

THE MIRROR

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Not Just a Kind of Fantasy

*Christmas Retreat at Tashigar
With Chögyal Namkhai Norbu
December 1998 - January 1999*

By Griselda Gálmez

"The condition of a practitioner should be like milk poured in milk, or water in water." This we heard Chögyal Namkhai Norbu say on the first day of the Christmas retreat at Tashigar.

in a retreat it means you haven't succeeded yet and therefore it is very important to understand how we should basically work because knowledge has to be something concrete, not just a kind of fantasy." Later

Where is Tashigar? In the South. In the center and West of Argentina and among the hills. The nearest town is a small village called Tanti. From there we start climbing up a winding limestone road and suddenly, in one of the tight corners on the left, arises a verdant spot. It is the 'El Durazno' valley. From the road we can see here and there some houses dotting an area of greenery. Some time ago only one of them belonged to Tashigar, 'the Buddhists', as the locals call us. Now the buildings have multiplied. Near the entrance to the Gar, in a dip among the aromos, pines and eucalyptus, stands the Master's house. It is not difficult to see him from the road, talking to people who consult with him or enjoying the swimming pool. Some other practitioners have already built their houses in some other places on the land. There are still some lots left.

Two years ago Rinpoche expressed his decision to hold the Christmas retreat of 98/99 in Tashigar. At the same time he told us he would stay with us for four months and shared his idea of subdividing the land so that all the Dzogchen Community members who wanted to, could have a retreat house here as well. He also talked about his own house.

It was too much for us. Too much joy, too much responsibility and, let's admit it, fear. During these last two years we have been working with ups and downs, disagreements and agreements - but everyone shared a heartfelt conviction of fulfilling Rinpoche's wishes. It was important that Tashigar was ready to receive our Master for the first time for such a long period of time.

Now he is here at last. The yellow flowers of the aromos blossomed as a good omen to calm the anxiety of the Yellow gakyil. Now the white campinellas have welcomed those interested in the Teaching who have come to Tashigar from all over the world; people new to the Teaching and more experienced practitioners.

This is precisely what Rinpoche started talking about on the first day of the retreat (December 26th). After a warm welcome to everyone, mainly to those coming from afar, he asked the new people to raise their hands. Then he stated, knowing beforehand that his explanations would sound familiar to some: "You may say, 'Oh, I've already heard this before!'. But you can listen to these explanations again and again all your life. The important thing is not just listening, but applying and integrating. If you had the capacity to integrate successfully you wouldn't need to do retreats. If you are



Land of Tashigar

he added, "At the beginning when we follow the teachings they seem something very powerful, and when something manifests we think, 'If I go on like this I'll probably realize in a year or two'. After two or three years we become like wood. Like the wood from a tree that gets harder and harder year after year. Ten years later we are like ceramic, and in fifteen or twenty years like crystal, not because we are clear and limpid, but because we are hard. The teachings should help us to become freer and freer and softer day after day. If everything isn't getting softer how can we be integrating? The Tibetans say: "This looks like a bunch of horns put together in a bag; the egos get harder and hold their positions more and more strongly". And here he pronounced the quotation that begins this article.

The following eight days Rinpoche explained the contents of the base of the Santi Maha Sangha. He clarified how to get into the state of contemplation, how to experience emptiness and instant presence, and how to integrate when practicing. Then he gave the transmissions and explanations of Guru Yoga, Short and Medium Tuns, Guru Dragpur, practice of the night,

Phowa, Green Tara and everything that was requested.

Each morning for two hours we listened to the firm voice of Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche giving the precious teachings. After the lunch break, nobody wanted to miss the Three Vajras Dance course given by Nelida Saporiti and the beginner's Yantra Yoga course taught by Marisa Alonso. Then the more experienced practitioners explained the practices and finally there was a collective practice.

The schedule was really tight, but if someone had spare time he could go to Tashibar - intimate under lamplight, as if for the tango - to have an ice cream or beer and talk to the other night owls. We should admit that there are many night owls in this part of the world, when the weather is warm and the moon is bright. We have also heard, from trustworthy sources, that in the vast amphitheater of the campsite there was a great deal of nocturnal activity.

The weather was also sweet during the days of the retreat, except for December 31st, the day of the big party. You must understand that Tashigar is a powerful place and maybe you have heard from those who have been here, that many personal melodramas blindly gain energy and emphasis and then suddenly evaporate. For us to learn, Tashigar seems to teach us from her nearly ideal beauty. The weather of the place is

a part of the great lesson of illusion and impermanence, from intense heat to cold, from glorious blues to threatening greys with all the hues of the quiet clouds loaded with hail, enveloping fog and thunder. One never knows how to dress to avoid overheating or catching a cold at the same time.

It rained on the 31st. We celebrated altogether at the same time with Rinpoche, Rosa and Fabio Andrico. There were toasts, kisses and good wishes, but the rain and sudden cold weather watered down the punch that the people of Tashibar had prepared for those who stayed to dance. Finally, it was all for the best, because the following day there were teachings and we had to be alert to follow the powerful stream of the Master's words.

The retreat ended on January 3rd, but the activities of Tashigar haven't finished yet. There has also been a Yantra Yoga course taught by Fabio Andrico, and the first part of the Vajra Dance course taught by Adriana dal'Borgo. Meanwhile practitioners from different parts of the world (Italy, Australia, Germany, Japan, the USA, France, Venezuela, Brazil, Peru and Argentina) took refuge under a tree, in the

continued on page 6

CHÖGYAL NAMKHAÏ NORBU
INTERNATIONAL PROGRAM
1999-2000

ARGENTINA

Tashigar
Teachings: April 2 - 6

PERU

Teachings: April 16 - 18

VENEZUELA

Teachings: April 28 - May 2

ITALY

Merigar

Vesak: May 28 - 30

Retreat of Dzogchen Upadesha: July 7 - 11

RUSSIA

Kunsangar

Retreat of Dzogchen Longde: July 12 - 25

USA

New York City Teaching: July 30 - August 1

Tsegvalgar

Retreat, Dzogchen Principles: August 4 - 8

Chicago: August 13 - 15

Houston: August 20 - 22

Santa Fe: August 27 - 29

Teaching for Tibetans: August 30

Colorado, Tara Mandala: September 9 - 12

MEXICO

Teaching: September 17-19

USA (again)

San Francisco: September 24 - 28

Portland: October 8 - 10

Los Angeles: October 15 - 17

Hawaii: October 27 - 31

PACIFIC RIM

New Zealand: December 3 - 5

AUSTRALIA

Sydney: December 10 - 12

Namgyalgar

Retreat: December 26 - January 2, 2000

SMS Australia 2000:

Base Level Exam: March 3 - 5

Level 1 training: March 6 - 10

Level 1 Exam: March 17 - 19

Level 2 training: March 20 - 24

Level 2 Exam: March 31 - April 1

Level 3 training: April 3 - 7

SEE CONTACT ADDRESSES

IN COMMUNITY NEWS PAGE 12

CONTENTS

- 2 TEACHING
Chögyal Namkhai Norbu
- 3 PRINCIPLE OF THE DZOGCHEN
COMMUNITY
Chögyal Namkhai Norbu
- 4 ASIA
Des Barry
- 5 TIBETAN GONPAS IN NEED OF SUPPORT
Chögyal Namkhai Norbu
- 7 TIBETAN KUM NYE MASSAGE
Dr. Nida Chenatsang
- 8 WORLD FESTIVAL OF SACRED MUSIC
- 9 SACRED ART
Interview with Gyeme Rabjia
- 10 SPECIAL PRACTICE CALENDAR
- 13 COMMUNITY NEWS
- 17 REFLECTIONS
- 20 I WANT TO TELL YOU ABOUT MARIO
John Shane



Some practitioners go ahead for years and years and it seems that there is not much development and they don't feel as sensitive as they did at the beginning. That is not good; when a practitioner has this kind of problem then he or she must notice and refresh it.

There are many methods for refreshing [one's practice], but one very important one is the practice of *zenga* (The Five Principal Points). If you dedicate a little more time to *zenga* practice you become very sensitive and you refresh your practice. This is one important point of *zenga*.

Another important point is that we have too much attachment, thinking that everything is real. When we do *zenga* practice we enter a little more into the understanding that everything is unreal; we apply such methods with our mind and with our ideas we charge up our feeling of fear and our attachment and everything comes out. Then we go deeper and we observe where we arrive, which is the final goal of this kind of problem. When we get to that point gradually our attachment and our tensions and all these types of things diminish. And not only that, but through that [experience] we discover what our real potentiality, our real condition, means.

Discovering and believing

In the Dzogchen teaching we say 'introduction'. Introduction means that the teacher is giving methods and applying them and through that experience we discover knowledge or understanding. It is not something we decide with our mind. Someone may say, "Oh my teacher says that this is this and that is that. I have very strong faith in my teacher and I believe that". But if you didn't discover it [for yourself], you may believe your teacher today but tomorrow you may discover that it is not true.

It is not sufficient that you decide in your mind that something is true, that you believe in something. Believing something and discovering something are different. Believing means that someone is explaining in a seemingly perfect way, explaining logically 'why' and 'because'. Then you enter into this logic and think, "Oh yes. I'm sure that's true. I really believe that." For example you read a philosophy book and at the end you believe it and say, "Oh yes. Now I have decided. This is my path." But after a few years or even a few days maybe you will find another wonderful book and then you discover that the first was not really perfect, that this new one is more true. You have already changed your idea. Why? Because you didn't 'discover', you were only believing.

Discovering means that you have a direct experience with your five or six senses and really discover something concretely. For example if you have never eaten or had the experience of 'sweet' in your life, you can read hundreds of different explanations in books about what sweet is like, you can have an idea, you can believe this or that, but you can always change your idea because you have had no experience of it.

But if, one day, you simply take a small piece of sugar or chocolate on your tongue, you can discover, "Oh yes, sweet is like that!" You don't need hundreds of volumes to discover what sweet is like. When you read all these explanations in books you can understand the way in which it is explained and what the sense of these books is. Of course something is explained about what the characteristic of sweet is, more or less, but as Buddha said, "Our real nature is beyond explanation, beyond words," so then the only way is through experience. Through that kind of experience we can also get into our real nature. That is called introduction, how we do it and how we get it. Some people are very passive. They consider introduction or empowerment means going to a wonderful teacher and sitting in front and feeling a little vibration and then they have received an empowerment or introduction. You can feel vibration that way but it won't change your condition very much. When you go outside that hall or that place then you observe - you are always you. So knowing what experience means and how we discover our real nature is something important.

Consuming our karmic body

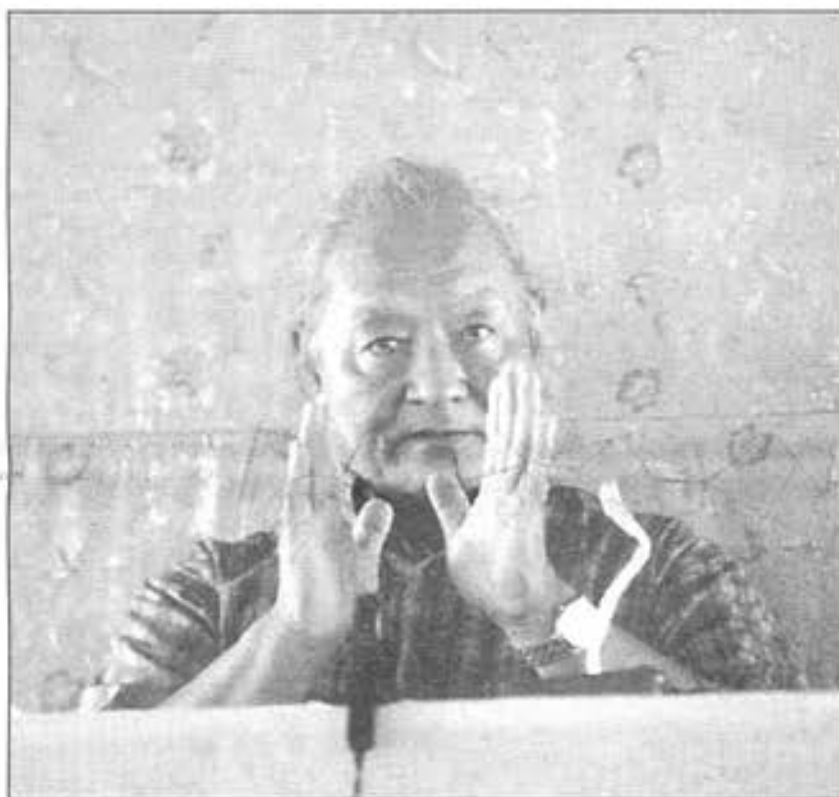
If we are practitioners of higher levels of Dzogchen teaching, for example you have heard of *tregchod* and *thödgäl*; *thödgäl* is related to our nature of emptiness, while *tregchod* means more related with our potentiality of manifestation; how

Our Real Nature is Beyond Explanation

Excerpt from a Teaching given by
Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

Karma Ling, France, November 1998

we integrate that manifestation in that potentiality. When we have this capacity of integration there is also the possibility of consuming our karmic body because our physical body is a production of our karma. When we use these kinds of methods there is a possibility of consuming which is called *dzedpa*. *Dzedpa* means consuming and not remaining. If our karmic body does not remain, then what remains is only its potentiality and that is the rainbow body. In this case there are particular practices called *thödgäl* and *yanrig* that we do in a dark



BY C. GALLI

retreat. Both of these teaching methods have the same principle - to have that kind of realization of *dzedpa*.

So if you are this kind of practitioner then the practice of *zenga* is also very important because, for example, our material physical body is integrated into consuming or dissolving into our energy level. And we are then in our existence at the level of inner energy.

Rainbow body

Sometimes there is an example [of the rainbow body] such as a painting in which there is a point at the center and then all different lights spreading from a figure of Guru Padmasambhava - we have these kind of drawings. But really the rainbow body is not that way. The rainbow body means that we have a physical body.

We can see a person with a physical body, we know who they are because that person has their own specific characteristics of form. When we dissolve into our real nature, that nature is formed like our physical body and always remains that way. The only thing is that there is no physical body and nothing at the material level. When there is no physical level, then ordinary eyes cannot see. We can say it has disappeared. But if we have a little development of our capacity of clarity then the rainbow body is visible.

Manifestation of potentiality

That is why in his invocation Guru Padmasambhava says he will always be present, particularly on the tenth day of the [Tibetan] month, the day of Padmasambhava, in front of people who have devotion. And particularly at sunrise and sunset you can find his manifestation in the rays of the sun because in the sun's rays *thigles* or circles of five colors appear. That is a manifestation of our potentiality. In that potentiality we can

have this kind of manifestation. That is why many teachers say that they have had contact with the rainbow body [of masters] like Guru Padmasambhava and have also received teachings. This is a kind of realization called *jalüs*.

There are two kinds of *jalüs* in Dzogchen: one is called the 'great transference' and the other is ordinary *jalüs*. Great transference means that even if death isn't manifesting, you have total realization of *dzedpa* (which I have just spoken about) already on the physical level. If you have not completely accomplished that stage of *dzedpa* in this lifetime but you are at that stage on the path and you are applying it and are a practitioner, then *jalüs* will manifest in a more

ordinary way. That means that after, say, seven days the body disappears.

It seems a little strange but it isn't. There is a very precise reason how we can have that realization in a precise way.

Sometimes when we are speaking about this kind of realization it seems like ancient history because if we talk about the time of Guru Padmasambhava or the time of Garab Dorje we can't really know how many practitioners manifested the rainbow body because it was a long time ago. But still today there are many practitioners who have manifested the rainbow body.

A few days ago I received an email from one of the organizers of A.S.I.A. who had been in Tibet saying that a practitioner there had manifested the rainbow body. Everybody was surprised. So it is not only history but something concrete. Even Western practitioners who do practice in a really perfect way - why not - can also have this realization because there is transmission, there is teaching, there is method, there is practice; we know why and how and everything. And *zenga*, for example, is very much used for that.

Nyala Pema Dudul

In particular there was a teacher of my teacher, Changchub Dorje, who was called Nyala Pema Dudul. Changchub Dorje was very small when he met Nyala Pema Dudul. Nyala Pema Dudul indicated to Changchub Dorje with whom he should study and follow teachings. That teacher was very famous later on and manifested the rainbow body in a fantastic way.

During his lifetime he was considered to be a good practitioner but he wasn't really very famous, although he had many students and received many *terma* teachings. But about three months before he died he called most of his important students to come to him and he gave some teachings. In

particular he told them that if they had some doubts they should ask him. And to those who had nothing particular to ask he gave a lot of advice. Then he did many practices like Ganapuja for purifying their samaya.

Then after about three months he said that he didn't feel very well physically. He said that it was time to go away and that he wanted to go to a place where he had discovered many *terma* teachings from a rock and asked his students to help him get there.

When they got there he asked them for his small tent where he did his Chöd practice when he was traveling. He went inside the tent and asked them to sew it up all around so that no small animals would enter. Then he told his students to go back to his residence and do Ganapuja and practice and to come back after seven days. Many of his students were really crying; they felt very sad but there was no choice so they went and did Ganapuja.

After seven days they returned to that place and saw that there were rainbows everywhere. When they opened the tent there only remained his clothes, hair and nails. There was no body.

Then his students distributed some of these things here and there, maybe they built a big *chorten* with his dress, etc. At that point all the important lamas came there to pay their respects and to do pujas in his honor.

Why do the nails and the hair remain? Because they are the impurities of the physical body. That is why we always cut our hair and nails and they are always growing. Sometimes there is a manifestation of the rainbow body without leaving even hair and nails. But then sometimes people doubt and think that they are hidden somewhere.

Transcribed and edited by Liz Granger

The Principle of Collaboration in the Dzogchen Community

Transcribed from the closing talk of the Christmas retreat given by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu at Tashigar, Argentina, December 1998

Today is the last day of the retreat, and I have given you mainly the transmission of the lungs of many practices. In general there are many booklets and cassettes of different practices, so if you are interested in these practices, after you have received the transmission of lung, you can learn and do practice. Sometimes you can learn how to do these practices through an explanation in a book or with cassettes; but communication with other practitioners is very important.

People go to retreats, receive transmission and think "Now I can do the practices. I'm interested in the teachings and the teacher but I don't care about the practitioners." That is not the correct idea, because we must remember that the path is just like a boat. In a boat someone is coordinating and taking responsibility, and others in the boat need to collaborate until they arrive. Similarly, everyone is in the boat of the Dzogchen teaching. We are traveling in order to have total realization. Therefore it is important to collaborate and not create problems in the Community between practitioners. That is also one of our main practices; to be aware and know and work with circumstances. So if you are working that way, when you understand the practices better, you can participate and apply them. Particularly, people who are living in different places, in other cities, and also people who are living in the same city, need to communicate and collaborate with each other. That is very important. If someone is living alone in the countryside and there are no other practitioners, then it is a little difficult. But most people don't live that way. So, it is very important to communicate with each other and collaborate.

This is the principle of the Dzogchen Community. The principle is not only creating a kind of dharma center and a group of people who live there. Collaboration, that is the main point. The way of collaborating and working together, that is what is called the Dzogchen Community. Tashigar is not only for Argentina, but for all South America. The people who are working and doing something here must have that idea in a very precise way. Not only South America, but all the Dzogchen Communities of the world; they must collaborate and participate together. In general we have Gars; Merigar in Italy is for all of Europe. The Russians are connected with Europe and participate with Merigar, but Russia is very big and has the most number of people in the Community, so it is not so easy and therefore we created another Gar there. We also have a Gar in Australia. We have no particular Gar in Asia, but we hope the situation will change and one day we can have a Gar in East Tibet. We

have many places that function as a Gar.

Gars are very similar to our chakras. We have five or six chakras in our body and all of our body is related to each of these chakras. The Community is not functioning as a bureaucratic system. You know very well that how we work in the Dzogchen Community is through the Gakyil. Gakyil means there are three groups and within these three groups either three, six or nine persons represent the Gakyil. That is not only at the Gars, but in the entire Dzogchen Community all over the world. There are many Gakyils which are chosen by the practitioners; the members of the Community. These people are taking responsibility for the Dzogchen Community. There are three colors like in the gakyil symbol: yellow, blue and red. That



is just the same as om, ah, hum; our body, speech and mind. When there are three existences there is a human being; the function of an individual. Where there is a Gakyil there is also the function of the Dzogchen Community, so when we collaborate with each other in that way, we continue the Dzogchen Community. It is very important you know that principle, otherwise people think the Dzogchen Community is just like any dharma center. In dharma centers someone is saying this is my center, this is his center. Someone considers that you come and visit the dharma center, you pay and go away and that person maintains the center. A group of people create a dharma center and live with this income. The Dzogchen Community is not like that, so that is important to know.

Many people say, "You Dzogchen Community people" or "You gakyil people". That is very wrong vision. If you are a practitioner and are interested in the Dzogchen teachings then you MUST be interested in the Community. The Community does

not belong to a group of people in charge in that moment. These people in charge can change after one or two, or at most, three years and then there are new people. You must feel if you are a practitioner that you are a part of the Dzogchen Community and are also responsible for it. In that way we should go ahead and collaborate.

Here in Tashigar we have a Gar and the program of a Gar. You see for example, I am always doing the Santi Maha Sangha program only in the Gars. We did it here and we still do. Sometimes when there are problems in a Gar and they don't do everything in a correct way, we stop these programs. For example, we had this kind of experience in Australia; there were some problems of samaya and the way of working with people that didn't correspond in the precise

way. Then they say, "Oh everything is perfect, we all agree and there are no problems." But brothers and sisters does not mean a group of Gakyil people. Of course it is good if the Gakyil agrees and there are no problems, that is fine, but that is not the main point of brothers and sisters of Vajra. Someone is considering that within the Gakyil they all agree and everything is fine, but then there are some problems with other people and they don't care. We are not a small boat, but a big boat. One of the main people responsible for this boat is me. If someone is following my teaching then they must understand that people from all over the world must respect each other and collaborate. In general you don't have a lot of contact with all the people in the worldwide community, but if there is a Gakyil and someone comes from another country and enters this group and is dealing with something like doing practice, etc., you must not have the idea that this person is not belonging to "our" group. "Who invited this person?" for example. If you have this idea then there is no Community. Community means all people who are really dealing with this teaching and transmission. So it is very, very important and with this knowledge we collaborate with each other.

For example, here in Tashigar we have divided the land and use it for all the members of the Dzogchen Community. Not only keeping it for the Community but using it. Why do we do that? So this Community becomes more active and alive. Also that is an idea open for all the Dzogchen people of the world, not only Argentineans. But of course we cannot collaborate with people who are only saying they collaborate with the Dzogchen Community, but there is no principle manifesting. That kind of person we couldn't accept. We must remember also what is the principle of the Dzogchen Community. The principle of the Dzogchen Community is following the teachings, being on the path, collaborating with Community people, practitioners, etc. So when people have this kind of qualification, of course, everyone can participate. That is an example and we are collaborating everywhere that way, not only in Argentina. Even if some places are not working that way we try to modify and change, because that is the principle of the Dzogchen Community since the beginning.

For that reason, if you don't know or feel to do many of these secondary practices in this moment, then it is better you receive transmission and collaborate with practitioners, and then you can learn and apply. You can do your best.

Transcribed and edited by
Naomi Zeitz

GLOBAL TIMETABLE

for the collective practice of the
Anniversaries of
GARAB DORJE (March 1st) and
GURU PADMASAMBHAVA (July 22nd)

see page 10

World Time Table v2.0

1. ODDIYANA time set to equal Islamabad standard time (+5 UTC offset)
2. All times are calculated according to UTC offsets. Daylight savings times (DLS) are considered in the calculation.
For example: Sydney Australia has an offset of +10 in the summer (March 13) and an offset of +9 in the winter (July 4). The summer offset of +10 represents DLS. Locations that implement DLS have +1 hour added to their UTC offsets during the summer months. Northern hemisphere locations in italics use DLS. Southern hemisphere locations in italics use DLS.

ANNIVERSARY OF GARAB DORJE

Mon. 1st March 1999
16:00 (-11)
17:00 (-10) Hawaii
18:00 (-9) Fairbanks
19:00 (-8) San Francisco, Los Angeles, Vancouver
20:00 (-7) Denver, Salt Lake City, Pagosa Springs, Edmonton
21:00 (-6) Chicago, Mexico City
22:00 (-5) New York, Conway, Montreal, Atlanta, Detroit, Havana, Kingston, Indianapolis, Ottawa, Lima, Quito
23:00 (-4) Caracas, San Juan, Bermuda
23:30 (-3.5) Newfoundland
00:00 (-3) Buenos Aires, Sao Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Santiago
Tues. 2nd March 1999
01:00 (-2)
02:00 (-1)
03:00 (0) GMT, Reykjavik, London, Dublin, Lisbon
04:00 (+1) Rome, Berlin, Oslo, Paris, Madrid, Amsterdam, Copenhagen, Brussels, Geneva, Prague, Salzburg, Stockholm, Budapest, Vienna, Warsaw
05:00 (+2) Helsinki, Athens, Ankara, Beirut, Jerusalem, Tallinn, Vilnius, Istanbul, Johannesburg
06:00 (+3) Moscow, Marmansk, Baghdad, Kuwait City, Riyadh, Tashkent
06:30 (+3.5) Tehran
07:30 (+4.5) Kabul
08:00 (+5) ODDIYANA, Islamabad
08:30 (+5.5) New Delhi, Bombay
08:45 (+5.45) Kathmandu
09:00 (+6) Dhaka
09:30 (+6.5) Rangoon
10:00 (+7) Bangkok, Jakarta, Saigon
11:00 (+8) Singapore, Beijing, Lhasa, Manila, Hong Kong, Kuala Lumpur, Taipei, Perth
12:00 (+9) Tokyo, Seoul
12:30 (+9.5) Darwin
13:00 (+10) Brisbane, Vladivostok
13:30 (+10.5) Adelaide
14:00 (+11) Kamchatka, Melbourne, Sydney
15:00 (+12) Fiji
16:00 (+13) Wellington, Auckland

ANNIVERSARY OF PADMASAMBHAVA

Thursday 22nd July 1999
16:00 (-11)
17:00 (-10) Hawaii
18:00 (-9)
19:00 (-8) Fairbanks
20:00 (-7) San Francisco, Los Angeles, Vancouver
21:00 (-6) Denver, Salt Lake City, Pagosa Springs, Edmonton
22:00 (-5) Lima, Quito, Chicago, Mexico City
23:00 (-4) Caracas, San Juan, Santiago, New York, Conway, Montreal, Atlanta, Detroit, Havana, Kingston, Indianapolis, Ottawa
00:00 (-3) Buenos Aires, Sao Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Bermuda
Friday 23rd July 1999
00:30 (-2.5) Newfoundland
01:00 (-2)
02:00 (-1)
03:00 (0) GMT, Reykjavik
04:00 (+1) London, Dublin, Lisbon
05:00 (+2) Johannesburg, Rome, Berlin, Oslo, Paris, Madrid, Amsterdam, Copenhagen, Brussels, Geneva, Prague, Salzburg, Stockholm, Budapest, Vienna, Warsaw
06:00 (+3) Kuwait City, Riyadh, Tashkent, Helsinki, Athens, Ankara, Beirut, Jerusalem, Tallinn, Vilnius, Istanbul
06:30 (+3.5) Tehran
07:00 (+4) Moscow, Marmansk, Baghdad
07:30 (+4.5) Kabul
08:00 (+5) ODDIYANA, Islamabad
08:30 (+5.5) New Delhi, Bombay
08:45 (+5.45) Kathmandu
09:00 (+6) Dhaka
09:30 (+6.5) Rangoon
10:00 (+7) Bangkok, Jakarta, Saigon
11:00 (+8) Singapore, Beijing, Lhasa, Manila, Hong Kong, Kuala Lumpur, Taipei, Perth
12:00 (+9) Tokyo, Seoul
12:30 (+9.5) Darwin, Adelaide
13:00 (+10) Brisbane, Melbourne, Sydney
14:00 (+11) Vladivostok
15:00 (+12) Fiji, Wellington, Auckland, Kamchatka

*The time in Vilnius, Lithuania is considered to be the same as Tallinn, Estonia

*It is considered that Kathmandu does not use DLS.

*If a location implements DLS but it does not fall on either of the anniversary days, the DLS designation will not show on the time table.

*This chart was composed with the help of various members of the world wide Dzogchen Community and with information from the web site
<http://www.stud.unit.no/USERBIN/steffen/vendour.pl>

An Invitation to the Sangha

by Adriano Clemente

After the Ganapuja that marked the end of the Christmas retreat at Merigar, Adriano Clemente, who led the retreat, gave an invitation to those present about awareness.

I think that we are all aware of how lucky we are to be here at Merigar. Look what a wonderful place we have here! And what a wonderful Ganapuja we've just had! And we can have this type of thing in the future, too. Just as we were fortunate enough to do the Narag Tongtrug practice we should consider that if the world is still going on in a hundred years then future generations might enjoy all this as well.

When we talk about the Dzogchen Community you know very well that we don't have a big sponsor. Nobody is giving us money to do all these activities. Each one of us gives some money, some work, or whatever we can. And we have this famous membership quota which means that every month we pay a contribution. New people shouldn't think, "Oh, now that I come to Merigar I have to start paying." You shouldn't think like this. Try to understand first of all what the teaching is. That's what is important. We don't need you to give us money.

But if people have understood the meaning of the Dzogchen teaching and what our Teacher is doing

for us, then I cannot understand how they still continue to come here for Rinpoche's retreats and are not members of the Community. I don't know. I would like to talk to these people one by one if it is possible.

I don't think they do it because they have a negative idea and don't appreciate what's going on. But you should remember that the Dzogchen Community is like the body of our Teacher. We visualize, we make offerings to the Buddhas, to the Tathagatas, but that is not the main thing. The main thing is our Guru. So we have to consider our Master as the center of the Dzogchen Community.

So of course, you can do what you like. Nobody will stop you and tell you that you are not a member; that you cannot participate in the activities of the Community. But sometimes we have to remember these things.

There is an example given in the Tibetan teaching. It says that one should not be like a hunter and consider the teacher to be like a musk deer and the teaching like musk.

So that is all I wanted to say. I wanted to say this because sometimes we have problems and sometimes members don't pay their quota. There are so many of these kinds of problems. So we shouldn't live too much in fantasy but rather in pure vision so that we won't have problems to keep Merigar alive. Only that.

An Open Letter to the Dzogchen Community

from Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

To all people who are interested in our newspaper, The Mirror.

You all know very well that our Community newspaper, The Mirror, has already been in existence for many years. You also know that this newspaper is really very important for collaboration and communication among the people of the Dzogchen Community. You also know that the organ of the Dzogchen Community is the Gakyil, and the system of the Gakyil is not a bureaucratic or hierarchical one. All our Gakyils of the world are autonomous; so if there is no newspaper like The Mirror, then there is no way for us to communicate well between the Gakyils. Therefore we can understand that The Mirror is something very important and useful for all the Dzogchen Community.

Even so, after so many years, The Mirror is still not yet financially autonomous because there are not yet a sufficient number of subscribers. I don't really know why there are not sufficient subscribers after so many years. Sometimes it seems the cost of the subscription is

too high and that may be true for some people who are not employed, but I don't think most people have that problem. Of course the cost of a subscription would go down immediately if there were more subscriptions. It seems to me that many people don't want to subscribe or that they just don't care about the newspaper. I don't really know what the real reason is. It seems that particularly people of English speaking countries would be interested in supporting The Mirror, like for example, in the USA, Canada, the UK, Australia and New Zealand, but I have heard that some of the people of these countries are making photocopies of The Mirror instead of subscriptions. That is a little strange for me.

You see, in a country like Italy where most people don't speak English and where they also have their own newsletter called the Merigar Letter in Italian, they have the highest number of subscribers of The Mirror. That means that people realize the value of supporting The Mirror and how important it is for our Dzogchen Community.

So I would like to ask all of you,

please reflect more on the value of The Mirror and make more subscriptions to it. Please take a little more responsibility for our newspaper. Please try to give life to The Mirror and soon it will become economically autonomous. It is in your hands. I am not asking you to give money to benefit The Mirror; I am asking that you subscribe to it. That doesn't only benefit The Mirror, but it also benefits you because you then know what is going on in the international Dzogchen Community and also what is going on with the Teaching and all things related to it. Also then you don't always need to write me and ask what the teaching and my travel schedule is.

If there is no financial development regarding The Mirror by the end of the year 2000, then we should stop its publication. Merigar and Tsegvalgar can no longer maintain the life of The Mirror, so I really hope there can be some development in terms of subscriptions.

Thank you. With my warm wishes to you all,

Yours,

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

A.S.I.A's Fall Mission to Dangche

By Des Barry

Dangche is a farming village in the Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture of Hainan. It is spread out across a wide flat valley and is something of an oasis in where the fields have been surrounded by a complex system of irrigation ditches. The farmers cultivate wheat and barley and have plum, apple and pear trees. The houses are within fortress-like mud walls with a courtyard that serves as a vegetable garden. The mountains to the East and West are arid, steep and deeply eroded but all the elements of the landscape put together create an extraordinary beauty. In the distance, snow peaks rise over the lower ridges. It is here that A.S.I.A. has built a traditional Tibetan style building that accommodates three hundred children at the moment with the hope of increasing this number to six hundred. The mission that A.S.I.A. undertook this Fall was to set up three courses: one for English, one for Computer Training and the other for Tibetan Language. In addition, we also wanted to begin and complete the renovation of a derelict building for use as a Traditional Tibetan Medical center. It is A.S.I.A.'s hope that Dangche becomes an educational nucleus for the whole of the five county Prefecture where more training courses can be run in order to "teach the teachers" and so have the maximum benefit for the people of the region. We also undertook a project to record the financial situation of all students at the school and for potential students among the nomad population so that we could develop an adoption-at-a-distance program to increase the number of students at the school and to reduce the burden on the poorest parents for the cost of the children's education.

The A.S.I.A. team was truly international - two Italians, Andrea Dell'Angelo and Daniele Colajacomo; an Australian architect, Tony Laurent; and Tseringthar, who teaches at Beijing Minorities University. We were driven up to Dangche from Xining, the capital of Qinghai Province in a jeep and a car courtesy of Guide County Department of Education, arranged by Mr. Mi Yan Xu and Mr. Ridorje. On arrival, we met Lhatse Gyal, our translator who teaches English at Qinghai Tibetan National School; and also Palchen Dorje, a very respected Tibetan teacher who was to teach courses for both the Dangche Teachers and a group of village farmers. Joint funding for the project came from the United Nations' L.E.A.D. and private donations to A.S.I.A.

The drive up was through spectacular mountains and grasslands and down into the arid and heavily eroded valley of the Yellow River. The scenery was reminiscent of the painted desert of Arizona or the mountains of Colorado in America, rocky and

sandy mountains deeply grooved by erosion. On arrival in Dangche, the mission was received by the men of the village and we were treated to a huge meal of freshly killed, boiled sheep, blood sausage, and arak, the local liquor. The blood is fresh out of the sheep and packed into intestines. It tends to spurt out all over the untutored knife-hand and at first it tasted surprisingly good. It did get a bit heavy when it became our steady diet as we did the rounds of people who wanted to offer us dinner and killed a sheep in our honour. The village people were enormously and constantly generous to us and did everything they could to make our stay comfortable and enjoyable.

The courses began on September 14th for teachers from the Hainan Prefecture. The computer course continued until October



Dangche School

14th and the English course on November 20th. Daniele Colajacomo did a great deal of research on the equipment that we brought with us and we were able to equip the school with two state of the art computers, a printer, and a scanner. A number of teachers from the Computer Course came to participate in the first English lessons but quickly dropped out when they found that the level of the course was too high for them. Unfortunately, they could not participate in the beginners course for the Dangche teachers either because the English course time clashed with their computer course. Classes ran for seven days a week. Naturally, there was some disparity amongst the students as to skills and language level. Having disparities in level was a teaching challenge and although not insurmountable will be avoided in future given that both A.S.I.A. and the Government of the Prefecture have more time to prepare courses and the choice of students. Parallel courses were taught for the Dangche teachers. Given the workload of the teachers - they participated in the English Course, the computer course, the Tibetan course and taught all of their regular classes - a number of them had little time for any extra study. Most students were however enthusiastic in class work. Hopefully, they will have more time to work when future classes are offered in the summer break. At the beginning of the English course, many of the

young Dangche pupils participated in the classes which brought the class up to around thirty four students. This did cut into the time available to give personal attention to the adult students when they were involved in group and pair work. After about two weeks, the children no longer participated and the class was entirely adult. This decision was made by the teachers themselves and all in all was a wise one in that the class became much more concentrated and beneficial to serious study by the teachers.

There was a disparity in language skills among the Dangche teachers with a marked enough difference that eventually the class was split into two groups when the computer course finished. One group concentrated more on the letter sounds of the English alphabet, word formation and sentence structure while the second group had the opportunity to increase their vocabulary, develop some writing skills and learn practical speaking skills. The tapes and books were entrusted to the care of the school and the teachers were requested to practice tape drills and to do the exercises in their workbooks so that we have something to build upon for the next course that we will hold in July when the teachers have their long annual holiday.

Tony Laurent, Andrea Dell'Angelo and Tseringthar participated in long meetings with the local village co-ordinators and the local government in order to complete agreements for a Tibetan Medical Center. As soon as agreement was reached, the Dangche village workers began the renovation and by the beginning of December, the work was about 80% completed. Work was also underway in the Tibetan Cultural Center where the villagers can hold meetings and social gatherings as well as having a library with a complete collection of the Kangyur and Tangyur texts. The government also provided sixty beds for the school and a telephone line was installed at the beginning of November.

The success of the course can be judged by the enthusiastic responses of the students. All of them wanted to continue with the second course that we hope to offer and expand over the summer of 1999. We are already planning for it. The department of education of the prefecture was also very happy with our work and wants to organize more courses which naturally depend upon our capacity to fund them. The benefits that A.S.I.A. brings to the Amdo region are indisputable. The sad fact that a generation aged from 20-40 has largely lost the ability to read and write Tibetan is being countered by the fact that three hundred children in the Dangche school are receiving lessons in Tibetan Language, reading and writing, and many other subjects are being taught to them via the medium of Tibetan. This is extremely important for the future of Tibetan culture. In addition, the quality of the teaching staff for children of the whole region is being improved through A.S.I.A.'s initiatives as well as parallel projects being developed for health care and cultural centers. Naturally all this depends on being able to raise money and the participation of all interested people is most welcome. Contributions can be made directly to: A.S.I.A. at Via S. Erasmo 12, 00184 Rome, Italy.

TIBETAN GONPAS IN NEED OF SUPPORT

Sponsorship Through Community Collaboration

By Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

In the year 1998 when I traveled in East and Central Tibet, I received many requests to help build some Colleges of Study (Shedra) and Colleges of Practice (Drudra). There are already some small Colleges of Study and Practice which need their living conditions improved. One particular monastery requested help to build a small temple because recently their small temple collapsed, and they asked for help to improve the condition of their small hospital, etc. I received many requests and it is not so easy for me to satisfy all the requests, but some requests could be very important for many reasons. I would like to ask the following Dzogchen Communities to collaborate on these projects.

It is not at all easy to get permission to go into these places to work on these projects. The only possibility is that you connect with our ASIA Organization and in that way have direct contact with your project place or Gonpas. For the future, I really hope you can go to these places to see the real situation. When you make contact with ASIA, you can have a more clear idea of how you should work with these Gonpas.

The address of ASIA in Tibet is:

Mr. Giorgio Minuzzo & Dr. Phuntshok Wangmo

E-mail: Giorgio Minuzzo, cosvasia@ns1.chinaonline.com.cn.net

Following are the names of the Monasteries and which Dzogchen Communities are going to sponsor them:

GALENGON

&

Dz.Com. of Merigar:

Galengon or Galendeng Monastery is one of the oldest monasteries of East Tibet and was originally founded by Lhalung Palgi Dorje, the student of Padmasambhava and Sogpo Palgyi Yeshe's student. Later there was a very important Sakyapa teacher called Ga Anan Dampa and since then Galengon has mainly followed the Sakyapa tradition. It is the main residence monastery of my Uncle Khyentse Choekyi Wangchuk's teacher Grubwang Kung Paldan and, for that reason, it later became the residence of my Uncle Khyentse Choekyi Wangchuk. We have a project of building a College of Study and later a small College of Practice there. I would like to ask to the Dzogchen Community of Merigar to take care and sponsor Galengon so that these colleges can be realized in a concrete way.

KHAMDOGAR

&

Dz.Com. of Tsegylgar:

Khamdogar is the residence of my main teacher Rigdzin Changchub Dorje and where they have already rebuilt the main temple. I hope that at Khamdogar there will be a good College of Practice and another small College of Study, because these will be very important for maintaining the knowledge transmitted by the Master Changchub Dorje. I would like to ask the Dzogchen Community of Tsegylgar to take care and sponsor these projects so they manifest.

WONTOD

&

Dz. Com. of Germany:

Wontod (*dbon-stod*) Monastery, Dege County, Szechwan Province, is a monastery of the Sakyapa tradition, and is the residence monastery of the famous Khanpo Wontod Khyenrab. He is one of the most important students of Dzogchen Khanpo Zhanga and built a College of Study (*bshad-gra*) near Wontod Monastery where I, Chogyal Namkhai Norbu, studied for some six years with Khanpo Khyenrab Choekyi Woezer. This college was destroyed completely during the Cultural Revolution, but the nephew of Khanpo Khyenrab, called Lama Gelegs, is taking care of it and he also discovered the young Reincarnation of Khanpo Khyenrab. Now they are rebuilding the college. We have already sponsored them so they could invite a teacher for the College and build some rooms for the students. The money for the teacher and rebuilding the rooms I received mainly from the German Dzogchen Community; therefore I think it is appropriate that the Dzogchen Community of Germany continue to help finish the building of this college and help improve their standard of living.

RALUNG

&

Dz. Com. of France:

Ralung Monastery, in Gyaltsé County, TAR, is the original residence of the Dhammaraja and the source of Drukpa Kagyud School. We have already prepared a project of building a new College of Study (*bshad-gra*) at this Monastery. This College of Study will be very important for maintaining the knowledge of the Drukpa Kagyud lineage. We still have no permission from TAR for building this College, but in any case, we are still preparing it and when there is the possibility of permission we are ready to realize it. For that reason I would like to ask the Dzogchen Community of France to take care and sponsor the realization of this project.

RALUNG

&

Dz. Com. of Taiwan:

Ralung Monastery, in Gyaltsé County, TAR, is the original residence of the Dhammaraja and the source of Drukpa Kagyud School. We have already sponsored the building of a small College of Practice (*sgrub-gra*); which is already active but very small, but there is no stable support for their livelihood. I would like to ask the Dzogchen Community of Taiwan to take care and sponsor this project to increase the College of Practice and help bring about an improved standard of their living conditions.

DZAMTHOKGON

&

Dz. Com. of SINGAPORE:

Dzamtshokgon or Dzamtshog Monastery, Jomda County, TAR, is a small monastery of the Sakyapa tradition and a very important sacred place of Vajra Kilaya. Two years ago their main temple collapsed; it is a not a big temple but medium sized. When I visited this monastery they asked me to help rebuild that temple. I realized that for them that it is very important to build that temple, and for the future I feel it is very important to construct a new, small College of Study (*bshad-gra*) for the young monks. There are some young people of this monastery, like their young reincarnation and some other young monks, who study at the Sakya College of Dehra Dun in India. Later they will be qualified to teach at that new college. I would like to ask the Dzogchen Community of Singapore to sponsor these projects.

SENGCHEN NAMDRAK

&

Dz. Com. of West-Coast

Sengchen Namdrak Monastery is the residence of my Uncle Togden Orgyan Tenzin. In this monastery there is already a small College of Study (*bshad-gra*) and another small College of Practice (*sgrub-gra*). They are in a very poor and uncomfortable situation, so I want to ask to the Dzogchen Community of West Coast to sponsor these colleges and help bring a better livelihood to them.

DZONGTSAGON

&

Dz. Com. of Netherlands:

Tagzik Dzongtsagon or Dzongtsa Monastery, is a very small monastery of the Sakyapa tradition and when I, Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, was in East Tibet in the year 1950, I took a commitment to look after and help this monastery. When we went to visit this monastery in 1997, they reminded me of my commitment to them and asked me to help look after their situation. They have already rebuilt their temples, but I thought it would be very important for them that there is a small College of Practice (*sgrub-gra*) and a small College of Study. For this project, I would like to ask the Dzogchen Community of Netherlands to take care and sponsor to help realize this project.

KHRORUGON

&

Dz.Com. of U.K.:

Khorugon or Khoru Monastery is one of the root monasteries of Khoru Kagyud lineage and the residence of the very famous Tibetan Doctor Troru Tsenam. In this small monastery, they have already built a small College of Study and hospital. We have already sponsored Khorugon several times but their condition is still very poor; therefore I would like to ask the Dzogchen Community of the United Kingdom to sponsor and take care of this college and hospital so their situation and livelihood become better.

GRAMAGON

&

Dz.Com. of Japan:

Gramagon is a big College of Practice (*sgrub-gra*) belonging to the biggest monastery of Dege Gonche. This monastery was founded by the Mahasiddha Thantong Gyalpo. It is the main monastery of the Sakyapa tradition in Dege. The actual head Lama of Dege Gonchen rebuilt this College but it is only halfway completed, so they need some help and sponsors. I would like to ask to the Dzogchen Community of Japan to collaborate on this project.

SIBDAGON

&

Dz.Com. of Tashigar:

Sibdagon is a Monastery of the Nyingma tradition. They have built a new, good College of Study and for years ASIA has been sponsoring the maintenance of the teacher at this college. I would like to ask to the Dzogchen Community of Tashigar to take care of this college and help to improve their situation and livelihood.

DZOLUNG

&

Tara Mandala:

Dzolong or Dzolunggon is a small monastery of the Sakyapa tradition. Dzolong is the place where one of my main teachers, Ayu Khandro, spent most her lifetime in the dark retreat anywhere there is a young reincarnation (Tulku) of Ayu Khandro recognized by H.H. Sakya Trizin. This young Tulku started to build a small College of Study (*bshad-gra*) at Dzolong monastery, and they have asked me to help improve the condition of this College of Study, and to help build a small new College of Practice (*sgrub-gra*) there. Tara Mandala is interested to participate in our projects particularly by sponsoring the project of Dzolong to upgrade the condition of the College of Study and build a small new College of Practice. I really hope this project becomes something concrete.

BOOK REVIEWS

TIMELY RAIN

edited by David I. Rome

Shambhala Publications, 1998, 212 pp

The Buddhist tradition which contains so many streams in its long meander through time and place, from its outset, prized poetic expression. Within the Pali cannon, commonly known as the Tripitaka, written down in the first century A.D., there are two collections of verse called the Therigata and Theragata which survived in oral form during the intermittent six centuries following the life and teachings of Buddha. These songs or gathas of the elders Theri(a) form a bare bone account of the lives of the Buddha's earliest disciples—both men and women. I first became acquainted with these extraordinary works through Chogyam Trungpa's own copy of the Pali Canon recently donated to the then, small library, at the Naropa Institute where I had gone to study Buddhism in the early 1980's. After a year of immersion in the literatures of Abhidharma and Madyamika, coming upon these songs with their vibrant immediacy brought home to me—far more than any Buddhist hermeneutics could, the living presence of lineage.

While 'songs of experience' are fairly universal in many religious traditions—not just Buddhism, in the Buddhist Tantric culture of the Indian Mahasiddhas, where the aspiring adept is often portrayed as meeting his/her teacher at a critical juncture, the moment of awakening is traditionally encapsulated in verse (*doha*). The methodology here is somewhat more than the finger pointing to the moon (*prajnapiti*) but the moon itself—ecliptical and shimmering in the twilight of awareness. This is the realm of the dakini whose natural abode is, more often than not, the charnel ground, the perfect environment for signaling the demise of ego proclivities—the dead baggage of duality. So precious were many of these verses, some were never written down but passed on orally from teacher to disciple even into the present. It remains one of Tibet's greatest achievements that this culture was preserved intact against the total annihilation wielded by Islamic conquerors.

In Tibet, poetics (*nyan ngag*) was considered one of the five minor cultural sciences. Indeed, Tibetan culture contains a vast corpus of literary genres which has only in the past two decades come to light. A recent publication Tibetan Literature Studies in Genre edited by Jose Ignacio Cabezon and Roger R. Jackson is fairly comprehensive. The (*nyangur*) or 'song of experience' within Tibetan culture rose to new heights, popularly epitomized by Milarepa's quintessential verses. Scholars suggest that the tradition became highly codified by the twelfth century. But if so, how does one explain an 11th Trungpa?

Like many great masters, the late Chogyam Trungpa appeared differently according to his students' needs and capacities. In my own experience, I related to him in two respects—as an administrator and as a poet. To this day, whenever I work in an office environment I always think of Trungpa who once said that he liked to walk around a

bit before settling into his desk in order to check out the environment to "smell the wind" before attending to the tedium of administrative work.

Trungpa was an enormously creative and capable administrator considering that not many Americans can lay claim to having created an accredited college, let alone a refugee born in a tent on the high Tibetan plateau. His love of detail was legendary among his students—giving new meaning to William Blake's "labor well the minute particulars." Although he never had much money, nor was Vajradhatu, his organization, as wealthy as fabricated, he always insisted on the best quality. At the heart of his Shambhala Training was the notion that the richness of the phenomenal world depended less on personal wealth than on attention to the details of our life.

These details included the most mundane activities, how to eat, speak, dress, walk, where to place objects so as to not upset the natural hierarchy of energy.

If the manifestations of his administrative genius by age 34 had



Chogyam Trungpa 1987

A. Ginsberg

created an American college of Contemplative Arts, The Naropa Institute, but one of the many organizational forms he would inspire during his short lifetime (he died at the age of 47) including everything from a certified credit union to loan money to practitioners (Three Jewels), a military for training in non-aggression (Kasung), unique programs of treatment for the mentally ill (Windhorse), alcoholics, the elderly and sick (Dana Home Care), a primary school (Alaya) and Shambhala Training—his own poetry is steeped in the tradition of his Tibetan forefathers. Reaching even further into the past of the great era of Mahasiddhas and the bikshus of the earliest aspirants, his poems whilst rooted in tradition, nevertheless utilize the snappy rhythms of American pragmatism, the American lineage of modernism—"no ideas but in things" They are sad, funny, earthy, concrete, expansive and yet totally individualistic. First Thought/ Best thought is the aphorism of this old/new poetics of fresh perception unladen by cumbersome concepts and thus, tremendously playful. Mostly they attribute to the power of a mind liberated.

In the scheme of things, the late Master, has been much maligned in his more public persona as an alcoholic and power-hungry guru. In recent years, this limited stereotype has been further reinforced by a growing conservative strain among

certain prominent western Buddhist teachers. However, for those practitioners who never met him, one need only read *Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism*, to grasp the enduring vitality of his vision for the integration of the Buddha dharma into western culture, and the perils thereof. Twenty-five years later it still speaks to both new and seasoned practitioners. In my own opinion, *Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism* and his *Sadhana of Mahamudra* are among the great spiritual masterpieces of all times. Ever the consummate spiritual Master, his determination to bring teachings according to the Kagyu/Nyingma lineage he was trained in, into Western culture found a powerful ally in the arts. This he fostered in a variety of disciplines—through Mudra theater, the Jack Kerouac School of Disembodied Poetics, Contemplative dance, Japanese arts of flower arranging, and seminars on dharma art, and, of course, in his own artistic works from small pieces of jewelry (those famous pins) to large-scale installations in museums and public gardens.

It's no accident Trungpa chose Allen Ginsberg as his own poetry mentor. The deal was that Ginsberg would teach Trungpa American poetics and that he, in turn, would teach him meditation. Ginsberg had great respect for Trungpa's poetry on its own terms. He especially appreciated the shapely originality of Trungpa's mind and the Master's spontaneous composition skill. Ginsberg's recollection is that he first met the late Master in N.Y.C. while each tried to enter the same taxi in 1972. Trungpa's attendant, recognizing the poet, introduced the two, who exchanged telephone numbers and agreed to meet again which they did. Trungpa read his masterful *Sadhana of Mahamudra* while Ginsberg read Kerouac. Two years later Trungpa would invite Ginsberg to participate in the now famous summer of 1974 at Naropa Institute. But perhaps they met earlier, in 1962, at the Young Lamas Home in Dalhousie which Allen visited with poets, Peter Orlovsky, Joanne Kyger and Gary Snyder on their two-year sojourn in India and Japan from 1961-62. There's a photo taken by Gary Snyder of a young monk showing the poets a Tibetan text I came across cataloging the photo archive of Allen Ginsberg. While evidently the poet did not remember this meeting, I wonder what the young soft spoken monk in the picture, Trungpa thought of his exotic visitors— if he remembered them a decade later?

Timely Rain is the third collection of poems published by the author beginning with *Mudra* in the late 1960's, and *First Thought/Best Thought*, in the 1980's shortly before his death in 1987. Rain in Trungpa's vocabulary always signifies the rain of 'adhistana' (Skt: to stand in blessing). With the notion of timely as akin to the ancient "kairos," or the critical moment, in his signature poem, 'Timely Rain'—Trungpa implies simply but unexpectedly that now is the time to wake up. "In the jungle of flaming ego/May there be cool iceberg of bodhicitta/ On the race track of bureaucracy/May there be the walk of the elephant/ May the sumptuous castle of arrogance/Be destroyed by Vajra confidence/ In the garden of gentle sanity/May you be bombarded by coconuts of wakefulness."

The poems in this collection range thematically from the most personal to liturgical chants under

Teachings of Chögyal
Namkhai Norbu
Reprints From The Mirror



FIRST EDITION

The Mirror is pleased to announce the first edition of a new book called *Teachings of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, Reprints from the Mirror*. The book is a compilation of teachings from past issues of *The Mirror* available in a beautifully bound soft cover book illustrated by Glen Eddy. The book includes: The Difference between Sutra and Tantra, Dzogchen - the Path of Self-Liberation, Helping the Dead and Dying, On Working with Newcomers, Terma Teaching - Refreshing the Transmission, How to Follow a Master, The Base in Dzogchen, Yantra Yoga, Introduction and Knowledge in Tregchod, The Three Sacred Principles, Contemplation in Dzogchen, The Essential Tantra of the Six Liberations, Integrating the Teachings into Daily Life, Invocation of Samantabhadra, The Meaning of the Vajra, Discovering Our Real Nature, The Attitude of Samantabhadra, Dzogchen Longde and The Importance of the Dzogchen Community.

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the chapters, 'Loneliness', 'Samsara' and 'Nirvana', 'In the Land of Promise', 'Love's Fool', 'Victory Chatter', and 'Sacred Songs'. In a poem called 'Wait and Think' from 'In the Land of Promise, The poet/teacher bemoans his students' habitual styles of neurosis. "Wounded son/How sad /Never expected this /Oily seagulls/crippled jackal/complaining flower-/very sad/ Is it?/Is it?/ Is it?/Maybe a couple of donuts might cure /Or, for that matter, wine turning into vinegar." Or in 'Missing the Point' "Good soldier/Neat girl in the cosmic whorehouse—" the poet's wry sense of humor is not lost in the all too familiar workings of the mind's endless display of hope and fear, the beginner's meditative swing between the tightness of the good soldier and the wanton looseness of sexual fantasy. Other poems are saturated with Trungpa's unique brand of loneliness, the hint of sadness behind the playful lover. There are poems to his many girlfriends, wife, son and his regent. Many poems from "Sacred Songs" are from his Shambhala terms. They

are among the most exquisite works. On the lighter side, *Timely Rain* even includes some of his elocution exercises. I was sorry not to see the emblematic, "Cathy's hair is black." David Rome's valuable 'Afterword' attempts for the first time to place Trungpa's poetics in the context of Western literary history and his role as a spiritual master. This combined with Allen Ginsberg's earlier essay reprinted from *First Thought* offers greater accessibility to those who were not privy to the late Master's inner mandala.

For me, Trungpa remains the most interesting person I ever met, a Master of exceptional courage and sensitivity who fulfilled his promise. Whenever I think of him, it is always springtime, and my mind, youthful, at play in the highlands where the air is pure and light. *Timely Rain* offers a rare glimpse into the mind of one of the great founding fathers of Western Buddhism, in all its multifaceted brilliance.

by Jacqueline Gens

Christmas Retreat in Tashigar

continued from page 1

library, or in the Gonpa, getting ready to sit for the Base and First Level exams given by Rinpoche and Jim Valby.

Thanks to the help of all by working, buying raffle tickets or participating in the auction, Tashigar has improved in a short time. Now we have a good phone service, a computer, and the main house and campsite keep getting better and better for those who like to visit us. Of course there are still things to be done.

"I give you the path, but realization depends on you, said the Buddha many times." This is what Rinpoche told us on the second day of the retreat explaining what having the capacity for the teaching means. "If a person follows a Teaching year after year but always

thinks that the Teachings are something mysterious, he will be like the nose of a dog. If the dog has a black nose, no matter whether it is summer or winter, it will always keep on being black, it will never change. These kinds of people can spend all their lives like this and get to the end of their lives like this. This means that they are living passively in a fantasy and lacking the capacity to follow the path."

To conclude: May the presence of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu in Tashigar and the commitment of those working, studying and practicing be auspicious so that the hardness of the crystal turns into water in water and frees us from being like the black nose of the dog.

Tibetan Kum Nye (Chugpa) Massage

Part 2

Brief Summary and Implications

by Dr. Nida Chenagsang

This is the second and final part of a short introduction to Kum Nye Massage. Part 1 appeared in Mirror Issue 47.

There are two different substances used for massage - decoction and oil. Oil is used for massaging healthy people and those with too much *rlung* energy. Decoction is used for people with skin infections and disorders. Many different minerals and herbs can be used to prepare a decoction depending on their qualities.

For general massage, sesame oil is highly recommended to balance the *rlung*. Agar and nutmeg can be added to the sesame oil to help with disorders such as insomnia and sadness which arise from *rlung* problems. If the person has problems with their blood circulation, feels cold etc., ginger can be added to the oil because it creates warmth.

A good olive oil can also be used because it probably has many benefits since it is a combination of different tastes: sweet, bitter, acidic, salty and hot.

Boiled butter or shunmar can be used for massage. It is prepared by melting some butter in a pot, stirring it constantly so that it does not burn. As it is heated the butter separates into two parts. It is heated and mixed until this separation takes place and then the upper strata is removed to be used for massage purposes. This is excellent for general massage.

How to do the massage

The place

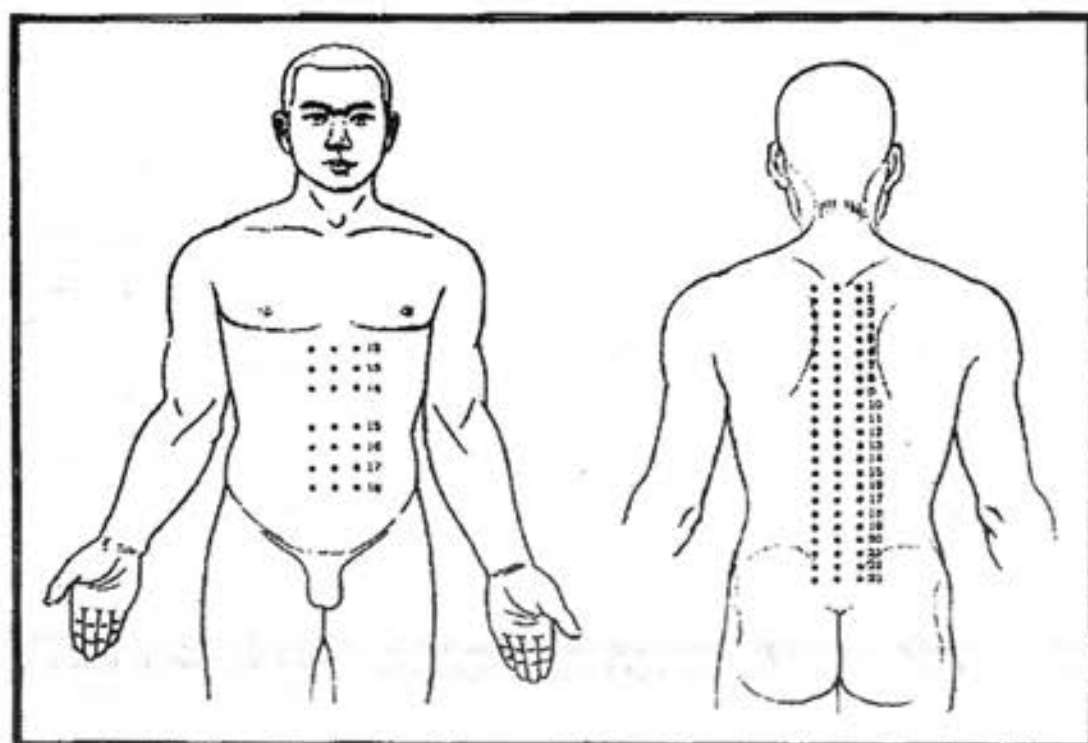
The place for doing massage should be quiet, warm, pleasant looking and should have plants and flowers. In springtime and

tive sense organs, incense should be used in the room. When the conditions in the room where massage is to be done are pleasing, it is very beneficial for the patient. Even the sound of soothing music or birdsong will help to make the patient feel at ease. Incense, music, pleasant and attractive surroundings satisfy the patient's *rlung* energy and help to calm it

problems. Massage in this season is good for the health and protects the health.

The summer is the time for *rlung* disease because the *rlung* energy is increased and it is very easy to have problems with it. In this case massage is very helpful.

The morning and the evening are the best times of day for massage



so that the patient will forget his or her problems. So it is important that the patient has this kind of contact before the massage starts. When the *rlung* energy calms down it is good for blood circulation, the beating of the heart and all the different energies in the body.

The time

The best time for massage is the winter, the second best time is the summer because in the winter, the outside weather is cold and closes

because at these times the *rlung* energy is more active in the body.

This type of massage is very beneficial for children and old people because in these two ages people tend to have more *rlung* energy. Each person has a predominance of either *rlung*, bile or phlegm energy. In general massage is better for those with a predominance of *rlung* energy.

The massage

First of all as a preliminary to the massage the patient should sit down and exhale strongly from the nostrils three times. Then they should do a type of breathing similar to the recitation of the Vajra seven times. Afterwards the patient should lie on their stomach with the body straight because when the body is straight the channels are straight and if the channels are straight the *rlung* is very calm and as a consequence the mind will be stable. The shouldn't be wearing a watch, earrings, rings or other jewelry. They should remove their clothes.

A red string should be tied around each of the person's ring fingers and fourth toes because these fingers and toes may be susceptible to a loss of the *lha* energy so the thread should help to prevent this from happening. The thread should not be very tight.

The person giving the massage should rub his or her hands together briskly before starting in order

to warm them. Then using both hands he should briskly rub the patient starting from the head and gradually working down to the feet in order to warm the body. After he should pat the entire body once again from the head to the feet because this will unblock the *rlung* energy in the skin and assist in blood and *rlung* circulation. It also helps people to breathe more easily and is beneficial for the skin.

Ku - applying the oil

Then the real massage starts: 'ku' - applying the oil, 'nye' - kneading and massaging the points and 'chyi' - using powder to absorb the oil. These are the three main processes of kum nye massage.

The masseur or masseuse puts a little oil on their palms and rubs the hands together briskly and then starts applying the oil on the body starting at the head and working down to the feet. The oil is applied

the thumb is applied to the points on the head, face, torso and all the body points and massages them with a circular clockwise motion five times, followed by pressing directly on the point five times. Then a counterclockwise motion is used five times on each point. On the points along the back, three fingers (the index finger, the middle finger and the ring finger) may be used at the same time for massaging the points. If this is tiring for the masseur, he or she can use the thumbs as described earlier.

After this, the masseur uses the middle finger, reinforced by placing the tip of the index finger on the back of the middle finger, to firmly tap each point five times.

In general, pressing and tapping the points is done five times, but if the patient has particular pains at any points, pressing and tapping can be done for a longer period of time. If a person has a particular physical or mental problem with pain in certain parts of the body, massage can be applied only to the points connected to the area of the problem, without applying oil to the entire body or massaging all the points.

Chyi - using powder to absorb the oil

After pressing and tapping (*nye*) is finished, the powder is applied. In general barley powder is very good but for fat people, chick pea powder is best because it can absorb not only the oil but helps to absorb some of the body fat. For those with problems of blood circulation etc., herbs such as sandalwood can be added to the chick pea powder.

This type of powder can protect the phlegm energy because it absorbs the oil on the skin so that it doesn't enter into the pores and increase the phlegm energy. The powder is also good for absorbing the fat from the body and makes the skin soft and shiny. The joints become more supple.

The powder is applied to the entire body and then removed by brushing it off with the hand.

When this has been done the patient should remain five or ten minutes in quiet relaxation. They should assume any position that they find comfortable. It will be beneficial for the person to take a shower afterwards but the water shouldn't be very hot on the head because it is not good for the hair and the sight. However hot water is good on the lower back and the legs down to the feet.

Diet

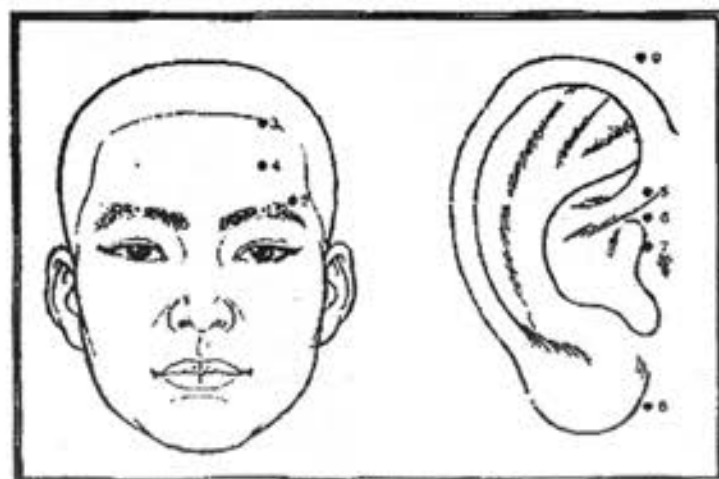
Onions, garlic, boiled vegetables such as beans, barley, mutton, horse meat and herb butter are all beneficial as well as milk, *chang* (beer) (not too much), bone soup and a little warm fatty food. Food that is not recommended is white bread, white rice and other foods which are not considered to be nutritious.

Behavior

After the massage, the patient should stay in a warm place keeping the body warm. He or she should be relaxed, with the senses enjoying things such as music, the pleasant company of friends. The person shouldn't undertake any heavy work that day. Strong exercise is not good.

Nye - kneading and massaging the points.

The muscles all over the body are kneaded and the masseur uses his fists to apply firm pressure along both sides of the spine pressing firmly and briefly on various points starting at the top of the spine and moving down to the lower part. With a slight pressure,



summer time it is good to massage outside in the sun, in winter in a warm place inside. The mattress or material on which the person to be massaged lies should be soft and not rough. If the patient has sensi-

the pores of the body. The inner heat of the body is increased and digestion and absorption are faster than during other seasons. The night is very long and in general the body starts to get weak and thin and it is easy to have physical

WORLD FESTIVAL OF SACRED MUSIC



A GLOBAL QUEST FOR UNISON

Foundation for the Support of the World Festival of Sacred Music

Summary of six WFSM programs around the world

World Festival of Sacred Music, 'A Global Quest for Unison' an initiative of H.H. the Dalai Lama. The World Festival of Sacred Music is initiated by the Dalai Lama to approach the new millennium with a new sense of universal responsibility. The Dalai Lama: 'We now have an opportunity to break down barriers and create the spirit of a global family. We should invoke the forces of peace and harmony. Music symbolizes the yearnings for harmony with the sacred within and around us. The World Festival of Sacred Music is a coming together of people and traditions to share and nurture the profoundest expression of the human spirit that is part of each one of us.' The Dalai Lama appeals to all like-minded people to join and help bring this relevant project to fruition.

The five continental festivals will be in Los Angeles, Dresden, Cape Town, Sydney and Hiroshima. The Grand Final, held in India, is a global festival. All five continents will be sending a minimum of 40 musicians to the Grand Finale in India. Each continental festival consists of a series of concerts and performances that represent that continent's heritage of sacred music. Each continental festival will be blessed by the presence of the Dalai Lama and a choir of monks and nuns from all Tibetan Buddhist traditions. The Foundation for Universal Responsibility of H.H. the Dalai Lama and Tibet House, the Cultural Centre of H.H. the Dalai Lama, have been entrusted with the task of co-ordinating this project under the guidance of Lama Doboom Tulku, director of both the Foundation for Universal Responsibility and Tibet House. Each Continental Festival consists of a series of concerts and performances that represent that continent's heritage of sacred music.

AMERICAS, LOS ANGELES (9-17 OCTOBER 1999)

The 'World Festival of Sacred Music, the Americas is a nine-day celebration of sacred music traditions of the people of the Americas. 'Sacred' is defined broadly to encompass musical forms from ritual and folk traditions of indigenous peoples to contemporary expressions of sacred music. The festival - part of the city of Los Angeles' Millennium Celebration - will engage the diverse communities of Los Angeles in a city wide arts event taking place in a range of venues, from the city's major stages to intimate places of worship throughout Los Angeles city and county.

The Los Angeles Philharmonic performs together with the choir monks and nuns from the different Tibetan Buddhist traditions in the

opening concert on Saturday, October 9. The presence of the Dalai Lama is requested for this opening celebration.

The 'Sacred Music of the Americas Concert', with a focus on the indigenous traditions of the Americas, is scheduled for the Hollywood Bowl, an outdoor amphitheater that seats 17,000, on Sunday, October 10. The program has Native American Music, African American Gospels and Spirituals, but also a Huichol Pueblo/Hopi group, Latino Songs to the Virgin of Guadalupe, Hawaiian music to the goddess Pele, a Sacred Harp Chorus, Gregorian Chants, Sufi Music and the Philip Glass Ensemble with songs from the film Kundun.

The next days' programs feature: Women's Voices singing Jewish, Armenian and Indian songs; Cross Cultural Sharing of Asian and Latino traditions; an Interfaith Celebration with contemporary musician and dancer Meredith Monk; a Concert of Sephardic Jewish and Arab Sacred Music; Temple Dances; Pacific Island Sacred Music and Christian Chorale Music.

The L.A. event closes with a 'Sacred Music of Los Angeles Concert' on Sunday, October 17. It will focus on the sacred music of the people of Los Angeles. It is scheduled for the John Anson Ford Amphitheater, an outdoor arts venue seating 1250.

A team of cultural specialists and ethnomusicologists research and document traditions of both indigenous and immigrant communities of the peoples of the Americas to provide comprehensive background information in their WFSM concert programs. Educators are developing contextual information into a packet of materials for school teachers, as a means to foster respect and peace in the new millennium through music and media.

EUROPE, DRESDEN (19-27 NOVEMBER 1999)

The 'World Festival of Sacred Music, Europe' is an eight-day series of concerts and church bell symphonies of religious and sacred music traditions of the people of Europe and around the world. The city of Dresden is the venue, but Dresden involves its twin cities Petersburg and Coventry too.

The opening concert on Friday afternoon, November 19, in the Kulturpalast, is conducted by Lord Yehudi Menuhin, the Honorary President of the European festival. The concert presents a program of sacred music as healing music such as: Makam, the old Turkish healing music and, Nada Brahma, the Indian style of healing through sound. In the evening at 22.00 hours there will be a meditation in the famous Frauenkirche, destroyed during WW II but rebuilt completely.

Saturday, November 20, the 'Jewish day', will have smaller and bigger concerts and lectures on Jewish music of ancient Europe from Spain, Italy, the Balkan and again sacred music as healing music. A night concert will emphasize the Song of Songs, the Christian Song of King Solomon, the ancient European Mystic in Love.

Sunday, November 21, is the day for Christianity and will present Lutheran, Roman Catholic and Anglican liturgies throughout the day.

Monday, November 22, has in the evening two concerts of old European music from Russia and Estonia.

Tuesday, November 23, is the day of Gypsy music from Spain and France, Christian orthodox music from Russia, Islamic music from Ephesus and Roman Catholic music from Poland and Spain.

On Wednesday, November 24, monks from Petersburg, nuns from Greek, and church singers from Moscow will perform in the Kreuzkirche.

On Thursday, November 25, presents hymns and songs from Syria, Coptic liturgy, Maronite songs, Byzantine liturgy and sacred music from ancient Europe.

Friday, November 26, has an evening concert of Sufi music and a lecture by Sheikh Nazim Adel al Haqqani an Naqhsibandi.

Saturday, November 27, Peter Vaahi from Estonia gives an afternoon concert of Supreme Silence. In the evening 108 Tibetan monks, Bahai music, Hindu music, Sikh music etc., will be performed and H.H. the Dalai Lama will give a lecture.

Throughout the festival at 22.00 hours in the evening the meditation in the famous Frauenkirche will be repeated. Also Koran readings, daily Orthodox Christian, Roman Christian, Armenian Christian, Coptic services, Gregorian services, as well as Buddhist rituals for the sand mandala that is especially made for Dresden, can be attended throughout the festival.

AFRICA, CAPE TOWN (9-11 DECEMBER 1999)

The 'World Festival of Sacred Music, Africa' is a three-day event that will include the sacred sounds of all 56 countries in the continent of Africa. Cape Town shall be captured in the sounds of African gospel music for three days. The Dalai Lama will hopefully be part of the Cape Town celebrations on the first day, Wednesday, December 8, the inauguration of the African festival. The 108 Tibetan monks and nuns will perform in Cape Town that opening day. The African festival will also bring together Mr. Nelson Mandela and the Dalai Lama for a media conference from Robben Island.

The festival takes place at three

large venues: a sports stadium, an outdoor venue in the public gardens of Cape Town and a music hall for the closing night program. A selection committee of musicians, professors of music and ethnomusicologists make final selections on who appears at the festival. For new information visit the website with the url related name:

www.wfsmafrica.org.za

AUSTRALIA, SYDNEY (17-19 MARCH 2000)

The 'World Festival of Sacred Music, Australia' is a three-day event which at the centre piece draws upon the talents of the 40-60,000 years old culture of the Indigenous Peoples of Australia.

The Dalai Lama is requested to perform the opening ceremony on March 17 in the company of the 108 monks and nuns from the different Tibetan Buddhist traditions. The program for the opening evening involves representations of traditional tribes from throughout Australia and Aboriginal performers involved in contemporary indigenous expression, who still have the aboriginal spirituality at the core of their sound. Groups performing contemporary expressions are: the Bangarra Dance Theatre Mimi, the Marrungaku Company's dancers and musicians and the Aboriginal Band Yothu Yindi. The Torres Strait Islander Group will be represented by indigenous Christine Arnu, now a renowned singer of contemporary music. As Aborigines are earth worshippers, it is appropriate to hold their performances in open air venues.

The second day of the Australian festival Papua New Guinea groups, the Maori peoples from New Zealand, and the Melanesian groups, the Tongians, Samoans and Fijians will perform. The first Papua New Guinea singer bassist to come out and earn international renown, Klare Du-olga, will perform on this second day of the festival.

Complimenting the indigenous cultures will be performance pieces on the third day by The Sydney Symphony Orchestra, The Australian Choral Group, The Sydney Chamber Children's Choir, The Song Company, renowned for their Gregorian Chants, and The Sydney Philharmonic Choir, internationally praised for their virtuosity and versatility. Camella Baynie, with her unusual Arab/Celtic mix of music, drawing upon her Lebanese, Scottish and Irish ancestry, will contribute her unusual vocal style.

Further research is initiated and a detailed draft proposal will be ready by early next February.

Venues for the festival are, for the first day, the open air Opera House Forecourt offering the dramatic backdrop of the Sydney Harbor with the Harbor Bridge and city skyline in clear view. The Botanical Gardens Amphitheater is

the venue for the second day. For the closing concert the Darling Harbor Convention Centre offers the appropriate capacity of 10,000 seats.

ASIA, TOKYO AND HIROSHIMA (23 MARCH-2 APRIL 2000)

The 'World Festival of Sacred Music, Asia' is a thirteen-day event that will start with concerts, from 23-28 March, on a cruise ship in Tokyo Bay. The Tokyo audience can visit the ship to enjoy rehearsals and attend small concerts and dance performances in the different ball-rooms of the ship.

Some 300 musicians and dancers are going to meet for the first time on board of the ship in Tokyo Bay. They will live and rehearse together from that moment on. The unison of sacred music will really be practiced on this musical Arc of Noah. Performers from different parts of Asia and the world will naturally play together. The idea is to bring the understanding of unison into practice by making the musicians who have never heard each other's music before, play and enjoy their sounds and rhythms together.

For the Tokyo audience the Arc of Noah will be like an 'amusement park' for sacred music. The public can enjoy sounds from far-away lands but one can also have an ethnic lunch, tea or dinner. The Tokyo Bay event will work as a one week promotion program for the main festival days on Miyajima Island.

On March 29 the ship will sail from Tokyo Bay to cover 1000 kilometers on the Pacific Ocean and the Setonaikai inland sea to reach Hiroshima Bay.

On March 30 the Dalai Lama is requested to perform a ceremony for the victims of the Hiroshima nuclear attack on the ceremonial square in the centre of Hiroshima city. At the Hiroshima memorial the Dalai Lama, initiator of the World Festival of Sacred Music, will pray for peace in the coming millennium. For this ceremony the Dalai Lama will be accompanied by the 108 Tibetan monks and nuns. Officials from Hiroshima city, national dignitaries and other officials are invited for this official opening of the World Festival of Sacred Music for Asia. An audience of 10,000 can easily join in for free in this ceremony at Hiroshima Memorial Park. The media will broadcast the Dalai Lama meeting Hiroshima as a message for world peace.

The next day, March 31, starts the three-day main program on Miyajima Island, in sight of the city of Hiroshima, in Hiroshima Bay. For thousands of years Miyajima Island has been considered a sacred island. The Japanese have been going to the island for spiritual retreats for as long as they remember. Every Japanese feels the soothing atmosphere of the island even when only pronouncing its name.

continued on next page

Sacred Art Inextricably linked to Tantra

An interview with the monk/artist Gyermes Rabgyas

by F. Van Den Berg & B. Siegel, translated by Dr. Nida Chenagtsang

Born in 1969 in Lhoka near Lhasa in Tibet, Gyermes Rabgyas became a monk at the famous Mindroling monastery when he was thirteen years old. He studied traditional Tibetan thanka painting with his painting master in Kham, returning to Mindroling to repair all the old murals destroyed during the Cultural Revolution. He is also very skilled in making tormas, powder mandalas and mdos.

He has been invited to Merigar by the Istituto Shang Shung to give courses in the traditional Tibetan arts of drawing, thanka painting and sculpture.



Gyermes Rabgyas

Interviewers: How do you feel at Merigar?

Gyermes Rabgyas: The conditions are very good here. People are kind. I am very happy here.

Int.: When one arrives at a new place, one often has certain expectations. What were yours?

G. R.: I hope to teach the tradition of Tibetan Sacred Art to Western people. Personally I really would like to learn more about restoration and its techniques.

Int.: What kind of benefit can Sacred Art have for a practitioner?

G. R.: The benefits are very direct: the Stupa is the mind of the Buddha and the painted scrolls are the body of Buddha. It is very useful for this and the next life to be intimately familiar with the sub-

tleities. You know we Buddhists always think in long terms. Today it is difficult to study Sacred Art in Tibet and to continue this culture. There is this danger that we are losing something very important.

Int.: Are there any benefits in Sacred Art for non-practitioners who simply enjoy it for art's sake?

G. R.: Yes. The thanka painter is not just an ordinary painter. When he starts a thanka he uses charcoal and applies it using meditation and reciting mantras and continues in this way when he moves on to applying the color. If a painter paints like this the thanka is already empowered, so if people

look at it just for the artistic aspect, and they enjoy looking at it, there will certainly be a benefit for their health and their protection. Certainly for practitioners familiarity with the wrathful deities is particularly good for people after death as for example in the shiro. There is a story in Tibet. The son of a famous painter died and after death he met Yama, the Lord of Death, and said to him, "Oh, I'm not afraid of you. My father used to paint you using his saliva to mix the paint." So one can recognize the wrathful divinities after death.

Int.: Is it necessary for a painter to have some realization of the divinity he is painting or sculpting?

G. R.: Yes, the best painter is one who has this realization of the form he is painting. But a painter

may paint many different deities and it is difficult that he has realization of them all. But when the painter and sculptor work, they must recite the mantra of the divinity.

Int.: Is it advisable for non-Tibetans to study Tibetan Sacred Art?

G. R.: There are no national boundaries in Buddhism

Int.: The Istituto Shang Shung is organizing a series of courses in Tibetan painting which you will be giving. Since some of the courses last no longer than a week, we will have to do a lot of homework if we wish to make some progress. Will you be available for long-term students to give advice outside the courses?

G. R.: Of course. That is what I am here for. I am a monk. Nothing should distract me.

Int.: In the West it is said to take three to seven years to perfect any art form. Are there similar considerations about how long an apprenticeship in Tibetan Sacred Art should last?

G. R.: According to the Tibetan system it takes at least three years and one begins by learning how to draw. In Tibet no-one is allowed to paint unless he has practiced for this period of time. The traditional method of teaching painting is very slow and goes point by point. But in some cases if the student has a good capacity to paint and is intelligent he may learn to paint in one or two years.

In these courses at Merigar I will give a general introduction to painting. If students have some experience and capacity they may be able to go further ahead.

Int.: At the Istituto, we do not have a textbook on Tibetan Sacred Art. Would you consider preparing one?

G. R.: In Tibet there is a text book in Tibetan for students learning to paint. I would like to prepare a textbook for Western students which will be a little easier. Learning painting in the monastery in Tibet is a very long

process and involves a lot of time. In Tibet it is often a family lineage.

Int.: Is it part of your family lineage?

G. R.: No, it isn't. My painting teacher told me that I was very interested in painting when I was a child in primary school although I don't remember that. When I was a little older, a monk from Mindroling monastery asked my family if I could join the monastery because he said that it was very important for them to have a painter there. In the past Mindroling had been famous for its Sacred Art and there was need to repair the murals and statues that had been destroyed during the Cultural Revolution. My parents were in agreement.

My painting teacher was from Kham from a monastery that had the same lineage as Mindroling. This master took me to Kham to learn painting and I studied with him for five years. His name is Zumpa tsang and he had many students in the Kham area where he taught at a school for Tibetan art.

Int.: Are there many lay-people in Tibet who are good painters?

G. R.: Of course. There are also yogis who practice painting. But Tibetan people prefer Sacred Art from good practitioners with some realization.

Int.: How did artistic activities begin in ancient Tibet?

G. R.: We have a story that says that in ancient times there was a nomad who was very fond of drawing and liked to draw animals. He used to draw with charcoal on rocks. One day he had a vision of a beautiful girl in a rainbow just after it had rained. He thought that she might be on top of a mountain but even after a long walk he could not see her, she had disappeared. But afterwards he missed this girl and was afraid that he would forget how she looked so he painted her. But then he became afraid that the image would disappear with the rain so he carved her in stone.

One day a friend of his visited him in his tent and asked him who this girl was. The shepherd replied that she was the daughter of the mountain, Ri po mo. You know in Tibet we call painting 'Ri mo'. So this friend told everybody that his friend had painted Ri po mo and the people came to look and marveled about it. And it all seems to have started with this.

Int.: Is there a modern development discernable in Sacred Art?

G. R.: There are things that cannot be changed. There are several reasons for this. The outline of the Mandala, for instance, cannot be changed. When it comes to painting, I personally prefer the traditional way. Also Tibetan people do not recognize the modern styles that are sometimes tried by young artists. For instance modern styles sometimes do not show the difference between a worldly human being and a Buddha. Although the Buddha appeared as a normal human being, people do not see him like this. Of course there are attempts by Tibetan artists to mix the styles but people often do not recognize this new way of painting as being sacred. They say that the new styles do not have power.

Int.: You have probably seen the painting styles of other Buddhist cultures. Japan has, for instance, developed a very spontaneous style of painting. Do you personally derive much faith from such spontaneously drawn Buddha figures?

G. R.: Yes, there are some very skilled painters who have studied for many years. But I do not have much faith in 'free styles'. You have to understand that the Tibetan way of creating Sacred Art is inextricably linked to Tantra. Everything from the very beginning to the very end is done and empowered by mantra recitation in order to purify. Sacred Art is not worldly art.

Int.: Our Master has shown us that many sacred things go into statues and that Thankas need to be empowered.

G. R.: Yes. Mantra has to be applied when we look for the clay, the material we use to make statues and mantra is also applied on the three sacred places of the statue. It is also applied when the relics are placed inside the statue, together with precious substances and medicine pills and different colored ribbons, symbolizing the elements.

Int.: You left a statue of Guru Rinpoche in the office. In the place of the kapala there was a painting brush.

G. R.: (Laughs) Yes, Yes! This brush shows that the statue is still unfinished. Then it also has a protective value. Beings with unwholesome intentions cannot take possession of it.

Int.: Thank you, Kushogla, for the interview and for coming here to teach.

millennium. In Japan half of the musicians will be from Asia, including China. The other half will come from all over the world.

GRAND FINALE
BANGALORE, INDIA
(APRIL 2000)

The exact dates for the seven-day Grand Finale of the 'World Festival of Sacred Music, India' are yet to be confirmed. Each continent will send music groups and solo musicians to the Grand Finale. In addition to the musicians from the five continents there will be representations of sacred music of India, which will include Baul singers, Sufiana Kalam, Sankirtan, Dagar Brothers, Wadali Brothers, Carnatic Recital and Pandit Bhinsen Joshi.

Every day will bring together different groups. Whirling Dervishes and African American

Gospel singers, Australian Aboriginals and the Vienna Boys Choir from Austria, a Noh group from Japan and Native American groups and Russian Orthodox choirs, Peruvian Inca music, Gnawa music from Morocco, traditional Jewish songs from Israel, Sufi music from Rajasthan, Maori music from New Zealand, music from South and East Africa, a Mormon Tabernacle Choir, Tibetan monastic dance, Sacred music from the South Pacific will be brought together with Vedic chants and sacred music from India. The Dalai Lama is expected to be present at the main events of the Grand Finale.

The preceding article is an update from 2/18/99 by the FSWFSM, Netherlands.

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World Sacred Music

Miyajima Island is a 'God Island' they say.

The small island has a three hundred meter high mountain called 'a symbol of God'. One of Japan's most important Shinto shrines is the more than a thousand years old, Unesco protected monument, built half into the water, that has the mountain as its backdrop. The concerts will be held in the shrine and in front of the shrine. In the water a large stage will be built in front of the shrine. From small boats musicians will make their sound carry over the water. The audience is part of this lively event from the shrine and from the shore. An audience of 20,000 is expected to participate every day.

For three days from 5-8 p.m. the musicians and dancers will perform in daylight and dusk. Music sometimes communicates history better than words. Canadian Eskimos for instance play the mouth harp in exactly the same way as the original Japanese Ainu people on Hokkaido play a mouth harp. This tells us that they had a communication that is not mentioned in our history books. The Gnawa music, now found in Morocco, has the same scale as Japanese folk music and Tibetan folk music. This too tells about earlier connections between these far apart outposts of Eurasia.

At the start of the three main concerts of the Asian festival sacred horn sounds from all over the world

will be brought together. Tibetan monks, Japanese Shinto priests, Australian Aboriginals, African Natives blow their horns, mixing in with pre-Christian horn sounds from Europe, Moslim horns as well as Native American Indian horns. All horns will merge into one honest cry for attention. Like drums, horns are originally used for communication between people and between people and gods. This start will be a horn fanfare with a harmony of its own that will sound from the stages and boats.

The Asian festival also brings contemporary musicians together with authentic music and dance, to create the sound and rhythm of the sacred music and dance for the next

continued from page 8



"... 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..."

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

The most important thing we can do help maintain the good health of our precious master, Chögyal 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.

LOSAR - TIBETAN NEW YEAR - EARTH HARE YEAR

1st Month, 1st day

Wed. 17th Feb. 1999

It is good to do a Long-life practice as early as possible in the morning and a Ganapuja during the day. Prayer flags can be authenticated during the Ganapuja. On the morning of the third day of the new year you can do the rite of the Sang and hang up the prayer flags.

1st Month, 3rd day Fri. 19th Feb. 1999

The fourth day of the first month is a special day for doing the Long-life practice of the Dakini Mandarava. It is also a very special day for doing the practice of Ekajati. This year there is no fourth day in this month and so today try to do the Long-life practice "Cycle of Life's Vajra" in the morning and the Long Tun in the evening. If you don't have this possibility, you can try to do the Long-life practice included in the Medium or Long Tun, with the rite of Ekajati, reciting the heart mantra of Ekajati as much as possible.

1st Month, 8th day Tue. 23rd Feb. 1999

This is an important day for doing the practice of Ekajati, so try to do the Long Tun either collectively or personally. If you don't have that possibility then try to do the Medium Tun and in either case recite the heart mantra of Ekajati as many times as possible.

1st Month, 10th day

Thu. 25th Feb. 1999

This is the day on which Padmasambhava was ordained by Ananta, or, according to Jigmed Lingpa ('Jigmed gLing pa), the day on which he left the kingdom of Oddiyana to go to the cemetery at Maghadha called Citavana. You can do a Ganapuja in the usual way or if you do not have the possibility you can try to do the Long-life practice linked to the Guruyoga of Guru Rinpoche (Universal Wisdom Union) either collectively or alone. Otherwise you can do a Medium Tun (Tundrin) with an intense practice of the Guruyoga of



Padmasambhava.

1st Month, 15th day

Tue. 2nd March 1999

FULL MOON. The first full moon of the Tibetan New Year is the very important anniversary of the Great Dzogchen Master Garab Dorje as well as the great Master Shenrab Miwoche, the founder of B'n. It is also a special day of Buddha Shakyamuni, the day he performed many miracles, and it is the anniversary of the Master Marpa. Therefore, on this day when it is 8 o'clock in the morning in Oddiyana, it is good for all Dzogchen practitioners in the world to practice at the same time, practicing the Agar Lama'i Nalgyor, Guruyoga with the White A, integrating all transmissions at the same instant into the state of contemplation. This practice should be done at the established moment with one's Vajra brothers or sisters, or, if this is not possible, alone.

SEE GLOBAL TIMETABLE page 3

1st Month, 25th day

Fri. 12th March 1999

This is the day of the Dakini and in particular the anniversary of the lady Master Ayu Kadro, so it is good to do the Agar Lama'i Nalgyor or a Ganapuja with transformation into the Dakini Simhamukha.

1st Month, 30th day

Wed. 17th March 1999

DARK MOON. This day is suitable for purification practice so try to do purification with the Namchos Shitroi Nalgyor, the practice of the peaceful and wrathful manifestations, either collectively or alone.

2nd Month, 6th day

Tue. 23rd March 1999

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

2nd Month, 10th day

Fri. 26th March 1999

This is a special day of Guru Padmasambhava, the day on which the King Sahora tried to burn him alive and when he transformed the fire into a lake, so try to perform a Ganapuja collectively, but if that is not possible do the Long-life practice Universal Wisdom Union.

2nd Month, 12th day

Sun. 28th March 1999

This is the anniversary of Jetsun Dragpa Gyaltsen (1147-1216), one of the first great Masters of the Sakyapa tradition, so try to do the Guruyoga Agar Lama'i Nalgyor, the Guruyoga of the White A.

2nd Month, 15th day

Wed. 31st March 1999

FULL MOON. This is one of the best days for doing the Long-life practice of Guru Amitayus, with a Ganapuja if possible. Try to do it collectively or, if that is not possible, alone.

2nd Month, 20th day

Tue. 6th April 1999

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

2nd Month, 25th day

Sun. 11th April 1999

This is a Dakini day so try to do a Ganapuja with your Vajra Brothers and Sisters or if that is not possible, a Medium Tun,

either collectively or alone.

2nd Month, 30th day

Fri. 16th April 1999

DARK MOON. On this day, which is the birthday of the great Terton Loter Wangpo, try to do the Agar Lama'i Nalgyor, Guruyoga of the White A either collectively or alone, with a Ganapuja if possible.

3rd Month 3rd day

Sun. 18th April 1999

On this anniversary of Karma Pakshi, a great Master of the Karma Kagyud and a Dzogchen practitioner, it is beneficial to practice the Agar Lama'i Nalgyor collectively if possible but otherwise alone.

3rd Month, 4th day

Mon. 19th April 1999

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

3rd Month, 10th day

Sun. 25th April 1999

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

3rd month, 15th day

Fri. 30th April 1999

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

3rd Month, 25th day

Mon. 10th May 1999

This is a Dakini day as well as the anniversary of the fifth Dalai Lama, a great Terton and practitioner of Dzogchen, so it is a good day to practice Agar Lama'i Nalgyor, Guru Yoga with White A in the morning and Ganapuja with an intensive practice of Ekajati in the evening.

3rd Month, 30th day

Sat. 15th May 1999

DARK MOON. This is a particularly good day for practicing the Purification of the Six Lokas. As it is also the anniversary of the great Terton and Dzogchen Master Sangyas Lingpa, try to do the Agar Lama'i Nalgyor.

4th month, 7th day

Fri. 21st May 1999

This is the anniversary of the birth of Buddha Shakyamuni, an important day for all Buddhists, so try to do a Ganapuja with your Vajra brothers and sisters.

4th Month, 8th day

Sat. 22nd May 1999

These are important days for the practice of Ekajati, so try to do a Long or Medium Tun in the usual way, reciting the heart mantra of Ekajati as many times as possible.

4th Month, 10th day

Monday 24th May 1999

SPECIAL PRACTICES FOR EARTH HARE

This is a special day of Guru Padmasambhava. If you can, try to do a Ganapuja, otherwise you can do the Long-life practice "Universal Wisdom Union".

4th Month, 15th day

Sun. 30th May 1999

FULL MOON. This is the anniversary of the Parinirvana of Buddha Shakyamuni, as well as an important day for the Long-life practice "Cycle of Life's Vajra". Therefore try to do this practice early in the morning, and in the afternoon or evening do a Ganapuja.

4th Month, 25th day

Wed. 9th June 1999

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

4th Month, 30th day

Sun. 13th June 1999

DARK MOON. This day is the anniversary of Nyag-la Pema Dudul (1816-1872). He was one of the Masters of Chang-chub Dorje, the main Master of Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche. He discovered the Terma "Tsedrub Gongdus" which two of his disciples, Ayu Khadro and Changchub Dorje, transmitted to Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche. Therefore you should try to do this Long-life practice, "Tsedrub Gongdus", "Union of Primordial Essences". The time to do it is the early morning. Later in the day or in the evening you can do the Guruyoga of the White A, Agar Lama'i Nalgyor.

5th Month, 1st day

Mon. 14th June 1999

This is the anniversary of mChoggyur gLing-pa (1829-1870) a Nyingmapa Master of Dzogchen, one of the most important Rimed masters of the XIX Century. Try to do a practice of Agar Lama'i Nalgyor.

5th Month, 10th day

Wed. 23rd June 1999

This is a special day of Guru Padmasambhava. If you can, try to do a Ganapuja, otherwise you can do the Long-life practice "Universal Wisdom Union".

5th Month, 14th day

Sun. 27th June 1999

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

5th Month, 15th day

Mon. 28th June 1999

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

5th Month, 25th day Thu. 8th July 1999

This is an important day for the practice of Ekajati, so try to do a

Long or Medium Tun in the usual way, reciting the heart mantra of Ekajati as many times as possible. If you have the possibility it is beneficial to add the Ganapuja.

5th Month, 30th day

Tue. 13th July 1999

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

6th Month, 4th day Fri. 16th July 1999

This is the anniversary of the Dharmachakra (the first turning of the Wheel of the Dharma): the first time that Buddha Shakyamuni gave the teaching of the Four



Noble Truths to his disciples at Sarnath, after his illumination. To honor the Lord Buddha on this special day you can do a Ganapuja with your Vajra brothers and sisters.

6th Month, 10th day Fri. 23rd July 1999

The tenth day of the sixth month is considered to be the anniversary of the 'birth' of Padmasambhava by many masters. This year, when it is 8.00 am in Oddiyana, on Friday 23rd July, we Dzogchen practitioners all over the world will perform the practice of Guruyoga with Tundrin or Tungyas, according to our opportunities, and those who have the possibility can also add Ganapuja.

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

SEE GLOBAL TIMETABLE page 3

6th Month, 14th day

THE MIRROR CALENDAR THE YEAR

Tue. 27th July 1999

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

6th Month, 15th day

Wed. 28th July 1999

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

6th Month, 25th day

Fri. 6th Aug. 1999

This is a Dakini day, so it is a positive day for reinforcing the function of our energy and creating a

sambhava. Therefore it is an ideal day to do Agar Lama'i Nalgyor in the morning and a Ganapuja and Long-life practice associated with Padmasambhava, "Universal Wisdom Union" later in the day.

7th Month, 15th day

Thu. 26th Aug. 1999

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

7th Month, 19th day

Mon. 30th Aug. 1999

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

7th Month, 25th day

Sun. 5th Sept. 1999

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

7th Month, 30th day

Thu. 9th Sept. 1999

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

8th Month, 10th day

Mon. 20th Sept. 1999

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

8th Month, 15th day

Sat. 25th Sept. 1999

FULL MOON. This is an important day to do the Long-life practice of Amitayus, "Union of Primordial Essences". It is best to do it early in the morning, but if you cannot it is still good if you can do it later in the day or evening.

8th Month, 19th day

Wed. 29th Sept. 1999

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

8th Month, 25th day

Mon. 4th Oct. 1999

This is a Dakini day, and also the anniversary of two great Dzogchen masters, Rigzin Kumaraja, who

transmitted the Dzogchen teachings to Longchenpa and to the third Karmapa, and of Rigzin Tsewang Norbu (1698-1755), a great Dzogchen master of the Nyingmapa school. It is therefore an excellent day to do Agar Lama'i Nalgyor, the Guruyoga with the White A. If you can do it in the morning, that is best. Then, if you have the time, you can do a Medium or Long Tun later in the day, with an intense practice of Simhamuka, or a Ganapuja, if you have the possibility.

8th Month, 27th day

Wed. 6th Oct. 1999

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

Sat. 9th Oct. 1999

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

Tue. 12th Oct. 1999

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

9th Month, 10th day

Tue. 19th Oct. 1999

This is a special day of Guru Padmasambhava. It is also the anniversary of the 16th Gyalwang Karmapa and 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

Sun. 24th Oct. 1999

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

Sun. 31st Oct. 1999

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

Tue. 2nd Nov. 1999

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 practice Agar Lama'i Nalgyor, the Guruyoga with the White A, according to your possibilities.

9th Month, 30th day

Mon. 8th Nov. 1999

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

10th Month, 10th day

Thu. 18th Nov. 1999

This is a special day of Guru Padmasambhava, the day on which he arrived in central Tibet. It is considered that on this day, at the end of the 8th century, that King Sonzan Gampo dissolved himself into the statue of Avalokiteshvara. Therefore it is good to 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

Fri. 19th Nov. 1999

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.

10th Month, 15th day

Tue. 23rd Nov. 1999

FULL MOON. This day is considered to be the day to honor the Lord Buddha in general, and it is one of the best days to do the Long-life Practice with the Dakini Mandarava particularly. Therefore try to do the Long-life Practice, "Cycle of Life's Vajra". Generally the best moment to do this kind of practice is at 7-8 o'clock in the morning. But if you don't have this possibility, then do it in the afternoon or later in the evening when you are free.

10th Month, 25th day

Thu. 2nd Dec. 1999

This is a Dakini day, and the anniversary of Tsongkhapa (1357-1491), who made a synthesis of the previous schools and founded the Gelugpa school. Try to perform a Ganapuja with your Vajra brothers and sisters or the Medium Tun personally. In either case recite the heart mantra of the Dakini Simhamuka as many times as possible.

10th Month, 30th day

Tue. 7th Dec. 1999

DARK MOON. This is an excellent day to practice Purification of the Six Lokas.

11th Month, 8th day

Thu. 16th Dec. 1999

This is a particular day for the practice of Ekajati so try to do a Long or Medium Tun with intensive practice of the mantra of Ekajati.

11th Month, 10th day

Sat. 18th Dec. 1999

This is a special day of Guru Padmasambhava manifesting in the form called Padma Gyalpo and is the day on which he arrived in the capital of Oddiyana and became the prince of King Indrabhuti. If you have the time and possibility it



is good to do a Ganapuja collectively with your Vajra brothers and sisters, otherwise you can do the Long-life practice of "Union of Primordial Essences".

11th Month, 15th day

Wed. 22nd Dec. 1999

FULL MOON. Today it is important to try to do the Long-life practice of Guru Amitayus "Union of Primordial Essences" in the usual way, and if you have the possibility, a Ganapuja.

11th Month, 25th day

Sat. 1st Jan. 2000

This is a day of the Dakinis in general, so if you have the opportunity practice a collective Ganapuja, with the transformation of the Dakini Simhamuka, and recite her heart mantra as many times as possible. Otherwise you can do a Medium Tun either collectively or personally.

11th Month, 30th day

Thu. 6th Jan. 2000

DARK MOON. This is a special day for purification practices so try to do "Purification of the Six Lokas".

12th Month, 10th day

Sun. 16th Jan. 2000

This day is the anniversary of Guru Padmasambhava's coronation as Prince of Orgyen at the invitation of King Idrabodi. We can perform a Ganapuja collectively or do the Long-life practice, "Universal Wisdom Union" either collectively or personally, according to circumstances.

12th Month, 11th day

Mon. 17th Jan. 2000

Today it is good to do a Medium or Long Tun with intensive practice of the mantra of Ekajati.

12th Month, 15th day

Fri. 21st Jan. 2000

FULL MOON. This is in general a day for honoring the Lord Buddha, and in particular an ideal day for the Long-life practice of Guru Amitayus, "Union of Primordial Essences".

12th Month, 18th day

Sun. 23rd Jan. 2000

This day is the anniversary of the great Dzogchen master Longchen Rabjam Longchenpa (1386-1363). On this very important day try to do the Guruyoga Agar Lama'i Nalgyor, Guruyoga with the White A, either collectively or personally.

12th Month, 25th day

Sun. 30th Jan. 2000

This is a Dakini day, so try to perform a Ganapuja with the transformation of the Dakini Simhamuka together with your Vajra brothers and sisters. Otherwise you can do a Medium or Short Tun in the usual way.

12th Month, 30th day

Sat. 5th Feb. 2000

DARK MOON. This is a good day for purification practices. Therefore try to do "Purification of the Six Lokas".

LOSAR METAL DRAGON
YEAR
SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 6TH,
2000



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

6th Month, 30th day

Wed. 11th Aug. 1999

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

7th Month, 9th day

Fri. 20th Aug. 1999

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

7th Month, 10th day

Sat. 21st Aug. 1999

This is the anniversary of Jomo Menmo (1248-1283), a very famous woman Tertön, reincarnation of Yeshe Tsogyal. She was the consort of the great Tertön Guru Chowang. It is also a very special day of Guru Padma-



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is on the
<http://scil.npi.msu.su/pub/religion/dzogchen> <Moscow Dharma
Pages> (dzogchen) site.

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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





INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY NEWS

KUNSANGAR

THE FIFTH GAR

New Russian Gar Manifests



The Russian Dzogchen Community ultimately acquired her house, the international Fifth Gar. We won the auction and bought the former pioneer camp. It consists of piece of land in a pine-tree forest, occupying the area of 14 ha. There are many buildings already on the land. Now we have a task to adjust everything into complete order, to repair and provide amenities for the buildings, and also to build the house for Rinpoche, the Gonpa and retreat houses. Now let's go step by step.

Reconstruction and repairs

There are four two-floor buildings for living (N4 & N5). Everything in these buildings needs repair: to change linoleum, to paper and then decorate the rooms. There are eight bathrooms and we need to change all sanitary equipment: sixteen toilet facilities, sixteen wash-basins and to put eight shower cabins. The warming system also needs repair. In order to create more comfortable conditions for living, the biggest room on the floor will be reconstructed into two rooms with a new entrance and partition. After

repairs one hundred forty-four people will be able to live there. Of course we need to buy beds, tables, chairs, bed linen, sheets and pillow-cases; also lighting appliances for the rooms and corridors. The buildings are built from reinforced-concrete panel construction and are in good condition.

The other building which needs much effort is the dining building which is 351 sq. m. with the height of 4.6m. (N2.) There we need to change all linoleum, decorate the walls and repair the warming system. We also need to buy tables, chairs, table-service and all kitchen utensils; only some large sauce pans have been purchased.

The Verandah (N3).

Today the verandah is of metal construction with columns which support the roof and it is practically open from the three sides. It is the good place for the Vajra Dance because two mandalas fit in. There we need much work: to warm the building, to build up the walls, to put glass in and to increase the place from 178 sq. m to 200 sq. m. In this case the hall will accommodate about two hundred people so it will

accommodate the SMS retreats. This will be a warm hall.
Remaining Structures

Summer Houses

One of the four summer houses, the five room one, (N9) will be reconstructed into a heated space, and if we succeed, also with sanitary equipment and shower cabins in each two person room. The other houses (N10, N11, N6, N8) need much more serious repair and will be equipped as retreat houses.

The Pool Building (N1)

The big brick building of the pool consists of two parts: the space for the pool (now there are only walls and ceiling) and the two-story so called "health improvement complex". Everything is incomplete and there only exists main walls, constructions and ceilings. This is an important building that needs much work for building and decorating.

New buildings

Retreat Houses (N14).

Here without any problem we can replace ten to fifteen little houses with 36 sq. m. for individual retreats. They will be built according our needs and possibilities.

Gonpa (N15)

One of the possible places for Gonpa. It is quite a comfortable place surrounded by pine-trees.

Rinpoche's House (N16)

This is the task we need to fulfill during the next building season; beginning in the Spring of 1999. During the Winter we will design the project, have it confirmed by Rinpoche and collect money for building.

All these projects and works need good financial support, firstly for the building materials and equipment. These expenditures are inevitable and we must do our best for obtaining money. All the work we need to do will become a good karma yoga for each of us and will mainly be fulfilled by volunteers.

(Persons during the working time get free room and board).

VESAK

May 28 - 30

1999 AT MERIGAR



Each year all the centers in Italy that recognize the Buddha's teaching meet together to celebrate Vesak, the anniversary of the Buddha's birth, awakening and parinirvana. On the initiative of the Italian Buddhist Union, this year Vesak will be held from May 28-30 at Merigar, the seat of the Dzogchen Community. The meeting will be centered around the theme, "Monks, nuns and lay people on the Buddhist Path", and a round table is planned where participants can speak about their experience on this topic.

Apart from emphasizing the universality of the Buddha's message and the possibility of lay people to integrate perfectly their practice into daily life, the theme also offers monks and nuns a means of clarifying and defining their role within the Italian Sangha. The following morning the Masters representing the Vajrayana, Zen, Theravada and Korean Chan traditions will give teachings.

In the afternoon the Masters, invited guests and all those who wish will meet with the local authorities and population in the spirit of greater integration between our spiritual reality and the outside world. At the same time there will be sessions of meditation led by representatives of various centers and traditions within the UBI.

On Saturday evening a concert will be held, open to all.

On Sunday morning collective meditation will continue while at the Gonpa an expert will show the paintings and decorations there. Before the final religious ceremony there will be a meeting to exchange ideas about the experience of Vesak and a prize will be awarded by the Maitreya Foundation for the best thesis on Buddhism.

The Program

Friday May 28th, 1999

- 16.00 Opening talks by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu and the President of the UBI
- 16.30 Round table on "Monks, nuns and lay people on the Buddhist Path"
- 21.30 Showing of the film "Kailash the Sacred Mountain"

Saturday May 29th, 1999

- 09.00 Talks and teachings by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, Maurizio Missimi, Prof. Corrado Pensa and Master Eugako Taino.
- 16-19 Meditations sessions in the Mandala room
- 16.30 Meeting with local authorities in Arcidosso
- 21.15 Music concert in Arcidosso

Sunday May 30th, 1999

- 9-11 Meditation sessions in the Mandala room
- 09.30 Presentation of the paintings in the Temple of Great Liberation
- 10.45 Presentation of a prize for the best thesis on Buddhism
- 11.15 Final meeting of participants
- 12.00 Closing religious ceremonies

Namgyalgar

GONPA BUILDING PROJECT

Namgyalgar is embarking upon a development project in 1999. Stage One of the development application has been approved by the local Government authority which means we can move ahead with our plans for the ongoing development of Namgyalgar. We are currently in the process of completing surveys and other conditions which must be met before we can start building.

The major projects planned for Namgyalgar in 1999 are the construction of the walls and floor of the Gonpa, the building of toilets and showers (will you miss the bush shower?), and the widening of the access road to the Gar. Water is a major concern at the Gar. We are investigating options for a supply of water for drinking, etc. and for fire-fighting. We may install another tank near the Gonpa or be able to

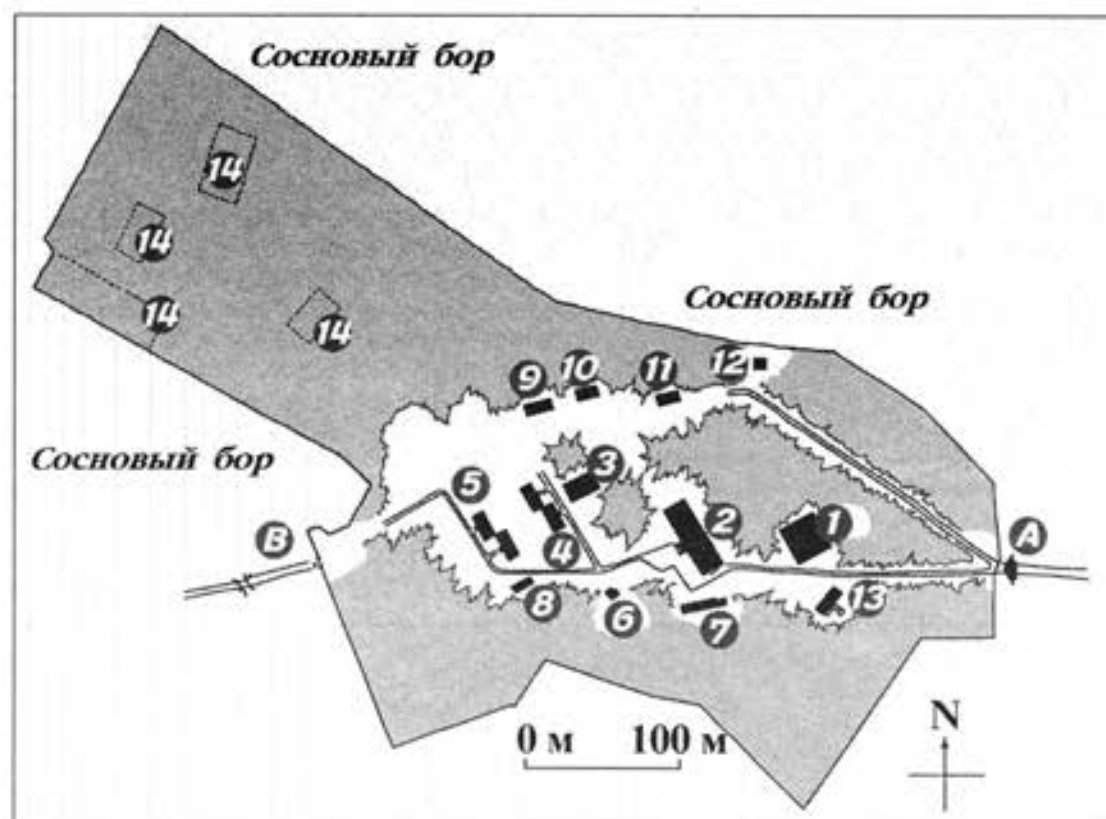
collect water from the mountain. It is hoped these projects can be completed before Rinpoche returns to Australia in December.

It is estimated that these projects will cost \$US85,000. A donor has kindly offered Namgyalgar a matching grant of \$US25,000. A fundraising campaign has commenced to raise this amount and the additional funds are needed to complete the projects.

If you could help in any way please consider making a generous contribution of money or any other form of energy.

Further information is available from:

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MERIGAR PROGRAM SPRING 1999

DZOGCHEN COMMUNITY OF ITALY

SAMTEN RETREAT (SMS BASE LEVEL)

March 20-21

Saturday sessions: 9, 11, 16, 18
Sunday sessions: 9, 11.

PRACTICE RETREAT

with Adriano Clemente
April 1-5, Easter

Retreat starts Thursday, April 1 at 4 pm and finishes Monday April 5 at noon with a Ganapuja. 10 am: SEMZEN (not included in the SMS Base), 2 pm: CHÖD practice. Instructions on sounding the damaru. There will also be sessions of YANTRA YOGA and VAJRA DANCE.

RETREAT OF THE COMPLETE VAJRA DANCE

April 15 - 17
Starts Friday at 5 pm.

PRACTICE RETREAT OF TRENPA NYERSHAG (SMS BASE)

April 24 - 25

Saturday sessions: 9, 11, 16, 18.
Sunday sessions: 9, 11.

IN DEPTH YANTRA YOGA COURSE

with Laura Evangelisti
April 30 - May 2

Two sessions daily at 10 am and 16.30
Participation quota - Lit. 120.000 with discounts for members

RETREAT OF THE COMPLETE VAJRA DANCE

May 14 - 16

Starts Friday at 5 pm.

VESAK

May 28 - 30

see page 13

RETREAT OF DZOGCHEN UPADHESHA

with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche
July 7 - 11

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Red: Anne-Grethe Nyeng
Yellow: Allan Pedersen

RUSSIA: FIRST KUNSANGAR GAKYIL

Blue: Gregory Mokhin (Coordinator of SMS in Russia)
Vladimir Maikov
Red: Leonid Korolev
Julia Philimonova (Current Director of Moscow Gakyil)
Yellow: Anna Rudneva - Director
Gekos: Sergey Wschture
Treasurer: Olga Moiseeva
Editor: Michail Cherepanov (Russian Dzogchen newspaper and Zerkalo, the Russian Mirror)

SWISS GAKYIL

Blue: Lobsang Zatul, and President
Red: Karin Koppensteiner-Eisenegger,
Yellow: Sabine Attenhofer

UKRAINE: KHARKOV GAKYIL

Blue: Pozolotina Tatiana
Mironenko Igor
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Director of Gakyil: Jaremenko Alexander

ISTITUTO SHANG SHUNG PROGRAM 1999

MERIGAR, ITALY



SACRED ART OF TIBET

SEMINARS ON TIBETAN THANKA PAINTING
AND SCULPTURE



TRADITIONAL TIBETAN PAINTING

FIRST SEMINAR

with Gyurmed Rabgyus, Prof. Enzo Terzano,
Paola Minelli and others
July 14 - 21

July 14 - 16: Introduction into the spiritual, historical and cultural aspects.

July 17 - 21: Drawing of scenery, animals and people etc., and preparation of the background in traditional Tibetan painting.

SECOND SEMINAR

with Gyurmed Rabgyus and Paola Minelli
August 13 - 19

Painting of the Peaceful Buddha. Preparing the canvas and the frame. Using measurements and colors. Preparing colors and mixing them. Applying the paint.

SUCCESSING SEMINARS WILL BE HELD ON

DRAWING WRATHFUL DEITIES

(seven days)

STUPA AND MANDALA PAINTING

The meaning, use, and benefit of the construction of stupas and mandalas. The use of measurements and colors. The actual construction. (five days)

STATUES OF THE PEACEFUL BUDDHA

Introduction into the meaning of statues. Explanation about the precious substances inserted into the statues. The making of statues and the application of colors. (seven days, max. 7 people)

STATUES OF THE WRATHFUL BUDDHA

(seven days, max. 7 people)

THE HISTORY OF TIBETAN ART

Gyurmed Rabgyus, a Tibetan monk from Mindroling monastery, will give an intensive training course in Traditional Tibetan Thangka Painting and Sculpture at the Istituto Shang Shung at Merigar, assisted by Paola Minelli.

The seminars will begin in July 1999 and cover most of the year 2000. Besides the training and explanation of the techniques, the spiritual, cultural and historical aspects of Tibetan sacred art will be illustrated by Gyurmed Rabgyus and other experts on this subject. The monk's studio will be open daily for students who want to practice their newly acquired skills.

Gyurmed Rabgyus was born on July 14th, 1969 in Lhoka, near Lhasa. His master, one of the most famous painters of Tibet, holds the sMan lugs lineage. The painter-monk is a guest of the ISS and presently resides at Merigar.

Paola Minelli, born in 1963 in Turin, graduated from the Accademia di Belle Arti di Torino and is specialized in the iconography of traditional Tibetan Buddhism. She is a student of Gega Lama, Dugu

Choegyal Rinpoche and Shedrub Namgyal, all masters in the art of Traditional Tibetan Painting. Paola Minelli's drawings are well known to the Dzogchen community by way of her illustrations in the publications of Shang Shung Edizioni.

INTENSIVE COURSE ON TIBETAN LANGUAGE

with Iacobella Gaetani and Nida Chenagstang
August 4 - min.13

on request the course will be prolonged. The length of the course will be decided according to the need of the participants. The level of the course depends on the level of the students' knowledge of Tibetan. The teachers are .

CONFERENCES ON BUDDHISM

A series of Conferences on Buddhism in Arcidosso is planned for this summer, further developing the series of lectures held last year by experts on this topic.

THREE YEAR TIBETAN MEDICINE COURSE

(Please note the change of the dates!)

FIRST YEAR COURSE

with Dr. Nida Chenagstang
April 30 - May 2
May 21 - 23
June 4 - 6
June 25 - 27

The course will be held over a period of three months with a minimum of 72 hours of lessons. A series of seminars will be held with an authorized tutor. The costs of the entire course is Lit. 1.200.000. For a detailed program of the course and further information contact the Secretary.

July 15 - 29

2nd First Year Course. This is intended for those particularly from abroad who were unable to attend the course in the Spring and will be a repetition of the Spring course.

SECOND YEAR COURSE

with Prof. Thubten Phuntsog
September - November 1999
The dates are still to be announced.

COURSE ON KUM NYE MASSAGE

with Dr. Nida Chenagstang
March 26 - 28 Second seminar
May 7 - 9 Third seminar

The course of three weekends will cover the same theoretical base as the course already held in August 1998 but will leave more space for practice. Those who have already followed the August course will have the possibility to deepen their practice.

MANTRA AND MEDICINE

held by Dr. Nida Chenagstang
August 21 - 22.

Born in Amdo, Tibet in 1971 **Dr. Nida Chenagstang** studied medicine at Lhasa Tibetan Medical College and then practiced in Lhasa and Tsetang for one year. He started studying and practicing Vajrayana Buddhism at this time. He has written various articles about Tibetan herbal remedies, medical techniques, traditional massage, chakras and channels and disease and the use of mantras to cure disease. He has had a private medical practice for four years and teaches Tibetan massage and herbal medicine.

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SHANG SHUNG INSTITUTE

PROGRAM 1999

CONWAY, MASSACHUSETTS



TIBETAN MASSAGE (KUM NYE)

with Dr. Keyzom Bhutti

March 20 - 21

Saturday and Sunday 10am - 5:30pm, \$150.00

Tel: 413-369-4928

Fax: 413-369-4165

Email: ssiusa@compuserve.com

The Tibetan Medical Branch of the Shang Shung Institute in America, Inc., presents a workshop with Dr. Bhutti, in the ancient art of Tibetan Massage. Send \$25.00 to PO Box 277, Conway, MA 01341 to register or call 413-369-4928 fax 413-369-4165 or e-mail ssiusa@compuserve.com for further information. Lunch available for \$5.00.

Kum Nye is a holistic healing system discovered in 8th century Tibet which vitalizes body, mind and senses by means of breathing exercises, massage and movement. This workshop will focus on having the participant's experience the immediate effects of massage with and without oils mixed with herbs. This massage system is particularly helpful for treating ailments such as: headaches, compulsions, fatigue, insomnia and anxiety.

Learn to allow the hand to become the eye of the mind. Generate an energy contact that liberates the

body from its inner and outer harnesses. Discover how to focus an inexhaustible universal energy resource to foster physical and mental relaxation.

The workshop is open to those with all levels of experience and interest.

Dr. Keyzom Bhutti was in the first graduating class of the Tibetan Medical Center in Dharamsala, India where she had spent a total of eight years in training. As part of her practicum she traveled throughout the Himalayan region to study plant recognition and collection, followed by a period of producing medicine pills from the plants. Upon graduation she was selected to develop the first Tibetan medical clinic in Darjeeling, India and spent the next twenty-five years there practicing all aspects of Tibetan medicine seeing sometimes fifty to sixty patients a day. She is now living in Boston, Massachusetts, USA.

The Shang Shung Institute was founded by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu in Italy in 1988, and in America in 1994, to foster the knowledge and understanding of Tibetan Cultural traditions, sciences and arts. The Medical Branch of Shang Shung Institute now offers a certification program in Tibetan Medicine on audio tape.

Call 413-369-4928 for further information.

The Shang Shung Institute is pleased to announce:

A THANKA PAINTING

WORKSHOP WITH

GLEN EDDY

MATERIALS AND TECHNIQUE



Glen Eddy

MAY 28-31, 1999

AT THE GOLDEN VAGRA GUILD IN CONWAY, MASSACHUSETTS

To Register call 413-369-4928 or fax 413-369-4165 or e-mail to ssiusa@compuserve.com. Cost: \$150.00.

This workshop is an introduction to the practice of traditional Tibetan Painting. There will be two work sessions daily from 9am-12noon and 2pm - 5pm.

The workshop is not only for artists or thangka painters but for anyone interested in Tibetan culture. The daily sessions will be an intensive learning situation aimed at giving a direct experience of the thangka painting process.

Glen Eddy has been painting thanks for the past 20 years and his works have appeared in numerous publications including *Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism* and *Myth of Freedom* by Chogyam Trungpa, and in "The Mirror" the International Dzogchen Community Newspaper of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu. He is one of the few thangka painters with such extensive experience using natural minerals for pigment. This workshop is a rare opportunity to learn about the materials and techniques of this ancient art of Tibet.

Students should bring a drawing pad larger than 8.5 x 11 inches, a pencil, eraser, ruler or

straight edge, and a couple of coffee stir sticks. We will supply all other materials. Out-of-town students can stay in the school dormitory or request information on local motels. Meals are not included in the workshop fee but kitchen facilities are available.

Please contact us as soon as possible as workshop size is limited. The Golden Vajra Art Guild is a division of the Shang Shung Institute which was founded by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu in Italy in 1988, and in America in 1994, to foster the knowledge and understanding of Tibetan cultural traditions, sciences and arts.

SWISS COMMUNITY MEETS

We are doing weekend practice retreats every two to three months at a mountain resort in Switzerland. There are weekly practices in Geneva (contact Monique, pg.12) or in the Zurich area (contact Karin; e-mail: garuda@bluewin.ch)

SIMULTANEOUS RECORDING NEWS

This Recording and Public Address System was used by the Dzogchen Community of Spain during the Karuna Retreat, 1998, and could be a useful for the Gars' and the international Community at large.

The teachings at the Karuna retreat in Spain, were translated simultaneously by the translator with an operator style microphone (so the voice is not disturbing) linked to a cassette recorder to record the voice first, and then transmitted into small earphones of the participants through a small FM radio tuned to the specific broadcast frequency. The signal from the output jack is sent to a short range (300 meters) FM broadcast system. The broadcast device used must have the ability to be tuned very precisely.

Possible Problems and Solutions

1. There is no available free local frequency

In this case you have to choose the frequency at which the signal is weakest, so that your signal blocks the other one temporarily. It would also be more convenient to broadcast with more power, using a system with a range of at least 500 meters.

2. The broadcast is in stereo mode but only one channel is heard

This problem arises when a mono microphone is used, so that the broadcasting system only receives the signal from one channel. Therefore the receivers get an empty signal on the other channel. The solution is to use a stereo microphone or to make a mono input interface with stereo output, which should be connected between the microphone and the tape recorder input.

3. Signal received is very weak

There are several ways to diminish this problem. First you can use a self sufficient battery operated microphone that generate a better quality and stronger signal. You can also get a stronger output level by raising the level of the volume of the earphone output of the cassette recorder. Finally, you can get good quality receivers which are more expensive, but being more sensitive, will lessen the problem.

4. The signal is not stable

This problem appears when the broadcast's power source fluctuates. This can be avoided by using a power source consisting of several small alkaline batteries connected in parallel, which will afford durability. We advise not to use transformers because they can lead to interference and noise. In case you have to use them, they have to be located as far as possible from the broadcast system and coaxial cables should be used for connecting with the power source.

Further Advice

Systems which work on the AM band can also be used, but you must remember that noise may be greater and that many power lines can also produce interference in this band. The ideal layout for the broadcasting system is above the room on the roof or in the attic. As this almost never possible, you can at least try to put the system in a place without obstacles; centered and higher than the people and objects which may interfere with the signal. For grounding the equipment, you can use a ground connection of the electrical installation of the room in which the teachings are taking place.

The size of the antenna depends directly on the power of the broadcasting system and must be the appropriate size. The controls of the broadcasting system must not be touched while working, because the broadcasting frequency could change and the receivers would lose the signals.



THE MIRROR

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COMMUNITY

founded by
Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

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I don't know why it is that one usually becomes so very hungry during retreats. Fortunately Tashigar has many fruit trees and after the teachings everybody was eating pears, apples, red and yellow plums, raspberries; a delicious feast!

But very few people knew about the only fig tree in the gar. Everyday I looked at the figs, but they were still green or slightly dark. I even touched them, but they still weren't matured. One day I saw some figs just waiting to be eaten. I went immediately and picked them. What a pleasure!

I was delighted and already looking for more. Virginia saw me and joined the search. We were both there with big sticks trying to make the figs fall. One for you, one for me....until there were no more we could possibly reach. The rest were in the higher branches. From above they looked so far away. So we were very seriously trying different methods to bring them down. We shook branches, but it didn't work.

Our faces were probably dramatically

desperate because a very compassionate Vajra brother decided to climb the tree and get the precious fruits for us.

All of a sudden I saw Rinpoche sitting down on the well surrounded by some students; sometimes he likes to do this after coming out of the Gonpa.

So we went to join the rest and offered Rinpoche one fig. He opened it and ate it with real pleasure. But then he also ate the skin. So Virginia said, "Oh Rinpoche, do you also eat the skin?" "Yes", he replied, "this is good for you because then you won't have hair on your body: You see?", and he

RINPOCHE'S ANCIENT THEORY

"HOW WE HAVE COME TO HAVE HAIR ON OUR HEADS"

by Monica Varela

"If you cannot see the Master as a manifestation, how could you become enlightened?"

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

showed us his hairless and soft skinned arm.

So I gave him another fig and he devoured it completely. "You see", he said, "the fig's skin is very

soft so you must eat it and you won't have hair anymore. Try."

But then I asked Rinpoche, "But Master, what will happen then to the hair on my head? Will I also lose that?"

"That's different", he said, "because that's constitutional. Don't you know why man has hair on his head?"

I replied that I didn't know. So he opened his eyes as big as an owl's and very serious-

ly said, "So you don't know? So then I will tell you."

"A long time ago, a little bit before Adam and Eve man was like a gorilla, full of hair everywhere. But he had a very big problem; there were entities that persecuted him because they wanted to bite his hair. So he had to run and run to escape from them.

One day he had been running so much and was so tired that he only wanted to hide from these entities, but all he could find was a hole in a rock, so he crouched down, pressed his arm against his armpits, his legs tight and stuck his head into the hole. Then the entities came and bit him everywhere except of course on his head, arm pits and crotch."

"So this is the story", he said while he ate his third fig. "Now you should try...."

Then our precious Master got up and started on his way to his pretty new house followed by devas and dakinis, full of joy and colorful thigles.

The Master in Portugal

by Ana Maria Humeres

The Place

After hours of winding roads, some of them in repair, others a little less, one arrives at Casa Karuna, a large farmhouse situated on a small terraced mountain. This house is currently a center for various spiritual and cultural activities and was created by an Indian doctor who practices Ayurvedic medicine and follows Tibetan Buddhism. For many years he has followed our Master at a distance. Rooms of different sizes, bathrooms, spartan wood beds, an outbuilding thirty meters below along the slope with a kitchen and refectory for about forty people, a Gonpa dug into the wall of a terrace with lots of windows and completed on the very day the teaching began, a circular courtyard which seemed made on purpose for the Mandala of the Vajra Dance.

The place has also got two guardians: cinnamon colored with dark head and paws, Zak, the playful gigantic German shepherd of the Pirenees, and a Siamese cat with an unknown name. But the main thing about this house is the panorama: the mountains go down and are transformed into numerous hills sloping to meet the strip of light that is the Atlantic ocean. The large trees, the air sweet during the day and pungent at night, perfumed and clear, the subtle mist on the horizon, the colors and shades that change throughout the day, the stars large and luminous at night.

Staying There

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu and Rosa arrived there some days before the retreat and remained for several days after. Their room was on the first floor in the south-east corner with their windows and terrace facing the panorama. Unfortunately there was no heating on the first days then a stove and then a video arrived. On a couple of occasions we were happy to spend a day with them at the sea, guided by our Nicola. Since he had spent four years in the area he knew the surrounding coast well and we admired some beaches and rocky places as well as tasting fresh fish

from the Atlantic.

The retreat

We were more or less 180 participants and apart from some 'seasoned' students from Italy such as yours truly, they were almost all new or very new and for the most part Spanish or Portuguese. Besides following the teaching of Rinpoche, we practiced Yantra Yoga with Fabio Andrico and some more expert practitioners explained the Medium Tun and the Ganapuja.

The Master explained the short tun with the essential Guruyoga of the White A and this was the thread with which he guided us through the different paths of the teaching to make us understand how the essence of all paths is found in the supreme Ati. He also transmitted to us pure instantaneous presence by means of a Semdzin which unites presence with the experience of emptiness. May this knowledge live in us forever!

The Birthday

December 8th immediately showed its holiday atmosphere, with a beautiful warm sun and the air clear and limpid. From the early morning we started preparations for a great Ganapuja to celebrate according to the wishes of the Master while the Portuguese prepared two beautiful cakes. At ten o'clock the Master arrived at the Gonpa and we did the Ganapuja with him. When it was over, Rinpoche replied to a question that the owner of the house had asked some time before, indicating the correct way to continue his connection with the teaching and the Community, avoiding both 'Dharma business' and the New Age 'mixing' which is becoming widespread at this time.

Then the birthday greetings, the presents, the cakes and the Master who had gifted us with his presence until the afternoon. At the end good-byes and departures with the hope of finding ourselves together again very soon.

In the Best Possible Way

The retreat with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu in Brazil

by Muriella Colajacomo Malaga

I was asked if I wanted to write about what a marvelous experience it was to have Chögyal Namkhai Norbu in Brazil. Rather than whole sentences, a series of uninterrupted adjectives appear in my mind, indefinable sensations that here and now in the peace of Tashigar, where I am staying, gradually begin to mature and take form.

First of all, I have to say from the first days of my stay in that immense and amazing country called Brazil where I have been living for five years, I had a very strong wish and a distinct sensation of having the Master nearby. All the roads that I followed seemed inevitably to be parts of a puzzle that fitted together perfectly and which slowly brought me to realize everything, starting from the people I met, including a wonderful husband who I practice with and all the Dharma brothers and sisters who, even though they belong to other schools or follow other teachings, were so willing to help me. To them my most sincere thanks.

As Voltaire said, everything went in the best possible way. I realized a dream and great roads opened up and in spite of all the difficulties (which were not few but, as they say, were included in the price), the retreat could not have been more perfect.

Besides the great teachings, we had an experience of let's say panic; a night before the retreat began, when people said that a band of robbers were coming to attack us (the famous 'ladrao bandidao' as Rinpoche says). We passed the entire night wide awake with the Master, firmly decided to capture one of them though fortunate-

ly for us or for the robbers, nothing happened. At the public conference in San Paolo there were a lot of people; it seemed as if the entire immense metropolis had passed the word around. Rinpoche spoke about the pre Buddhist Tibetan culture, while in his way he also directly introduced the Dzogchen teaching.

At the conference on December 16th at the Associazione Pallas Athena (which is a more specifically a place of practitioners), there were people who went from dumfounded amazement to the greatest emotion, realizing what a great gift they were receiving.

The exhibition of photographs by A.S.I.A. that was held at the same time attracted a great deal of interest even with non-practitioners and was written about in many newspapers. It was an experience that I strongly recommend to all the Gakyils and non-Gakyils who are interested in inviting the Master to any large city.

And if we made some mistakes in organization (such as a mobile phone at Sitio which didn't receive calls very well and then my home phone where obviously nobody was answering), we apologize to all those numerous people who wanted to participate in the retreat at the last moment and didn't find us. Thank you to those fifty lucky or rather far-sighted people who participated and rejoiced with us in listening to the precious teaching for three days in the midst of the tropical forest.

Our commitment with them is to continue and ... not to remain in doubt.



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Passages



L. MAURER

FOR MARIO

Mario Maglietti is dead. Unexpectedly: a brain hemorrhage took him away in a couple of days. We knew that he was ill, seriously ill, but I think that no-one expected such a sudden passing. On the other hand, death,

especially our own and that of people dear to us, is always a theoretical, abstract and distant event.

I saw him a few minutes after his life had drawn to a close: he had a very calm look. His wife, Tiziana, and his closest friends had cared for him up to the end. Tiziana had remained very calm

which had helped to relieve the sorrow of their children, especially Matteo who is only nine.

The body had been left undisturbed for three days while the consciousness started its journey. Morning and evening the shiro was practiced at the Merigar Gonpa and at Mario's home.

Early in the morning of the fourth day his body was taken to Siena for cremation, as he had requested.

What is there to say? To speak about him to those who knew him is useless and to those who did not know him impossible. And yet how can we not remember him?

Mario gave of himself completely, without sparing anything. He belonged to that generation, one of the first in the West, which left for India in search of masters, teachings and sensations of every kind and returned with an experience of the world that was to change their point of view for life.

When the Merigar adventure began, I was amazed by the courage of the Maglietti family when they moved there. Viola had

only been born a short time before.

Things were different then. Merigar wasn't the pleasant place we know today. It had an almost lunar landscape, without trees or flowers, with winters of snow and ice and summers without shade or even a drop of water.

Mario was there with his family, one of the first to believe in this dream and to collaborate with the Master in realizing that which today is our community. He embodied its potentiality and its limits so well. Almost everything at Merigar carries his imprint from the wooden kitchen tables he made to the contacts he established with the local people.

In the days following his death when I walked about the local village or went into the shops, people who knew me stopped to talk about him with affection and emotion, remembering so many moments they had shared with him.

But things are impermanent and so after the shiro practice on Sunday morning we left the Gonpa to give back to the earth Mario's

remains. Adriano Clemente suggested that we recite the mantra for purifying the elements as we walked through the wood to the Master's house, then to the Stupa and finally to the Yellow House. The sound of the mantra filled our minds keeping the memories and thoughts that tried to rush in at a distance. I had wanted to say something to alleviate the sorrow of Maria Margherita and Viola but did not find the words.

I would like to tell them now that it fills me with joy to think that some part of Mario will always be a part of Merigar, home to us all.

Gino Vitiello

Creation of a Committee

DEVELOPING THE LAND AT TASHIGAR

by Edward Goldberg

During the New Year retreat at Tashigar, a spirited Gakyil meeting designated a five person committee to provide recommendations for advancing the development of Tashigar Mandala. Tashigar's land development project. Three architects, a lawyer, and a project organizer were assigned the task and began to meet on a daily basis for the next week.

The group divided the project into four principle divisions: Town Planning, Management and Facilitation, Legal Issues, and Community. These topics were filled in with pertinent subsets and as many tasks as the group could list. By week's end, four lengthy lists had been devised.

Town Planning encapsulates the planning and development of the land. Mainly, this subset focuses on researching Tashigar Mandala's infrastructure (energy, water, sewage, etc.) and preparing for the construction of private and public structures.

Management proposes the establishment of a Cooperative to oversee the construction of the infrastructure. The Coop might then participate in constructing dwellings, and perhaps manage the ongoing administration of Tashigar Mandala. The Coop would likely enlist the combined manpower of the International Dzogchen Community in combination with local workers.

Legal Issues outlines such tasks as the collection of pertinent maps and documents; the writing and safekeeping of contracts; and the legal establishment of the Coop.

The final division outlines Community issues such as Vision, Ecology, and Economy.

These concepts and the list of tasks were presented to Rinpoche and the follow-up Gakyil meeting on January 9, 1999. The meeting was attended by future homeowners and other community members interested in the development of the project. Rinpoche gave the committee's plan for a three-month moratorium on new building his approval. These three months will be used to research and budget essential elements of the infrastructure, determine the role of the Coop, and flesh out all pertinent issues. A proposal of recommendations will be prepared and presented to the Gakyil in time for the April retreat at Tashigar.

The committee's experience of working as a team brought forth strong emotions in many of the participants. Each of us had our own viewpoints and methods of working. For the most part, however, we were able to work together; listen before jumping to uphold our own opinions, and attempt to determine the best options for Tashigar Mandala's future.

It's worthwhile to note that during the committee's presentation at the Gakyil meeting the concept of Community sparked impassioned discussion. The topic may have met resistance because of its title, which was introduced as the "Community of Practitioners". In fact, we were not speaking of the general community of Dzogchen practitioners, but the unique community being established by the creation of Tashigar

Mandala.

In constructing a physical community or village, Tashigar Mandala takes on significance in a number of ways. On the relative level, we are planning to build a community of sixty or so private and public dwellings, some of which will be used for full-time habitation, others as retreat homes. This type of development requires certain preplanning as to the manner in which homeowners will live together. I am not promoting a rigid set of laws, but an organic platform that can be adapted over time to ease predictably difficult situations.

Such issues as the definition of a rightful homeowner, specific regulations on the use of land, and various financial issues, if left to the discretion of individuals will surely lead to avoidable conflicts. Such turmoil affects the samaya between Vajra brothers and sisters, as well our relation to the Master and the Teachings. The Teachings do not provide specific guidelines for 21st Century cohabitation. My opinion is that we have an opportunity and a responsibility to work together and with circumstances to consider the need for addressing workable solutions for living together.

Tashigar Mandala is a wonderful opportunity to move from an ego-oriented to a community-oriented way of living. If we are successful, this project could be of benefit to the International Dzogchen Community, to a world in need of successful models of community, and to the Master's transmission.



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TASHIGAR

*A Happy Land
of Sparkling Earth and Magic Rocks*

by Martha Heinen



Eucalyptus Giants

MARTHA HEINEN

Eucalyptus giants all over, two little wooden bridges leading to an open spot of a soft grassland, and then the Gonpa in a wide circle around the tents; horses running freely around eating the fruit trees bare because someone left the gate open. Then after some time you can hear the barking of Blacka and Buki, the amazing dog characters around here, who try to chase the horses off the land. Blacka is a real sweetheart, even the kids can do what ever they want with her, she is playful and stays relaxed and likes to enter the Gonpa for the Ganapuja...and sniffs around the plates without touching anything. Buki is an old little doglion who likes to listen to private practice sessions...sitting in front of the tent like a guardian. There are rocks and big stones all over the land in different amazing shapes like mushrooms with round huts, they seem ancient and store the sunlight, wonderful spots to rest. It seems that extra terrestrials are also very attracted to this place...if one is patient or just lucky one can see UFOs in the wonderfully glittering night skies above Tashigar...no lie. When walking to a quick bath in the nearby natural pool your feet stumble over a sand road covered with mica and quartz. In the sunlight here it makes the earth into a huge jewel radiating sparkles. You might think that is exaggerated but what can I say; just come and see, it is true! True is also that people are very open and friendly

and willing to share...space and time...with laughter, Tango and famous asado (unending meatmeetings near the smoke of the grill). It is easy to relax if one wants, but if it does not work out there is also caring for each other when you are miserable. Samsara is not missing, how could it (sickness because of a little arsenic in the drinking water, someone stealing your moneybag in nice Tantitown nearby, lovesickness or a grumpy Sanghafellow). But in general there is a strong feeling of community and sharing. Is it Argentinian hospitality or is it because the group of people is not so huge like elsewhere? It might be a bit of both. But anyway, it was a very inspiring experience of enjoying being together and sharing happiness on this sacred path to our real nature. Thank you all !!!

TASHIGAR LOSAR

by Pamela Oldmeadow



Rinpoche playing mimang

MARTHA HEINEN

Cleaning and stitching over, we made Tibetan soup and momos with Rinpoche on Losar eve. Some of us found lucky lentils and stones in the momos. He taught Adolfo to play deer and hunter while we watched. Before bed, Rita and I set a bowl of water in the starlight. Awake at 6 a.m. we debated whether to head for the river, but we heard Rinpoche greet the year so headed for his pool. We bathed, waved incense, sipped tea and swapped dreams. I told how in my job interview for a school teaching position they said "What we really want is someone who's good at Ganapuja" and I said, "That's me!" I understood it's to make the children feel happy. Rinpoche greeted the sunrise with a burst of Hodser Janma mantra.

Longlife of Mandarava at 7.30 a.m., Ganapuja at 10, and an afternoon mimang knockout competition. Jim was the teaching victim this time, but survived a long time. It's fun and some of us lasted at the table for hours - playing winners or losers as our case may be. No one ever beat Rinpoche. He taught Ron to play dice, and won by miles.

We concluded with a birthday barbecue party for Griselda at her rented 1930's medieval castle with a vampire lamp in the entrance hall, and danced till the small hours. Our patterns set for the New Year?

DREAMTIME STORY

by Jonathan Schaeffer

Dream November 1997:

I'm situated at a streetscene, people - watching; noticing people's energies as they walk by. I recognize specific auric signatures and their correlative emotional and mental behavior patterns. A question begins to form about pure and impure vision, and I wonder who to ask. After some moments, an A-HA! comes, as I know who can answer my question. Immediately I fly in the air with great speed and a quite pleasant feeling, and in seconds I'm far above Alaska noticing the Aleutians and the Pacific coast of North America from perhaps 200 miles up. Traveling South, I pass over Mexico, Central America, and begin the descent over central South America. The landing is near the Southern tip of the continent, and the terrain is hilly, somewhat green, and quite rocky. Some people are milling about, and there are some sheep around as well. I try and make contact with a man nearby, and we just do not connect. As I wander around I notice people transforming into sheep and sheep transforming into people. I then remembered that a few years previous (true story-dinkum!) an Australian farmer gave me some advice about moving sheep about, getting them into the holding pens from the fields, and then into the shearing sheds, etc., and he told me, "Sheep are just like people, mate". It was necessary to get three or four into the next pen and then the rest would follow. Something clicked inside me, my query somehow half answered. A few hills nearby attracted me, and as I come to the top of the third hill, an older man (who must be the shepherd) and his assistant (somewhat younger) are boiling water for tea. Joy and complete relaxation permeated my being, as I recognize the shep-

ard as my 'Babaji' (my Root Master). My question and any doubts (about anything) are instantly dispelled, and I walk over and greet 'Baba' warmly. We drink tea, tell stories, just hanging out on the hill enjoying the moment. I am supremely satisfied in this moment, profound and at the same time very ordinary. I wake up in an altered state, remaining with the intensity and clarity of the dream for hours.

The general atmosphere of the dream was one of fullness, infinite patience and compassion. The dream stayed with me as the following months went by, and in June 1998, I met Song Pak, a student of Norbu Rinpoche, and we talked and collaborated. I read some material and immediately appreciated the clarity and depth of the teachings. Then some weeks later Song showed me a picture of Rinpoche (holding a baby lion), and we talked briefly about the retreat schedule of the rest of the year. Two days later it hit me, that was the 'Baba' in my dream, and he'll be in Argentina for many months starting December 1998. I decided to go then and there.

Here it is, mid-February, and I'm still in Tashigar, deciding to stay longer after the Christmas retreat. Rinpoche transmitted many teachings, and I feel blessed to have been introduced to Dzogpa Chenpo and hope to be able to integrate as much as possible in the time I am here. There are many foreign practitioners, and most Argentinians are coming here from afar as well, as it is summer vacation. The overall atmosphere is quite relaxed, and my Vajra brothers and sisters here enjoy a seemingly consistent stream of birthday and asado fiestas, New Year's celebration,

continued on page 19

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Mists caress the steps of the Mayan temple as the first rays of 1999 permeate the dense jungle. We creep by a condor mother warming two eggs - our hostess of the previous evening - launching a pilgrimage toward Teacher and Sangha in Tashigar, Argentina.

In Guatemala there is no avoiding the chicken-bus experience. Former school buses live out their third incarnation, hugging perpendicular mountain faces, screaming around blind bends and through tiny pueblos as wide-eyed children, waving excitedly, run from thatched houses. We bounce along to Guatemala City, on wooden seats with one hundred and fifty locals and a few turkeys, luggage piled high, doubling the height of the bus. We join the general chatter, cuddle a sleeping infant or hug a turkey. Steamy jungle mountains evolve into cactus strewn hills and eventuate as a huge metropolis. We spend the day applying for a visa we no longer need, then head straight for the Tica bus terminal. It has just closed. Slow down.



Elle and Stef

N. JEFF

The following day we congregate with our new family, travelers from various parts of the globe, a herd of nuns with kind eyes dressed in brown and Jorge, a merchant marine, from Columbia. Jorge becomes our instant friend and source of all information. Upon hearing our plans, he is the first to caution us about the Darien Gap.

We all find our seats which became our home for the coming days, and after the chicken buses this one seems like a space craft. As we glide out of Guatemala City a movie lights up the row of screens, the first in an endless stream of Hollywood tearjerkers and action flicks. Our tour of the cities and border posts of Central America has begun.

The passing images outside are movies in themselves, in some cases tearjerkers minus the manipulation. Hurricane Midge had recently wreaked havoc in the north of Central America. Bridges through El Salvador, Honduras, and Nicaragua are out, crumpled heaps washed up on nearby river banks. Not one bridge is in working order. The now small streams we cross, on rough earthen bridges, had created wastelands of smashed trees and crushed houses. Shanty villages, like children's cubby houses of cardboard and tape with windows cut out of the sides and doors leaning in place, have manifested along the banks. Families mill around in the rubble, collecting remnants of their lives.

Days later, the space shuttle pulls into Managua; capital of

ON THE WAY TO TASHIGAR

by Elle Loudon

Nicaragua. With our last cents, we talk our way onto a bus into town. Finally a Visa sign beckons us and inside crouches a small ATM. It closes at 7pm. It is 7.10pm. With our card we buy a hot dog dinner. The cashier quietly forwards us enough change to catch the bus back to the station. Against the wall of the bus office we set up our bed for a brief night.

Throngs of travelers with pressed clothes and clean hair arrive. We quickly pull ourselves together. It is 4.30 am. Our bus leaves at 10am. We like to wait. When our next bus family arrives they recognize our rough night. We

may. The boat for Columbia leaves every two weeks. One left eight hours ago.

Down in the Darien Gap, the mists thicken above the jungle, clouding our minds. The wall grows higher. We could return to the States. The wall is insurmountable. We will turn back. We arrange a boat north, to leave the following day.

Under shadowy figs, we check our decision a final time. No. We must continue. And suddenly, down in the jungle, the wall dissolves, our minds clear, and determination re-emerges. It is best if we jump the Gap.

Next morning we make the leap into Columbia effortlessly. We have made it intact, almost. Except for Elle's backpack. The uniformed airport attendant explains it has been sent back to Panama. They can send it on to our hotel when it returns. What hotel? The flight has blown our budget as high as the sky we just flew through. We sit on the conveyor belt. Hours later the man with the suit and name tag returns clutching Elle's pack sheepishly. It has been hiding around a corner.

The night sky envelopes us as we drive into the steep mountains of Columbia where the roads are switchbacks all the way. Over the blaring stereo we attempt sleep, as the driver attempts a land speed record. With every turn ears are smashed against chairs. Somewhere around three in the morning the considerate bus driver pulls over and turns off the stereo. As sleep settles in we feel a glow of appreciation warm our hearts.

People chatter and move. Light streams into the bus. We are still at a standstill and in the morning light we discern a line of buses, trucks and cars extending far. Word filters through. Landslide.

There is plenty of time to acquaint ourselves with this bus family. John, an aspiring business man from a small village, becomes our official translator. With an expressive eyebrow, he escorts us through the Equadorian border and haggles a taxi driver for a deal to Quito. On we go.

The taxi is filled with fumes. Our eyes smart and sting. We cough. On we go. Only 5 hours to go. We spot border controls ahead. Three huge men ask us to open our luggage. The most enormous of these men peers at John's shabby paper. John winces and smiles broadly, eyebrow arched. John is not legally allowed into Ecuador - and how do we know him? The monolith positions himself. Time falters and stops. Steph splutters the Spanish equivalent of, "We have just met. We are from Australia". Next thing we are on our way, in the fume machine.

It is Sunday and we enjoy a park where joy abounds. We soak up this luxury. As the day closes, we gather meat and wine for the moon is new. We have sent word to the States that we are in need of assistance. Monday morning we check

our card. The machine clicks over and money rolls out. Gratitude overwhelms us and we set for the Peruvian border.

We are on our way with a new group of companions. Steph takes our last cash to change to Peruvian currency. We hand it over for the next bus ticket south. The packed terminal turns and looks on in shock. We look back holding our note limply. It is counterfeit. Our companions understand and fork over for the tickets as we rush to the bank. The machine clicks over. Nothing rolls out.

We return to the terminal and explain, praying they believe our unbelievable story. They understand without question. We board the bus. It is 24 hours to Lima. We still have a packet of complimentary croutons to enjoy. Tomorrow is Steph's birthday.

We contact Australia this time. By the end of the day we are reassured. Our bus companions have become our friends and we eat ceviche, a Peruvian raw fish and hot sauce delicacy, and drink local beer in celebration of Steph.

Peru is fueled by a glow in the dark fizzy drink called Inca Kola. It is as high in caffeine as it is fluorescent yellow. It screams toxic and as we set off for the final leg of the pilgrimage, everyone who boards the El Rapido coach has a six pack of liter bottles. Understandable. It is a 60 hour journey.

Barren windswept desert dunes stretch as far as the eye can see. Two days later we take a left. Up and over the Andes; snow capped peaks, mountain streams. Finally, fifty hours, twelve movies and three meager meals later, we are almost there. At some stage during the evening we pull into Mendoza for the bus change to Cordoba. Sleepily, we are all herded onto the bus.

Hours later, Steph turns to Elle,

as she returns to consciousness across the aisle. "The sign said Buenos Aires, no mention of Cordoba," he says carefully. We stare at each other. Steph makes his way to the bus driver. Elle goes into denial.

Shaking his head Steph sits down. Elle approaches the driver. The wall of denial shatters. The driver attempts valiantly to steer the two story bus with one hand, comforting sobbing despair with the other.

In Buenos Aires, within minutes, concerned staff usher us onto a bus to Cordoba. No time for food. We have no idea how far it is. We guess, two, maybe three hours? Twelve hours later past hunger, past delirium, we wander the streets looking for a cheap room. Cordoba welcomes us.

Clean and rested we take one more bus to the little holiday town of Tanti. We begin walking in the heat of the Argentinian sun. An old stone bridge and generous tree offer sanctuary. A taxi drives by, the passenger smiles - Tashigar?

Through the eucalypti, Chögyal Namkhai Norbu saunters across the wooden bridge into the Gonpa. Raised bells chime as we think of all who have helped us arrive and we begin our first Ganapuja at Tashigar.

Dreamtime Story

continued from page 18

Christmas etc., etc. Integrate, integrate is the key.

The land here is hilly and rocky, (full of quartz and mica), with beautiful vistas, small creeks, and large trees for shade. One can find powerful spots for practice; my favorite is on a nearby stream, under a cypress tree. The sun here is quite hot, so swimming is almost mandatory in the afternoon. A nearby natural pool is but ten minute walk from here.

I do not know what my future holds, but I will do my best for creating qualifications for Dzogchen knowledge. I feel quite blessed for my association with Chögyal Namkai Norbu Rinpoche, as do we all. Long life to the Masters, especially our Rinpoche.

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I WANT TO TELL YOU ABOUT

MARIO

(But I Don't Know How)

by John Shane

I want to tell you about Mario, but I don't know how.

No matter how practiced my hand at writing, when I try to put down what I'm feeling about him now that he's gone, the words just won't come right.

I'm struggling here, so please be patient with me.

But, no, I'm not feeling that fearful concern for one's own mortality that sometimes comes up when someone close to us dies.

That's not the difficulty here at all. I'm not feeling that kind of emotion.

I can't put my hand on my heart and say that I have no fear of dying, but as Rinpoche has always remarked, death is natural - it comes to all beings - and as practitioners we are all working in our own ways to be ready when our own moment comes.

And the truth is, Mario lived a very full life. So, even though, of course, we would all wish that he had lived much longer, it's not as if a child has died. One doesn't have a sense of unfulfilled promise about Mario.

But for those of us who knew him - and many of you knew him much better than I did - Mario was somehow more than just a friend, a colleague, and a Vajra brother.

In some mysterious way he was a touchstone of all our values - a kind of (most often inspiring, occasionally exasperating) marker against which to measure ourselves.

He was there right from the beginning of the history of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu's teaching, and his personal commitment to Rinpoche and his vision was so strong that the influence of his contribution will not end with his passing away.

He left his mark on Merigar in such a strong way, both physically and in terms of the very special feeling that the place has, that I think it's really true to say that if you want to understand how Merigar became what it is today - in addition, of course, to considering Rinpoche's evident extraordinary ongoing input - you cannot avoid taking into account the simple - or rather the complex - fact of Mario.

All the Dzogchen Community centers around the world have their special flavor, a flavor that comes in part from the political, social, and geographical aspects of the environments in which they are located, and also of course, from the particular characteristics that make the Dzogchen teachings different from other types of teaching. And Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, as a Dzogchen master, clearly has his own very special qualities that differentiate him from other Dzogchen masters, and those qualities affect the nature of his centers.

But in addition to Rinpoche's personal attributes, and to the nature of the Dzogchen teachings themselves - beyond the exclusively local influences of the country and culture in which a center is located - the character of the students who help to build a particular Gar also plays an important part in the way that a center develops.

And although hundreds (perhaps thousands) of other Vajra brothers and sisters have contributed in so many ways to Merigar's development, Mario and Merigar nevertheless somehow go together in my mind in a way that is not so easy to explain just by stating the bare facts that he was involved with the place right from its founding, and that he

became its director, or that with Rinpoche's encouragement he built his family a house on a beautiful site right next door to Merigar's land, and so was always on hand when I went to Merigar.

It is natural that the qualities a spiritual teacher manifests tend to attract students with similar qualities, and in the early days of the Dzogchen Community I think it is fair to say that Mario Maglietti was in many ways one of the quintessential students of Namkhai Norbu.

That's why it is possible for someone like me to see so much of myself in him.

Mario lived the ethos of the Sixties very fully during that decade, and no doubt part of the attraction of the Dzogchen teachings for him, as it was for myself and many others, when he first encountered those teachings, was that the fact that Dzogchen does not involve the imposition on the individual of external rules to as great a degree as other some traditions.

In Dzogchen, in fact, the individual is challenged to live life governed by his or her own awareness, rather than by rules.

This is because, as long as we are governed by an external rule, we do not really know from our own experience the truth of spontaneous authentic behavior.

But as Rinpoche has often taught (and this is my paraphrase of his words): 'When a little bird has lived all its life in a cage, and finally steps outside that cage, there are many predators waiting for it that could take its life. So the little bird has to learn to fly before it leaves the cage. And in the same way, before we are fully ready to leave the cage of our cultural conditioning, we have to learn to live in real awareness.'

Until one has completely mastered the art of flying, learning to fly implies the possibility of falling, but as the great English poet William Blake wrote: 'The Path of Excess leads to the Palace of Wisdom'.

Mario, like myself and, I think, most of us, worked his way towards real self-knowledge - knowledge arising from within rather than from external rules - through trial and error, through making mistakes and learning from them. And in the early days of the Dzogchen Community, our errors generally tended to involve doing things to excess as we reveled in the discovery of our freedom.

But it was through testing the error of this excess for ourselves that we came to have real respect for our own limits, and to know the value of restraint from within, rather than because we had always been conditioned by a rule. Knowing for oneself is quite different than knowing at second hand - knowing something to be true just because someone else tells you it's true.

Each of us has their own particular personal inner demons, and like us all, Mario had his share of troubles, that were - and should remain - his private affair.

What is worthy of public record, and what I am seeking in my clum-

sy way to celebrate here - fumbling for the truth with these words - is how, notwithstanding his difficulties, Mario never wavered in his commitment to working with his situation. And in his later years he really did seem, at least to me - although, I admit I was not his intimate friend - to have really made quite extraordinary progress not only in accepting himself just as he was, but also in accepting others just as they are.

And that's really quite a difficult thing to do - as those of us who have been intimately involved in living in spiritual communities know.

When we start out, we want people to be how we imagine they 'ought' to be. And when we discover they are not that way, we become easily frustrated and irritated. We want to change the other person so that they conform more readily to our image of how they should be. It takes a great deal to be able to really let go of that, and to accept people as they are. And I believe that Mario achieved that.

I can't quote him verbatim, but the German author Goethe wrote something along these lines: 'There is no crime so terrible that I cannot imagine myself having committed it.'

And it seems to me that when he wrote those words, Goethe had reached a point - arrived at no doubt through his own profound experience of the setbacks and difficulties he encountered in his life - at which he had developed so deep an empathy with the faults and failings of others that he entirely ceased to judge them.

When we speak about compassion, it can sometimes become just a pious notion, a kind of goody-goody, 'holier than thou' attitude that really doesn't have much connection with the reality of being faced with the nitty-gritty of dealing with other people in all their 'strangeness' from our ego-centric point of view.

'Hell is other people' Jean-Paul Sartre wrote, and for many of us, actually having to take on other people - in all their extraordinary complexity - really is hell.

We may try to present ourselves in as compassionate a light as possible for public consumption, as it were, but in our hearts we know we are just pretending: for most of us the truth is that other people push our buttons, get on our case, take up our time, don't see us the way we want them to, are demanding, unforgiving, judgmental, distracting, confounding, confusing, and so on and on - as well, of course, as naturally being wonderful, too. And we'd perhaps rather not have to deal with that contradiction full time in the way that you have to when you are in the middle of the day to day running of a Dharma center.

But, in his maturity, I think it is true to say that Mario really did find space in his heart for all of us, and he got to that place, I believe, not only through his unswerving commitment to Rinpoche and to the other lamas, who were his teachers, but

also because he really got to know his own inner demons so thoroughly that, in the sense of my partial quote from Goethe, he really didn't judge other people any more.

He had space for other people's fears and failings precisely because he had lived so thoroughly through his own.

All of us have our own special memories of him, and no doubt others will speak and write of how they saw him, which may be very different from how I did. That's only natural.

But to me it seems that Mario's patient attention to the details of running Merigar as the director of its Gakyil brought him constant contact with others in a way that really made him grow in dignity over the years.

Working on the Gar's problems took him out of his own problems, and lifted him to another level of capacity as a practitioner.

Far from regarding Merigar's problems as an imposition on him, through giving himself so fully to each situation, he gained enormously in stature.

Rinpoche has always said that he hoped that Merigar, which was the first Gar of the Dzogchen Community, would be an example to the other Gars in the world as they developed. And now that we have so many other places of the Dzogchen Community in so many countries - although it may seem presumptuous of me to take it on myself to say such a thing (who am I, after all, to judge another practitioner?) - I really think it is worth pointing out how much Mario himself grew as a result of his dedication to Merigar.

It was not that what Mario gave to the Community took something away from him. In as much as he gave himself so fully, he grew so much bigger as an individual as a result.

That is an extraordinary example for Mario to have offered to others in the Dzogchen Community

around the world.

But Mario was certainly not a 'dry stick', no drudging drone devoted only to duty.

He loved to be there in the thick of every kind of work that was undertaken at Merigar, whether on the carpentry in the building of the Gonpa, the fixing of leaking plumbing before a retreat, the harvesting of the fields, or in helping to translate a profound text of the teachings from Tibetan.

He did so many other practical things so well that it was sometimes hard to remember that he was also a considerable scholar, and had a wide range of experience of the teachings from his many years in the East.

His down-to-earth human qualities made him an enormous asset in dealing with all the local authorities and the local community in the area around Merigar, as well as with Merigar's neighboring farmers.

None of us who knew him will ever forget his truly devastating sense of humor. He could be as mischievous as a child one minute, and deadly serious the next.

He loved life. He loved to cook. He loved to spend time keeping up with the news of everyone's work and family. He liked to party - there's no doubt about that - and he was the life and soul of so many celebrations at Merigar, toiling merrily away over steaming pots of pasta for everyone, or carving slices from giant watermelons at a festa one summer evening, that I think I will always feel his spirit hovering over us when we have a Vajra feast there.

This you can say of Mario, without question: as long as he was at Merigar, you could always count on him to be one hundred percent there for the Community - no matter what the Gar was going through.

We can only imagine the sense of loss which Tiziana, his wife who participated in Merigar's development as much as he did, and his three children, Viola, Maria Margharita, and Matteo, must feel.

We cannot, of course, comfort them: but we can perhaps offer them some solace by telling them, as simply and as clearly as we can, that the loved one they have lost is our loved one, too.

And in proportion to how much he was loved, he will be missed: which is enormously.

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