there to attend a music business convention—the annual meeting of the National Association of Independent Record Distributors and Companies (NAIRD), which at the convention changed its name to The Association For Independent Music. I was there at the invitation of Matteo Silva, who is the president and founder of Amia Records. You may remember that he produced a CD of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu practicing the Chöd, and perhaps also know that he will be responsible for producing a new CD of the music of the Vajra Dance.

Matteo and I were looking at the possibility of setting up a business venture together, and the NAIRD convention was a good place to meet to discuss our project. Akira has another small independent record label, through which he already knew Matteo, and when we met in New Orleans he gave us his card and invited us to look him up in New York.

"I have a little studio on Broadway," he said.

When we got to Manhattan, we decided to take him up on his offer, and after calling him, went to the address he had given us.

The studio is right in the center of town, in the CBS building, behind the Ed Sullivan Theater. The location is very central, but there are thousands of little studios in New York City, and we didn't expect much.

When the secretary in the reception area called him, Akira came up and rescued us from the smoky corner couch where we were waiting next to a crowd of young musicians hanging out between sessions.

"I give you tour right away," he said. "First we go Studio A."

When we got there, he pushed the swing door open and we went into a medium sized studio. Looking through the plate glass window into the dimly lit control room we

FREE Newsletter and Catalog!

Snow Lion publishes a free quarterly newsletter and catalog containing the latest news on Tibetan Buddhist events as well as hundreds of books, cards, audio, music & video, tapes, thangkas, statues, jewelry, and dharma practice items! Call the number below to receive your first issue.

Snow Lion is dedicated to the preservation of Tibetan culture.

Snow Lion
Publications

P.O. Box 6483
Ithaca, NY 14851
800-950-0313
607-273-8519

