

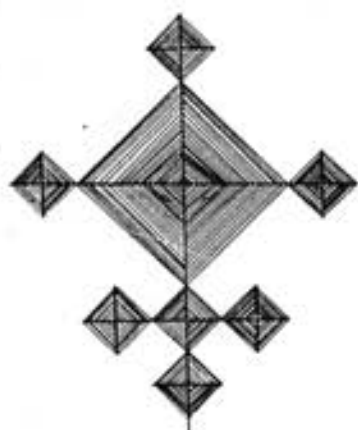
THE MIRROR

The International Newspaper of the Dzog-chen Community

Volume 1

Issue 11, September 1991

NAMKHA



Namkha is a Tibetan word, which means space. This word is also used as the name of an object made of sticks and coloured threads. In Tibet, Namkhas have been used a great deal yet few people understand exactly how they work.

In 1983, Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche clarified the ways that Namkhas can actually be used by a person to harmonise his or her energies. This involves a certain understanding of Tibetan astrology related to the individual. Once the astrological signs and aspects of an individual are understood, a Namkha can be constructed and with the use of appropriate rituals, it can become a practical aid in making one's life more harmonious.

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New Mexico

A group of people in Santa Fe now gather together regularly for group practice and activities as the Dzog-chen Community of New Mexico. They recount their activities and experiences throughout the year and their plans for organizing future retreats.

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Retreat at Merigar
with Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche
December 23 to January 5

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Merigar programme

This year Merigar has been fortunate to have the almost continual presence of Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche since the spring.

During the summer programme he gave several transmissions and practices and will continue to do so throughout the autumn.

A glance at the Merigar programme on page 4 will show the days on which Norbu Rinpoche will be teaching and giving transmission which is practically every weekend until Christmas when he will lead a two week retreat.

The principles of Tibetan medicine

A medical system based on compassion



The Medicine Buddha

In the Mahayana tradition, when we practise or study, from the start we look at our motivation. If we do not have good motivation then we cultivate it in order to benefit others. There is an explanation of the qualities that a doctor needs to have. If people do not have these qualities, then they need to cultivate them.

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Remembering Dr. Lopsang Dolma

The story of one of Tibet's famous women doctors

Born in the Kyirong district of West Tibet in 1935, Dr. Dolma followed the family tradition of religious and medical service to become the 13th Khangkar doctor in an unbroken lineage. After her departure from Tibet in 1959 and the first difficult

years in exile, she finally resumed her medical practice and in 1972 accepted the post of Chief Physician at the Tibetan Medical Centre in Dharamsala. She has given lectures, workshops and diagnostic exhibitions in America and Europe

bringing the unique system of Tibetan medicine to the West. In 1983 she participated in the First International Conference on Tibetan Medicine held in Italy. She died at the age of 55 in 1989.

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Ten years later

Merigar celebrated its 10th anniversary on a hot August day with an excursion on foot led by masked dancers, pipers and drummers from the Capamone, to Merigar 2, the river, across fields and fences to the woods, then on to the Gonpa, the hill of the nomads, the children's playground and the main house. An enormous long bodied lion reared its ferocious head along the way, and each stop became a story in dance, poetry, music and fun. The day closed as dancers whirled around a great fire.

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(photo Jean Mackintosh)



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The preservation and the purity of the teachings is the responsibility of all those who are involved with the teachings.

The preciousness of the teachings

From the teachings of Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche given in California, November 4th, 1979.

I want to explain a bit about things in general. We find among us that people have their own practice, their own master, their own lineage. That's not only true of someone who is following Buddhism. But when one follows any teaching, it's always like that. And one has these characteristics even if one is not following the teaching. That is to say, this is characteristic of the human being.

And in general we all have an enormous amount of confusion about this. When one wants to follow a teaching, one thinks many times about "Whether I should follow or whether I shouldn't follow". Particularly people who follow some particular school get worried. And the truth is that we all have a lot of these conflicts.

But it's very important to try to understand first of all, that through the teachings one must try to open oneself. Because the principle of the teaching has a way of working, has a real function. Man can always make a mistake. But the teaching cannot be mistaken.

The teaching can appear in many different forms, in different schools, but its essence and principle must always be the same. And therefore one must know that.

One must know what is the true principle that one must be following. And one must know where one must arrive. That doesn't depend on a particular person who is teaching or a particular master who is presenting the teachings. What principle you're following, where you are going, depends on the person who follows. If I must realize myself, I have to realize me, myself. It's not my teacher who must realize me, or my school which must realize the teaching.

When one puts this problem before the teaching, it's extremely damaging. Damaging for he who practises and damaging for the teaching itself and the school to which one belongs, because we're interested in the teaching. Because this means not only a few people or an individual, but each of us has his own way of being interested in the teachings and of taking the interest of the teachings into consideration. And this interest must proceed. And this must above all proceed for others.

Benefit for others

In the Buddhist teaching, one of the first things one considers is the benefit for others, and what gives benefit to others is above all the teachings. So you have to have a teaching that works, a teaching that is pure and authentic. And this guarantee of the teachings depends on the people who are interested in and participating in the teaching.

You must never think that the teaching is somehow the property

of some chosen few. Normally this is how people see the matter. For example, people speak of His Holiness, that His Holiness is the owner of the teachings like somebody is the owner of a precious jewel. But that is not true. Because nobody has given him the job. Nobody has given that authority to any such person. The teaching is in the common interest of all beings and therefore the preservation and the purity of the teachings is the responsibility of all those who are involved with the teachings.

Therefore it's extremely important that all the people and practitioners who are involved in the teaching should be active. And thus they must, above all, be responsible and aware of their responsibility, otherwise one's Bodhicitta is really just a matter of words.

Responsibility

For me, for example, that which is most valuable, most precious, is the teaching. Because the only thing that can resolve the problems of a human being definitively is realization. If a person doesn't become realized, he will always find himself at the level of dualism. Where can one find one's reawakening? Only from the teachings. And for this reason the teachings are very important.

I know what the value of the teachings is. Therefore I assume my responsibility before the teachings because I know how precious the teachings are. If, for me, the only thing which is truly precious is the teachings, then I know that's true also for others. If I seriously feel compassion for others, then I must use all my strength to keep this precious teaching as it should be. And I must use all my strength to carry the teaching forward, and what I know, I must communicate to others. And this which I do is what I consider true compassion. And if this is true for me, it's true for others. The teaching is something to which all those interested in must commit themselves to. When we think of Tibetan Buddhism, many people think to do something for Tibetan Buddhism out of sympathy, or affection, for the Tibetans or for the Tibetan tradition. But sympathy for the Tibetans and doing something for them is another matter.

But someone who understands the value and preciousness of the teachings, particularly of the teachings of Dzog-chen, is not just motivated by sympathy for the Tibetans or interest in oriental things. He knows that this is something precious to be saved, not to be lost. Therefore I habitually ask those who are interested to assume their responsibility. One's first responsibility is to practise. If you want to take your responsibilities towards the teachings, that is to say, do something for the benefit for others, first of all, you must better yourself. To do that you must



(© Modonesi & Namkhai)

practise. It may be that one does not know how to practise, then the first step of course is to learn, to try to understand.

In order to understand you must not shut yourself in. I'm not saying that all schools, all masters, are the same. You have to treat everything the same way. You have to be open at both ends. Some people might say you have to give importance to every school, every tradition, every path. I can understand that, but it's not the case that someone who is interested in becoming realized should make himself a slave to that outlook.

Understanding

From our point of view, to follow a teaching means that teaching gives a means or instrument for liberating the person. And this you must find in whatever teaching it may be. If someone has communicated this to you, then that corresponds to the teachings. If this isn't so, it means that in this case teaching has been conditioned by the people involved. Then it's up to you, the person interested, to have enough awareness to deal with that.

Many people, when they follow a teaching, say, "Now I've understood. What I was involved with before isn't so very right." And there is a kind of conversion, or change, like somebody changing his clothes. But that is not a correct procedure either. Because if you have truly understood, there is nothing to change.

The Dzog-chen teaching doesn't give a garment or suit of clothes or a new way of presenting yourself. You can be as you are. But what the teaching gives is an awakening. If I hadn't understood before, now I've understood. Now if I've understood, whether what I've understood is the Dzog-chen teaching or another teaching, I have really understood. So we don't have to create problems.

Problems

When a human being has decided to have a problem, the problem always grows, conflicts make progress. But

if you know from the beginning there is no conflict, then if somebody is making conflicts with me or in front of me, I find it unimportant.

In the same way, it's very important that if a practitioner feels himself to be a true practitioner of Dzog-chen, he must find himself like a man sitting on a mountain peak, with the whole panorama open to him. He has no conflict. If I don't provoke a conflict, somebody else who comes along and provokes a conflict doesn't have the power to condition me. There is no reason to go judging people. What is important is to observe oneself.

As Shantideva said, "If a certain area is full of thorns, and it is very difficult to walk through these thorny bushes, then to walk there do you have to cover the whole mountainside? You can't do that. How do you walk there then? You have to have very thick soles on your shoes." It depends therefore on the person himself to deal with the situation. You can never succeed in destroying all the elements which might disturb you. It is more important to deal with yourself and not be disturbed. So what's most important is the awareness of the practitioner himself.

We always go around criticizing other people. In every situation we can find grounds for conflict. In this case it is very important to liberate oneself, so that you don't find conflict outside. And what I'm describing is above all a way of being a practitioner of Dzog-chen. It's not important to demonstrate to the world that I'm a practitioner of Dzog-chen. What we're interested in obtaining is realization. Realization doesn't come by my exhibiting something. Realization is not dependent on other people.

Being active

As regards the teachings, one must be extremely active. Active means I myself, the person, participates. I do something to realize myself. You have to understand that teachers and masters have their power and their

capacities. But you must understand that the fundamental capacity of teachers and masters is transmission. A power greater than that of transmitting does not exist. Transmission is a way of developing your progress in that practice. But before developing that, you have to have a principle.

If we speak, for example, of making a flower grow and develop, this means we have to use fertilizer and plant food and water and so forth. It means there is already a flower. If there is no flower, there is nothing to help grow, to cultivate. Likewise, at the beginning there is a teacher who has explained and transmitted orally, and this is indispensable.

Then when the person has found the teaching, it is up to the person himself. It's no longer the master's job. The master's job is to transmit, to make you understand, to give you the methods which you will cultivate and develop. But the rest of it, doing the rest of the job, is the disciple's work.

The path of wisdom

The path towards realization is called the path of wisdom. The path of wisdom has nothing to do with somebody passively going to receive a blessing. It has to do with one's participating directly on one's own. In a Sutra, Buddha says, "A person who has sacrificed and renounced for all his life as a monk, who has paid honor and respect to all the buddhas and bodhisattvas, who has continuously made offerings, who has continuously done purifications, prostrations and the like, has accumulated a great deal of merit. But compared to a person who is in the state of *shiné* for the amount of time that it takes an ant to walk from the tip of the nose to the bridge of the nose," - that is to say, for a few seconds - "that is hundreds of times more important than that entire lifetime of sacrifice."

Once one has entered onto the path of wisdom, then one has finally begun the way to realization. The path of wisdom does not mean a mental concept that depends on having good intentions, or performing some benefit with body, voice and mind. It means going into the state of the individual as one is. It's not only the Dzog-chen teaching which says this, but all of the teachings of Buddhism in general. Their ultimate stage is always pointing, for example, towards *shiné*. This means that one must participate oneself. If you don't participate, nobody can accomplish anything. Thus what is it that the Dzog-chen teaching really communicates? It communicates that one must open one's eyes, and must not be a passive receiver, but an active participant in the teaching. As I am active, then I also help other people who are interested to understand what's involved. According to me, these are very important things to understand.

Merigar Programme Autumn 1991



October

Oct. 3, Thursday	8.00 19.00	Dakini day. Guru Yoga of the White A. Medium tun with intensive practice of Sinhamukha.
Oct. 5, Saturday	Morning Afternoon	Shine practice with Guru Yoga. Karma Yoga.
Oct. 6, Sunday	Morning Afternoon	Shine practice with Guru Yoga. Karma Yoga.
Oct. 7, Monday	8.00 & 19.00	New moon. Purification practice.
Oct. 10, Thursday	19.00	Anniversary of Rigzin Jigmed Lingpa. Guru Yoga of the White A.
Oct. 12, Saturday	Morning Afternoon	Karma Yoga. Dance of the Vajra.
Oct. 13, Sunday	Morning Afternoon	Dance of the Vajra. Karma Yoga.
Oct. 18, Friday	19.00	Padmasambhava day. Ganapuja with Long Life practice of Padmasambhava U.W.U.
Oct. 19, Saturday	Morning	Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche will give transmission of Bodicitta.
	Afternoon	Karma Yoga.
Oct. 20, Sunday	Morning	Continuation of Bodicitta transmission.
	Afternoon	Karma Yoga.
Oct. 23, Wednesday	8.00 19.00	Full moon and day of the Buddha. Long Life practice U.P.E.
Oct. 26, Saturday	Morning	Ganapuja. Xitro purification for the dead, with Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche.
	Afternoon	Karma Yoga.
Oct. 27, Sunday	Morning Afternoon	Karma Yoga. Special practice of Sinhamukha for all living sentient beings, with Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche.
Oct. 29, Tuesday	19.00	Anniversary of Buddha's descent from the dimension of the Divinities. Ganapuja.

November

Nov. 1, Friday	Morning	Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche will give the transmission of Vajrapani.
	Afternoon	Karma Yoga.
Nov. 2, Saturday	Morning	Collective practice of Vajrapani with Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche.
	Afternoon	Karma Yoga.
Nov. 3, Sunday	Morning	Practice of Vajrapani.
	Afternoon	Karma Yoga.
Nov. 6, Wednesday	19.00	New moon. Medium tun with intensive practice of Ekajati.

Nov. 9, Saturday	Morning	Purification and rite of Sanglungta to reinforce the energy of individuals, with Norbu Rinpoche.
	Afternoon	Karma Yoga.
Nov. 10, Sunday	Morning	Rite and practice of Sang.
	Afternoon	Karma Yoga.
Nov. 16, Saturday	Morning	Padmasambhava day. Karma Yoga.
	Afternoon	Vajrapani practice with Norbu Rinpoche.
Nov. 17, Sunday	Morning	Rite of the Naga with Rinpoche.
	Afternoon	Karma Yoga.
Nov. 21, Thursday	8.00 & 19.00	Full moon.
Nov. 23, Saturday	Morning	Long Life practice of Mandarava C.L.V.
	Afternoon	Karma Yoga.
		Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche will give transmission of the Chod. Intensive practice.
Nov. 24, Sunday	Morning	Karma Yoga.
	Afternoon	Chod practice.
Nov. 26, Tuesday	19.00	Dakini day. Medium tun with intensive practice of Sinhamukha.
Nov. 30, Saturday	Morning	Purification of the Six Loka.
	Afternoon	Karma Yoga.

December

Dec. 1, Sunday	Morning	Karma Yoga.
	Afternoon	Karma Yoga.
Dec. 5, Thursday	19.00	New moon. Xitro practice.
Dec. 7, Saturday	Morning	Practice of Green Tara with Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche.
	Afternoon	Practice of Green Tara with Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche.
Dec. 8, Sunday	Morning	Norbu Rinpoche's birthday. Tara practice.
	Afternoon	Entertainment.
Dec. 14, Saturday	Morning	Intensive practice of Dorje Legpa dedicated to the whole Community.
	Afternoon	The same as the morning.
Dec. 15, Sunday	Morning	Intensive practice of Ekajati and Naggon for peace in the world.
	Afternoon	The same as the morning.
Dec. 16, Monday	19.00	Padmasambhava day. Ganapuja.
Dec. 21, Saturday	8.00 & 19.00	Full moon. Long Life practice C.L.V.
Dec. 23	Afternoon	Beginning of the retreat with Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche.
Jan. 5, Sunday	Morning	The retreat finishes.

Kalacakra Tantra

According to tradition the Kalacakra Tantra was taught by the Buddha who manifested as Kalacakra at Dharmakata in South India. The tantra was expounded at the request of King Sucandra, an emanation of Vajrapani. Sucandra was from Shambhala which, according to the texts, is north of the river Sita (viz. Tarim), in central Asia. After hearing the Tantra, the King returned to Shambhala, wrote a long exposition and propagated Kalacakra Buddhism as the state religion. The literature of this tradition is based on the long Laghu tantra, which is currently called the Kalacakra Tantra. It is divided into five main chapters and 1,247 stanzas. The most famous and extensive exposition of this Tantra is the Vimalprabha, the great commentary on the Kalacakra Tantra "The Stainless Light". It is still extant and it formed the basis of subsequent literature. In 1026 the Kalacakra Tantra was

introduced into Tibet giving rise to a flourishing tradition, while in India, nowadays, this tradition seems to have disappeared. Among Tibetans it is still very well preserved. During the centuries Tibetans have produced a great bulk of literature concerning the Kalacakra Tantra. It is a system widespread among all the schools, above all Gelupa Sakya and Kagyu.

The initiations to the Kalacakra are fifteen and are divided into three groups. Seven initiations in the pattern of childhood (this is the one the Dalai Lama is going to give in N.Y. city). Four high initiations. Four greatly high initiations.

This sacred tradition is a complete concept of the world, and includes a very particular tradition of yoga called the "six branches yoga", a pranayama system with a thorough analysis of all the channels and the vital energy, a very complex system of astrology which is



intended as a description of the macrocosm in strict connection with the internal energy of the individual, the microcosm.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama is a great practitioner and holder of this tradition and he has a great confidence in the power its energy has for the peace of all the people who live on this earth.

Kalacakra Initiation for World Peace

The Tibet Center in New York will be sponsoring this rare and historic event during October 1991 as part of the celebration of the Year of Tibet. His Holiness the Dalai Lama will give the Kalacakra Initiation in New York City on October 21st to 23rd. His Holiness will give preparatory teachings on the Path of Compassion from October 16th to 19th. The Namgyal monks will perform ceremonial dances as part of the preparations for the Initiation on October 20th.

His Holiness' teachings will be preceded by five days of teachings on the Nature of Mind given by preeminent lamas from each of the five Tibetan religious traditions:

October 11th Venerable Lobpon Tenzin Namdhak, Bon tradition
October 12th Venerable Trulshik Rinpoche, Nyingma tradition
October 13th Venerable Tenga Rinpoche, Kagyu tradition
October 14th Kyabje Sakya Trizin Rinpoche, Sakya tradition
October 15th Venerable Tara Rinpoche, Gelug tradition
(Sogyal Rinpoche will translate for Venerable Trulshik Rinpoche)

If you would like to receive registration information, please send your name and address to: The Tibet Center, 359 Broadway, New York, NY 10013 or call (212) 353-9391.

Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche in Germany

September 13th to 15th

by Matthias Winter

Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche's visit to Germany, in September 13th to 15th, only lasted three days but during that time he gave an intensive programme. He had been invited to teach in Germany by two groups, the German-Tibetan Cultural Society and Kamalashila Institute, a Karmakargyu Centre situated in the old Castle of Wachendorf, about a half hours drive from Bonn.

Norbu Rinpoche gave very concentrated teachings in Dusseldorf on Friday evening and in Wachendorf on Saturday and Sunday. He gave a condensed introduction to the Dzog-chen teaching.

About 120 people attended Rinpoche's talk in Dusseldorf. He explained that for many people "practising the Dharma" means to follow a kind of religion, whereas the Dzog-chen teaching is based on the discovery and the knowledge of the primordial state of every individual, which has nothing to do with accepting or rejecting beliefs, as is done in religious systems. He concluded by saying, "The teaching is not limited, but we ourselves".

He also explained the difference between Tantrism and Dzog-chen. In Dzog-chen, impure vision is part of our clarity when we are in the state of contemplation, in the "instant presence" of Rigpa.

The tantric approach, however, makes a clear distinction between pure and impure vision.

In Wachendorf, Rinpoche also gave an introduction to Dzog-chen and on Sunday he explained some practices which we can use in everyday life.

About 70 people listened to the teachings.

Norbu Rinpoche gave two talks in Bonn on the early history of Tibet and the Dzog-chen teaching in the early Buddhist and Bon traditions.

In both talks, followed by more than 200 people, Rinpoche underlined the importance of the pre-Buddhist culture of Tibet, the Bon religion and the kingdom of Shang-Shung. He explained that all the sciences, from astrology to medicine and philosophy were already well-known in the tradition of Shang-Shung and were not imported from India or China. There is also a genuine Dzog-chen teaching in the Bon tradition but this doesn't mean to deny the Dzog-chen tradition in Buddhism, which is also very ancient. Rinpoche said the Dzog-chen teaching is not "owned" by any tradition or school.

On Sunday afternoon Rinpoche inaugurated an exhibition in a little town near Wachendorf. Here he reminded those present about the imminent extinction of Tibetan culture.

As an example he spoke about the lack of education for Tibetans which would mean the loss of written Tibetan during the next 20 or 30 years if nothing is done to counteract this.

Tsegyalgar summer retreat

by Des Barry

This year the Tsegyalgar Community had no major teaching retreat with Norbu Rinpoche. When we asked Rinpoche's advice as to whether we should invite a teacher to give a retreat or do a practice retreat, he suggested that practice might be the better idea.

We used the retreat schedule prepared by Rinpoche for use at Merigar, which consists of a series of instructions that, originally, were taken each day from a sealed envelope. We translated the booklet, that has since been made from those instructions, and prepared everything that was necessary for the practices.

About twenty-two people participated in the retreat. Reactions to the various questions posed in the instructions, in the first few days, proved to be very edifying for everybody who pondered them. As we progressed more into the experience of the practice, answers to the questions, such as, "Is the teacher missing?", and, "Do you lack any teachings?", took on a different light. New turns of the crystal began to illuminate different facets.

Fabio Andrico was on hand to teach Yantra Yoga. Because of the fullness of the program, Fabio's teaching time was very limited, but working with the circumstances available, he did a great job of explaining the basic but essential features of breathing and movement. He taught with a precision obviously based on



Lobpon Tenzin Namdak
will give teachings
at Tsegyalgar
October 25 - 29.

For information contact:
Dzog-chen Community
Tsegyalgar, PO Box 277,
Conway, Mass. 01341, USA.

a very deep knowledge and understanding gained by study, practice and dedication. Everyone, including people who had practised, and even taught Yantra in the past, gained an enormous amount from Fabio's explanations.

One of the main features of the retreat was that there were fifteen minute periods set for the practice of simply remaining in contemplation, during each turn. Since Dzog-chen is remaining in contemplation twenty-four hours a day, it was very interesting to observe oneself and understand if one could really remain in contemplation, even for fifteen minutes, with the most perfect of conditions present, and not be distracted.

Perhaps for everyone, one of the most powerful experiences of the retreat was the realisation of the deep bond that we share as vajra brothers and sisters. As each one of us opened up through the practice, it was as if we were opening our eyes to each other, getting beyond the limitations, protectiveness and

closure which are our normal ways of communicating with each other in everyday life.

Most of our practices were done sitting on the platform upon which Rinpoche had painted the Vajra Dance Mandala. This was certainly not without its uncontrived symbolic significance. A large green and white tent had been erected over the platform to keep off the occasional rain showers which thundered around us from time to time, at the wooded lake side site.

Through this intensive period of practice each participant felt a profound connection with all other practitioners, with the Community both local and worldwide, with the land and the elements, and naturally, with the teacher. Everyone expressed the desire to have more events such as this, where we can enter into the practice together.

Yantra Yoga - Vajra Dance
at Tsegyalgar
with Fabio Andrico
November 29 - December 1

Black Forest retreat

The Dzog-chen Community in Germany is organizing a practice retreat weekend in the region of the Black Forest.

The location will be Schlempen which is near Furtwangen. The final dates have not been fixed yet.

For information contact Matthias Winter at 07723-5362.

At the present time Dzog-chen practitioners are looking for a house to rent in the country for use by the Community.

They are concentrating their efforts in the area surrounding Frankfurt since a greater number of people live around there. Once a house has been found, it will be used for small group meetings and personal retreats.

Dzog-chen broadcast in Auckland

by Gabrielle Kearney

Access Community Radio Station here in Auckland is running a weekly programme hosted by the Auckland Pan Buddhist Association. Recently the Dzog-chen Community was invited to present a programme. Mario Franchini and myself gave a brief introduction to Dzog-chen based on Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche's introduction in the "Rigba Kujyug", the Six Vajra Verses.

We also gave information about Yantra Yoga and details of the course which Mario began on September 5th. Finally we spoke of Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche and the worldwide Dzog-chen Community and also how we had personally come to make connection with the teaching. This was a most interesting experience and we have received a very positive response from the many new friends we have made through our connection to this group.

Washington, D.C.

by Tom Garnett

Dzog-chen Community members gather together once or twice a month in the Washington, D.C. area for group practices. A yantra yoga class will start soon. We are slowly learning to work and practice together amidst the fullness of jobs, city life, study, family, children and relationships. If you are in the area please join us for practice: Tom Garnett at 202-232-463.

Yantra Yoga in Denmark



Yantra Yoga group

(photo Jens Rasmussen)

by Jens Rasmussen/ Benny Gunnol Michael Bray Falslev

At the end of May and during the first days of June the Danish Dzog-chen group held its fourth course of Yantra Yoga with Oliver F. Leick.

The four day course was inspiring and beneficial to beginners as well as skilled Yantra Yoga practitioners.

Oliver emphasized his position as a Vajra brother, a fellow practitioner and not a master. At the same time he pointed out the correctness in developing Yantra Yoga along with the Dzog-chen teachings of Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche.

Paris conferences

by Michele Lanteri

"Like a bee that flies and lands on the flowers that mark his path, regardless of their size or color, the goal is to discover their taste, their nectar." Thus in Dzog-chen, there is no limitation, and the student meets the teachings on his path, and he must understand for himself their meaning.

Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche thus spoke at one of the three day conferences that were held in Paris, France from September 17th to 19th. Two hundred people came each night to hear him speak in the French capital. Among these were local students but also many 'new' people, who had heard of the conferences through the posters displayed in the centres or from a friend.

The first evening was a historic one. Rinpoche spoke for a long time on

the theme, "We live in time, and the times change ceaselessly. Sometimes the teachings develop, sometimes they disappear. At root there is no difference between the Dzog-chen of the Buddhist tradition and that of the Bon-po."

The master spoke about the historic evolution of the primitive religion of Tibet or more exactly of Shang-Shung, an ancient and powerful kingdom when Tibet was only a distant province.

The second evening was Guru Rinpoche day. It was concluded with a short spontaneous Tun, for which Sogyal Rinpoche joined Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche on the stage of the conference room of 'La Maison du Médecin'.

The teaching this time was a presentation of Dzog-chen in the different Buddhist paths: sutra,

tantra, and Dzog-chen.

There was a surprise on the 19th, announced only the night before with an invitation from Rigpa, the centre of Sogyal Rinpoche. Some 70 people still managed to get the information and free themselves to hear a talk on Guruyoga as a practice and as a method to maintain the samaya, in relation to the Master and to the teachings one has received.

"We live in circumstances, we live in time. There are many different circumstances and we can use all types of teachings.

There are certainly thousands of different methods in the Dzog-chen teaching. The final goal is always the same, to discover the real condition of our state and enter into this knowledge. If we do not know that, even a very important teaching will not be for us."

Santa Fe activities

by the Dzog-chen Community of New Mexico

Greetings to the Dzog-chen Community worldwide from those of us in Santa Fe, New Mexico, U.S.A. Since Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche's visit to Santa Fe in July 1989, there has been a small group of us who have endeavored to maintain a group practice and also to remain in touch with the larger community.

Currently we meet twice a week for practice of tun, chod, and, depending upon the lunar phase, either Simhamukha or Mandarava Long Life practice. Occasionally another practice is done, particularly if we have a visiting member of the community who knows well a practice we are not so familiar with. From what was perhaps an awkward beginning, this group practice has become quite valuable to those of us involved. As well as the formal practice, our common relationship to each other and the Dzog-chen teachings has had subtle benefit for all.

The travels of some of our members have served to bring back news of the community as well as glimpses of the thinking of Rinpoche. Our group has also benefited from the visits we have had from those connected to Rinpoche and the Dharma in general.

In February of this year, Tsultrim Allione came to Santa Fe and gave a "Dakini retreat" on the practice of Simhamukha, the Gong-ter of Ayu Khandro as transmitted by Norbu Rinpoche. This teaching was deeply moving and also served to increase the number of people connected to the practice and to Norbu Rinpoche. Then in the spring, His Holiness the Dalai Lama visited Santa Fe, a special honor, and as those at Merigar know well, the visit was a major event in the whole area. The simplicity of His Holiness' deep wisdom and laughter sent reverberations throughout our whole state. This was a historic time and many exciting things have come about as a result. The Native American community here was strongly affected and among other things, a student exchange has been started for Native American Indian students to go to Dharmasala and Tibetan students to come to the Indian school here. This was just one of the ways in which H.H. the Dalai Lama impacted the larger



Some of the Santa Fe yantra Yoga group

(courtesy of Cynthia Jurs)

community in New Mexico.

In June, we were fortunate to have Ani Tenzin Palmo visit from Assisi, Italy, imparting her quiet and deep commitment to those she met. Ani-la has been a nun in the Drukpa Kargyu lineage, and a disciple of Khamtul Rinpoche for over 20 years. She lived for many years in a cave above Lahoul in India, practising and doing retreats. Her experience radiates and her presence taught us much. Most recently we were very happy to have Fabio Andrico spend 10 days with us teaching Yantra Yoga, the Dance of the Vajra and leading practices. Fabio's humor and antics created a lighthearted atmosphere. He is a skillful teacher and was very effective in passing on a lot in a short time. His devotion to Rinpoche and his 'tales of the Master' were appreciated for having brought the Guru closer.

When Fabio arrived, we all joined together to paint the mandala and by the next day it was dry and we began to learn the Dance of the Vajra. It was quite exciting as all the pieces fell into place and we ended up with this beautiful mandala, and the opportunity to enter into the dance. Fabio did two weekends of practice including the Dance of the Vajra (and the Om A Hum Dance), Yantra Yoga and the Mandarava Long Life practice. During the week we did the Long Life practice in the morning, followed by the Dance of the Vajra, then yoga in the late afternoon and practice in the evening. The moon was increasing so on the last day which was the full moon we did a Ganapuja. As we finished the last dance and came out of the barn, we discovered a huge double rainbow in the sky directly

in front of where we were!

We are very thankful for our time with Fabio. Our weekly gatherings are newly inspired with two new practices of Long Life and the Dance. Our only wish is that we had a few more men here so our dance mandala would be more complete.

In the near future, Lopon Tenzin Namdak will also be visiting Santa Fe and we will be organizing that as well. Perhaps Tenzin Wangyal may return to Santa Fe while he is teaching in Texas.

We are not an official group at all, for the most part coming together around the teachings of Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche, but also open to receiving teachings from other lineages and traditions as well. Besides all the Tibetan Dharma activity, we also have a monthly Full Moon Meditation (as well as solstice and equinox celebrations), and practice Days of Mindfulness twice monthly in the style of Vietnamese Zen monk Thich Nhat Hanh.

Although the demands on our lives are many, as a group we try to maintain practice and collaboration. Individually, we relate to the Dzog-chen teaching and integrate it into our daily living in whatever manner we can. We rely upon the efforts of many who translate, explain, and work to publish the teachings. We especially appreciate the work of The Mirror and all those who contribute to maintaining communication within the worldwide community. Finally, and most essentially we express gratitude to Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche and the entire lineage for the teaching itself. We send goodwill to all.

Buddhism in Europe

An international congress held by the European Buddhist Union (EBU) will take place in September 1992 in Berlin, Germany. This organization represents all traditions of Buddhism and the aim of next year's congress: "Unity in Diversity - Buddhism in Europe" is to show the common basis of the different Buddhist traditions and the humanitarian essence of the Buddhist teaching. Guest speakers invited are well known teachers of all major traditions who are active in the West and include:

H.H. the Dalai Lama,
Ayya Khema (Theravada-forest-tradition),
Dr. Rewata Dhamma (Theravada-town-tradition),
Prabhava Dharma Roshi (Rinzai-Zen),
Daishin Morgan (Soto-Zen),
Thich Nhat Hanh (Vietnamese-Zen),
Sogyal Rinpoche (Nyingma & Dzog-chen tradition of Tibetan Buddhism),
Shamar Rinpoche (Karma-Kagyu tradition of Tibetan Buddhism),
Sangharakshita (Friends of the Western Buddhist Order).

Information can be obtained from:
Deutsche Buddhistische Union, Dachauer Str. 109, 8000 Munchen 2.

From the blue gakyil of Azamgar



Demolishing the ruin

(photo Maria Margherita Maglietti)

Come to Azamgar. Enjoy the benefits of practising in a place that has been authenticated by the Master as well as many other practitioners; Enjoy all aspects of the environment in which it is situated and contribute to the upkeep and financial self-sufficiency of this sacred place. This is not a publicity campaign, but all the same we want to draw attention to the following summary of information regarding the blue gakyil: after several years of absence we have enjoyed the presence in Azamgar of our master, Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche, together with his wife, Rosa, and his daughter Yuchen. This visit certainly revitalized the energy of the place and of those of us who frequent it.

We spent a wonderful week together. We did some maintenance work on the house, but mostly we spent the time demolishing a ruin which had become dangerous. We also enjoyed moments of recreation and the good cooking the valley offers, and the visits of practitioners, mostly from the Piemonte region. Recently we acquired another house for which we will have to make payments until December 1992, so we need to make Azamgar more available to retreatants. Therefore, Rinpoche, as predicted years ago, reiterated the need for the presence of a resident practitioner (gekos), both to take care of Azamgar and to welcome and assist retreatants at all times of the year. It was amusing to watch Rinpoche subjecting Gigi to extreme pressure to become a future candidate for Gekos.

We talked with Rinpoche about other themes related to the gar: the use of the building that is being reconstructed (Gigi is putting the finishing touches on the roof); the pro-Azamgar lottery we want to prepare for the next Christmas retreat at Merigar; the exhibition of photographs and slides we want to mount; but the most practical thing is that linked to the opening lines of this article: come and get to know this wonderful place, and those of you who already know it, if you have periods you can dedicate to practice, contact those in charge, who will provide all the necessary information. You will stay in the quiet of the mountains, and above all, for a modest fee (10.000 lire a day or about 10 US dollars) you will be able to contribute to making Azamgar more solid and welcoming.

Aldo Oneto

Letter from Los Angeles

Some excerpts from a letter of Fabio Andrico, who has recently returned from the Soviet Union and is continuing to teach Yantra Yoga around the world.

Today is my last day in the States. I am in Los Angeles and will go to Melbourne tomorrow.

Many things have happened and are happening in the world, some good and some terrible. But I believe our Community is like one large being;

we are all linked and we can all help each other and feel ourselves to be united on the path.

My journey is going well.

Not many people came to the Yantra Yoga courses, but those who have attended them have followed the courses seriously, and it was the same for the Vajra Dance courses in New Mexico and San Francisco.

In San Francisco we practised Yantra Yoga every morning in a park among the trees. Every now

and then one could perceive the presence of skunk in the vicinity; at other times falcons and vultures circled around trees.

Kathy gave me the latest issue of the Mirror to read, which everyone appreciates very much.

I found Tsultrim Allione's article on children very interesting. I thought it was a very important aspect of the Community which we should take more seriously into consideration.

CAPENTI

Park Hotel

Swim & Sunbath

eat, drink and dance.

Ride on horseback or just walk and talk
in the natural surroundings.

58031 Arcidosso tel. (0564) 967355

Retreat at Merigar with Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche December 23 to January 5

During the first week, there will be teachings and practice on the Dzog-chen Semde.

During the second week,
Norbu Rinpoche will give Yangti teaching.

The participation quota to cover expenses for the retreat is Lit. 220.000 for the entire retreat, or Lit. 20.000 for each day. There is a fee of Lit. 10.000 for the request to be a member of the Associazione Culturale Comunità Dzogchen. Inscription will take place an hour before teaching starts. During the teaching sessions, children should be left with the child minders. Those who need to use this service, which is free, should make advance booking by phone to 0564-966837.

For information about the hotels, call Amiata Viaggi tel. 0577-777464.

The Medicine Project



This is an up-date on the project of setting up a healing centre devoted to well-being, relaxation and purification at Merigar that will be run by Community professionals in this field.

The first training group of the Medicine Project met at Merigar on August 10th and 11th.

The group consisted of doctors, body-workers, nutritionists and a psycho-therapist. Those participating agreed that before starting

any project it would be better to get to know each other better and learn how to collaborate and rely on one another in spite of different professional skills and qualifications.

As a first step, it was decided to organize four separate workshops. On the basis of a common background and curriculum vitae, professionals working in the same field will have the opportunity to share experiences and information in order to improve individual performance and thus grow collectively as a group.

Each work-shop should meet at regular intervals and become a sort of self-training group with the aim of gradually arriving at a clear and precise definition of its therapeutic role within the Medicine Project.

At the moment, the dates for the three work-shops on medicine, body-work and nutrition have been set for the 1st and 2nd of November and are coordinated respectively by Pia Barilli, Elisa Copello and Enrico Chiesa. The date and the coordinator of the fourth work-shop on psycho-therapy haven't been decided yet.

Also, it has been decided to collaborate with the Shang-Shung Institute for the study and diffusion of Tibetan medicine in the West.

Anyone interested in joining the work-shops and willing to cooperate for the realisation of the Project, can contact:

Elisa Copello, tel. 02-33607505 or Spartaco Vitiello, tel. 049-9075009.

Transcriptions required

The Shang-Shung Video Section is looking for transcriptions of the following retreats and conferences.

Anyone who has a transcription or knows where a transcription is available should get in touch with:

Shang-Shung Video Section,
58031 Arcidosso GR, Italy. Tel. 0564-966039.

September 1989	Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche	Piha, New Zealand
October 1986	Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche	Greece
Dec/Jan 1986/87	Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche	Greece
1984	Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche	Merigar
	Teaching for old students	
1983	Congress on Tibetan	Italy
	Medicine	
April 1986	Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche	Merigar
August 1986	Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche	Merigar
Oct/Nov 1986	Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche	Amsterdam
June 1986	Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche	New York
January 1986	Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche	Merigar
Christmas 1989	Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche	Merigar
May 1990	The Dalai Lama inaugurates the Shang-Shung Institute	
	Teachings at the Gonpa	

Latest news from COABIT

A building cooperative was founded on April 21st, this year, in the presence of approximately 20 founding members, with Norbu Rinpoche as President.

The cooperative COABIT's aims are several: first of all to build houses for members at competitive prices because building cooperatives can be granted government funds at special mortgage rates, then to invest profits in continuing the construction of Merigar building projects, to provide information on the estate market and to devise ways to guarantee discounts to anyone interested in building or renovating houses of their own. COABIT is the promoter of the Faggio Rosso project.

San Lorenzo project

There is the opportunity for the housing cooperative, COABIT, to buy 20,000 sq. metres of land in the residential area of San Lorenzo about 6 kilometers from Merigar, at the foot of Mount Amiata. The area can be subdivided into housing lots of which 3 will be from 900 to 2,000 sq. metres for family dwellings and the remaining lots for building apartments from 42 to 57 sq. metres situated in buildings consisting of 3 or 6 different units.

COABIT intends to ensure an option on the area and is probably going to sell apartments on the basis of 1,250,000 per square metre, a price which is absolutely competitive compared to the local market. The option lasts six months, consequently it is important to collect the names of people interested in buying apartments in the area as soon as possible. In order to do that you must be a member of COABIT and pay 150,000 lire as a subscription fee.

For further information and subscription please get in touch with Nina Robinson, c/o Merigar.

Purchasing group

COABIT is trying to start a purchasing group to help cooperative members who want to build new houses or to renovate old ones.

The purchasing group can obtain advantageous prices from a builders' suppliers, electrical and plumbing goods if the group can guarantee him a consistent turnover every year. All the members and craftsmen of COABIT should send out information on their projected works in order to get the purchasing group started and obtain the above-mentioned reductions.

Information on the estate market in the Merigar area

COABIT intends to publish a continuing information feature in The Mirror directed to all members of the cooperative concerning buying and selling real estate. Anyone able to send us information concerning property available in the Merigar area, please let us have it immediately so that we can provide a useful internal service for COABIT members and anyone who intends to become a member.

Up-date on the Faggio Rosso project

The Faggio Rosso is a large hotel and residential complex located at the foot of the hill leading up to Merigar. It has been on sale for a while and the Community is trying to buy it.

The selling price has been established at 2,500,000,000 lire plus 19% VAT coming up to a total of approximately 3 billion lire. It has been decided to find a hundred partners to buy a share costing 30 million lire each (approximately \$27,000 US), corresponding to a 100th share of the total price. So far, 26 partners have joined the project, but the date of the next auction (October 4th) is approaching and

the remaining 74 partners are still to be found. Thus anyone interested in the project should get in touch with Nina Robinson as soon as possible to have his/her name put on the list of prospective buyers.

The potentialities of a complex like this are endless and the initial investment could be re-evaluated in time and prove very profitable, particularly if we consider that the Faggio Rosso is sold at half price compared to its actual value.

Till now the Faggio Rosso has only been managed as a hotel, but once we have succeeded in buying it, the whole complex could be utilised in different ways: as a place for workshops and conferences or it could be easily converted into a rest home for old people or into a health farm etc.

The possibilities are manifold and consequently it is extremely important to join our energies to realize the project.

As Norbu Rinpoche said recently during a picnic in the wood, "The Faggio Rosso is waiting for us."

Good news for members of building cooperatives from CER (Committee for Residential Building)

According to what was published in the newspaper "La Repubblica" on August 13th, 1991, the Committee for Residential Building gave substantial funds to the Tuscany local government to activate mortgages at reduced rates particularly directed to building cooperative members. The local government is also supplying funds which should enable building cooperatives to build 2,200 apartments to be assigned almost exclusively to cooperative members. This is an opportunity not to miss! **For information** and all enquiries contact: Nina Robinson, c/o Merigar, tel. 0564-966837 or Giovanni Boni, tel. 0522-880803/485079.

Photo archive



Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche with the remaining residents outside the ruins of Ralung monastery, Central Tibet. (© Brian Beresford)

by Shang-Shung Editions

Merigar is organizing a general photographic archive which can be used by all the working structures of the Dzog-chen Community such as the Gars, the Gakyils, Shang-Shung Edizioni, the Shang-Shung Institute and A.S.I.A. Everyone is invited to collaborate by sending us a selection of copies of their photographs or information on the most interesting photographs they have. The criterion to follow in the choice of photos should roughly be the following:

1) Photos representative of the Dzog-chen Community (e.g. significant

moments for the Community, practitioners, photos of Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche).

2) Photos that are interesting to the Community (e.g. photos of sacred places, Tibetan masters and lamas, masters of other spiritual traditions, Tibetan Buddhist schools and communities, other spiritual communities, photos related to all aspects of Tibetan and eastern culture, photos of Tibet, Bhutan, Mongolia, etc.).

For each photo which is considered to be of interest, please send a copy and/or the following information:

- 1) name and address of the photographer
- 2) the subject (stating the place and people)
- 3) whether photo or slide
- 4) black and white or colour
- 5) quality of the photograph
 - a) professional (adapted to any kind of use, e.g. exhibits, publications, etc.)
 - b) good quality (can be used in publications)
 - c) poor quality (not adapted for publication but the subject is interesting)
- 6) The date or period in which the photo was taken.
- 7) In which publication/s the photo/s may have been published.

Those sending photos should specify if they have any conditions on publication of the photo/s by the international Dzog-chen Community and any of its related structures such as Shang-Shung Edizioni, the Shang-Shung Institute, A.S.I.A. and The Mirror. All information received will be registered on the computer. More information on the type of cataloguing to be used and further explanations will be published in another issue of The Mirror. Information and/or material can be sent to: Photographic Archive, c/o Shang-Shung Edizioni, 58031 Arcidosso GR, Italy. Telephone 0564-966039 Fax 0564-966608.

Book Review: In memory of Dr. Dolma

Dolma and Dolkar: Mother and Daughter of Tibetan Medicine by Tashi Tsering Gosayna and K. Dhondup
Yarlung Publications, New Delhi, 1990

This small book, published in India, tells the story of a well known and highly accomplished Tibetan doctor, Dr. Lopsang Dolma, who is the thirteenth doctor in the Khangkar family lineage.

This book gives an introduction to understanding Tibetan medicine; how knowledge has been passed down through generations in the one family; the importance of the lineage transmission; the emphasis of compassion and understanding for sick people rather than career motivation, worldly success and monetary gain as qualities of a Tibetan doctor. There is an interview about Tibetan Medicine given to Gabrielle Lafitte by Dr. Dolma when she was in Australia in 1979, in which she discusses her training and various aspects of Tibetan Medicine including the Seven Wonderful Pulse Diagnosis from which a good Tibetan doctor can diagnose the present and future health of a person.

Dr. Dolma was born in Tibet in 1935 into the Khangkar family. This is a family which had a long tradition of religious and medical service to the community.

Her father was Dr. Tsering Wangdue (1891-1956), the 12th Khangkar doctor of Dra town in the Kyirong district of Western Tibet. As early as the 14th century, the Khangkar family and its house of medicine had great significance in West Tibet. The Khangkar Medical Centre was both a free clinic and a school of medical and astrological learning. It had a long and unbroken lineage of oral and written medical knowledge and experiences. The 12th in this unbroken lineage of doctors was Tsering Wangdue. Dr. Tsering had no sons of his own and although it was highly unusual in traditional Tibetan society to continue the spiritual and medical traditions through a daughter, Dr. Tsering was determined to do this and when Lobsang Dolma was fourteen years old, he made her the 13th doctor in the Khangkar lineage of doctors. During her ten years of medical and astrological training, she memorised all the major treatises of medicine and astrology under the personal guidance of her teacher Geshe Lungtok Nyima. She did special training in the Six Yogas of Naropa, and the Ten Sciences of Knowledge from Lama Rigzin. She also received training in the Zhurkhar system of medicine from Dr. Drukgyal Tsangdrub of Kham, and this included the specific art of relocating twisted joints.

This knowledge proved very useful to Dr. Dolma in later years following her flight from Tibet when she worked as a labourer on the roads in the Kulu Valley, in India. She also had practical training in pulse and urine diagnosis, acupuncture,



Dr. Lobsang Dolma

(courtesy of Dolkar House)

moxibustion, massage and yoga. There were specific meditations and initiations in the different aspects of the Medicine Buddha with emphasis on the development of compassion and love for the sick and suffering beings. She graduated from this training in 1950.

Three years after the death of her father, Dr. Dolma and her family left Tibet and crossed into Nepal in 1959. In Nepal she found many medicinal herbs and as a preliminary step towards curing people she underwent a retreat of 100,000 mantra recitations of Vajrayogini and following this, diagnosed and made medicine for many sick people on the journey. Dr. Dolma finally reached Pathankot close to Dharamsala in India in 1961 and worked for a year on road construction sites. During these difficult early years in exile, Dr. Dolma made a pilgrimage to Dharamsala, and there she met the Third Kyalje Trijang Rinpoche (1901-1981), who became her personal Guru. He recognised her knowledge and skill in medicine and began to assist her to work again in this field, but she faced many difficulties and obstacles in being accepted as a Tibetan woman doctor. She was forced to work as a foster mother, a Tibetan language teacher, and slowly practised some medicine. In 1972 she was asked to join the Tibetan Medical Centre at Dharamsala as its Chief Physician. Her two daughters, Pasang Gyalmo and Tsewang Dolkar attended the centre for medical training and astrological classes. In 1975 Dr. Dolma made her first official tour of the West where she lectured on Tibetan medicine at more than a dozen major universities and gave diagnostic exhibitions at many major hospitals in the U.S.A.

Following this, a group of academics and doctors visited Dharamsala and made a film called "Tibetan

Medicine: a 1000 Year Old Tradition".

Dr. Dolma developed a contraceptive pill, a memory pill and also treated breast and liver cancer. Her compassionate and sensitive treatment of sick people and her medical wisdom was greatly appreciated, particularly in the West. In 1978, another tour of America and Europe was planned and organised by the Vajrapani Institute for Wisdom and Culture. Dr. Dolma gave a workshop at the University of Wisconsin and another at the Jungian Institute of Psychology at Zurich, Switzerland, as well as many other talks and lectures. Despite this success, both internationally and in India, The Medical Centre decided to dismiss her as chief physician. With advice and blessing from her beloved personal Guru Kyalje Tayang Rinpoche, Dr. Dolma set up her own private clinic in McLeod Ganj. It was called Dekyi Khangkar, the White House of Happiness by her Guru, who inaugurated and blessed its foundation.

In 1979, the W.H.O. invited Dr. Dolma to attend an 'International Conference on Traditional Asian Medicine' held at the Australian National University in Canberra, Australia. During this conference it became clear that the unique nature of Tibetan medicine was not properly represented or understood. Dr. Dolma spoke extensively during and after the conference on various aspects of Tibetan medicine and demonstrated the art and skill of pulse diagnosis. She spoke to students and staff at the University of New South Wales and extended her stay due to the interest generated by her talks. She demonstrated Tibetan acupressure and acupuncture.

In April 1983, Dr. Dolma attended the First International Conference on Tibetan Medicine, held in Venice and Arcidosso, Italy. This

conference was organised by Professor Namkhai Norbu and attended by Dr. Trogawa Rinpoche and Dr. Tenzin Choedrak. At this time Dr. Dolma came also to Merigar at the invitation of Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche.

Since 1980, her younger daughter Tsewang Dolkar, on personal instruction from Kyalje Trijang Rinpoche, began her work at Dr. Dolma's clinic during her mother's trips away. There is a chapter in this book entitled "Dolkar: Daughter of Tibetan Medicine", which is a short biography of Dr. Dolma's daughter Tsewang Dolkar Khangkar. She is

now a Tibetan doctor in her own right and has succeeded her mother as the 14th Khangkar blood lineage doctor. Pasang Gyalmo, the oldest daughter has also been trained by her mother and both daughters carry on the lineage.

Dr. Lobsang Dolma died at the young age of 55 years on the 15th of December, 1989. This book is written in dedication to her memory. It is written by people who obviously knew intimately and understood the personal struggles that she faced in her career as well as her compassionate and devoted nature.

Jean Mackintosh

Overview of Tibetan Medicine

by Jean Mackintosh

Included in this book is a reprinted article about Dr. Dolma and about Tibetan Medicine from the Tibetan Review, 1978, entitled "Lobsang Dolma: Tibet's foremost Lady Doctor". Glenn Mullin's article gives us a picture of Dr. Dolma in her clinic in Dharamsala and the calm, competent way she assisted sick people from many countries, and as well gives us an overview of Tibetan medicine.

The source of all Tibetan healing science is the historical Buddha who gave us the three Medical Tantras which are still the basis of Tibetan medicine. They outlined 1,212 main diseases and their branches; diagnosis of illness and also the medicinal properties herbs and metals. They deal with 8 branches of the general system of healing; as well as the treatment of women and children's diseases, disorders caused by psychic forces, open wounds, poisoning, rejuvenation and fertility.

An impressive feature of Tibetan medicine is its use of sensitive pulse diagnosis. The pulse is taken at the wrist. The doctor reads the pulse of the patient's left wrist with three fingers of his right hand and then the patient's right wrist with three fingers of his left hand. Each finger takes 2 readings, so 12 readings describe the condition of each of the 12 vital organs and vessels. Through understanding the condition and harmony of all the vital organs and vessels, the workings of everything in the human body can be understood. There are many things to be taken into consideration when reading the pulse and also the patient needs to observe various conditions such as not eating heavy food beforehand or exercising heavily or engaging in sexual intercourse.

Pulse diagnosis is very complex. Part of the diagnostic procedure which is easier to learn than pulse diagnosis is urine analysis, and this is also very complex. The urine is checked for color and sedimentation. It is stirred and then the reactions, such as the size of bubbles which form, the depth at which they collect and the rate they disperse, also reflects the state of the vital organs.

Treatment in Tibetan medicine is related to food, behavior, and therapies such as acupuncture, cauterization, massage, mineral baths and blood letting.

Food is very important, as one's diet can strengthen the disease and counteract medicine if not controlled in the appropriate way. Also, the patient must be aware of his environment and the effects this can have upon the harmony of the elements of the body.

Medicinal pills are also used. They are made from herbs, flowers, barks, metal and animal substances. Tibetan medicine doesn't use synthetic chemicals. Most things used are organic. Those which are not organic are natural minerals and substances such as gold, silver, turquoise, copper and iron. Plant substances come from roots, stalks, leaves, flowers and berries. Acupuncture, cauterisation and mineral baths are also administered in certain cases. For example, schizophrenia is treated with five cauterisations on various points of the spine as well as with medicine. The medicines for epilepsy must be given with acupuncture. Mineral baths are necessary with some conditions. The baths may be of natural mineral waters from deposits such as coal, quartz, sulphur and pitch. However, a doctor should be consulted before one takes a mineral bath because many diseases are intensified by the wrong type of mineral water.

Medication and ritual practices are also used in medical treatment at times. Many illnesses can be cured by Tibetan medicine or alleviated to some degree. They include mental illness, asthma, epilepsy, rheumatism, cancer of various types, heart disease and infertility.

In regard to approaching death, Tibetan medicine takes the attitude that the moments before death are very important, for it is then that one forms the mental frame in which one will enter the Bardo. So, in Tibetan medicine ingredients are used to reduce the pain of the dying person but also ingredients to maintain mental clarity and power.

This book is available from Yarlung Publications, Dolkar House, D-10, Kalkaji, New Delhi-110019 India.

From a talk by Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche Tibetan Medicine

Sydney University, Australia, in October 1989.

At the root of Tibetan Medicine we have four Tantras. The first is called the Tsagyud Tantra. We already have a translation of this into English. Tsagyud means root tantra. In this root Tantra principally there are explanations on how to do examinations and also diagnosis of different kinds of illnesses. There are also short explanations of the principles of medicine, and what kinds of medicine are used. The second Tantra is called Shagyud Tantra. Shagyud means Tantra of Explanation and it is more important for medicine. In this medicine Tantra there are a four principal explanations. The first is to do with how a person needs to be to become a physician or a doctor. It is not only to do with studying and applying medicine, but there is a principle. If a person becomes a physician, then they first of all must have a commitment. They need to have an education about how to behave as a doctor and what kind of motivation they need to have. This principle is not used so much in the Western world in the study of medicine. Usually in the West such aspects of medicine are studied, as how to do a physical examination and how to prescribe medicine. But in the Shadgyud Tantra motivation is considered very important because even when a person has knowledge of medicine, if he or she has no principal of commitment to help other people and to enter into the dimension of other people who have an illness, then it's not that easy to help people. Sometimes knowledge of medicine becomes a kind of business. Sometimes when people study medicine they have the idea, "I will study medicine to become an important doctor, then I will have more money and it will become easier to live in society". Many people have that idea, but this is contrary to the principle of Tibetan medicine.

The principle of Tibetan medicine is that a person really needs to understand the benefit of medicine in the process of helping other people. It is important to start that way from the beginning. For example, I didn't have the idea to study medicine, particularly when I was young. I knew many people studying and practising medicine and also helping ill people. But it seemed very difficult and complicated and I didn't really feel like studying it. Once I was in the monastery where I lived and there was an old monk and he had a very serious disease of Bad-kan. We say that Bad-kan gives a maroon colour, a dark color. His disease was something like Mkhri-pa and Bad-kan combined which can lead to a problem of blood pressure. Many doctors both Chinese and Tibetan, were trying to help him but they weren't successful. I went to visit that old monk. He took my hand and said "You try to study medicine. You can see how heavy it is, I have



had this illness for many years. It is difficult to find good doctors. They can't help me. You are very young. If you study you could help many people like me. But you can't help me now. It's too late. But you can help many other people. So I promised. Later I always remembered this old monk.

So, after that I started to study medicine. I studied the four tantras when I was in college with my teachers. Later I studied the four tantras again with Kalu Rinpoche, the teacher of Gyalwa Karmapa, a very famous master. And after that my knowledge developed. In Tibetan Medicine since the beginning there has been a principle of studying medicine which is based on compassion, so it is very important to look at our motivation. In the Mahayana tradition, when we practice or study, from the start, we look at our motivation. If we do not have good motivation then we cultivate good motivation in order to benefit others.

There is an explanation of the qualities that a doctor needs to have. If people do not have these qualities, then they need to cultivate them. For example, it is important not have an egoistic point of view. The interest to study and practise Tibetan medicine must not be based on the motivation to earn money. There are six or seven different things explained in the Shadyud. This is the most important one in the Shadyud. I think it is very, very important.

Secondly, there are explanations of illness. What is illness? Tibetan Medicine has not developed in the same way as modern Western medicine. Modern Western medicine is concerned with opening the body, looking inside and checking everything. It is a mechanical type of system. Also in Tibetan Medicine this is used sometimes to enable doctors to have more understanding of the organs of the human body. Doctors in Tibet also used to study this kind of thing. But the real principle of Tibetan Medicine is taught by enlightened beings. Enlightened beings have more knowledge than ordinary people who can only use judgement and reasoning. If we are thinking and reasoning we can only understand with the capacity of our

senses. That's all. We cannot go beyond that. But if someone develops more clarity, then they can have the capacity to understand the condition of energy, to understand energy not only on the physical level, but also energy related to the mind. That's the reason Tibetan medicine is explained by enlightened beings. In the Buddhist tradition there is a Medicine Buddha. Also there are many examples in tantra teaching, in Yoga Tantra, Kriya tantra, and the teachings of Avalokiteshvara and of Manjushri of enlightened beings teaching. In Tantra there are many kinds of these explanations about medicine. Also in the Chinese tradition there have been many explanations. In the Chinese tradition, there are considerations in history that Manjushri manifested and taught both astrology and medicine. There are these kinds of principles in Tibetan Medicine.

So for that reason then, all illness and how it develops in our physical body and how it is related to our energy is connected with how we live and what we have contact with. When we eat and drink we maintain our material body every day and in this way continue living. All these things like food and drink are a part of Tibetan medicine. They are its substance.

So, in order to understand our illness and our energy function there are explanations of six different kinds of tests and eight potentialities of all substances. In medicine there are seventeen qualities. By this is meant all substances that are found in food and other material things. There are these qualities. These things are the base of medicine.

Also, they are the base of all physical problems. Sometimes we use too much of something with a certain quality. If we eat too much salt we create problems. But when we need salt we use it and then we overcome this problem. So, substances have a beneficial and also harmful effect. This is the quality of the substance. All substances have qualities and in Tibetan Medicine there is an explanation of seventeen qualities. With these concepts we can learn how to use food, and also how to watch our attitude and our interaction with the environment and everything in order to be able to balance our energy functions.

Alternative Medicine

by Naomi Zeitz

'Alternative medicine' is a term frequently used in these times. In general, the art of medicine seems to be undergoing a period of change and expansion.

Historically, medicine was the art of the people; the mothers, the visionaries, the herbalists, the carriers of a certain kind of wisdom that blended the understanding of the physical, emotional and psychic body.

In modern Western culture, medicine has evolved into a super technological science that sometimes disregards the being as a whole comprised of subtle energies and influences, as well as the gross physical manifestation.

As society in general becomes more aware of the environment and ecological systems, it seems also to be reflected in the trends in medicine.

The growing interest in alternative medicines such as Chinese medicine; acupuncture, herbology and specific exercises, in Homeopathy, in Chiropractic, Naturopathy, Ayurvedic, Tibetan Medicine, Shiatsu, Macrobiotics and others, shows that more and more people are beginning to look at their bodies as interrelated systems that require the same sort of care and attention as the environment.

It is no longer enough to swallow a pill, or so easily opt for surgery, or inject strong chemicals, without considering the effect on the whole "eco system" of the body.

It seems that people are beginning to see that the mind and the emotional states of the person strongly affect the health and well being of the individual; as well as the quality of 'spiritual life' that explores the less apparent aspects of the human condition.

It is a crucial time in the evolution of the planet and its inhabitants. The integration of the various forms of medicine are a reflection of a more general tendency in the world that exhibits a growing awareness of the interconnectedness of all life, and within that, the interconnectedness within our own microcosm of the human body.

Just as the issues of suffering for the animals, plants, rivers and forests bring to light our inability to truly respect and love our environment, the kinds of diseases of this age reflect our inability to love and honor ourselves, to regard our bodies as sacred housing for our precious human life.

'Alternative medicine' brings us to more of an awareness of our health in relationship to all living things and to ourselves; and encourages the manifestation of self responsibility in healing ourselves and maintaining health.

Yarlung Publications Books on Tibetan Medicine



Glimpses of Tibetan Medicine - a booklet offering vital information on Tibetan medicine and its practitioners belonging to an ancient medical lineage from Kyirong in Western Tibet. \$1.00, Rs. 10

Health and Harmony Through the Balance of Pulse Rhythms. The Diagnostic Art My Mother Taught Me by Tsewang Dolkar Khangkar.

Dr. Dolkar describes the various subtle movements and variations of the pulse. \$ 4.00, Rs. 45.00

Dolma and Dolkar: Mother and Daughter of Tibetan Medicine

Tashi Tsering Josayama and K. Dhondup

This book brings to the readers the profiles of the two doctors and their outlook on the medical art they uphold. \$6.00, Rs. 65.

Journey into the Mystery of Tibetan Medicine - Book One

In this book Dr. Dolma (1935-1989) gives glimpses into the training of a Tibetan doctor, besides describing the mystic and healing influence of Buddhism on Tibetan medicine. \$6.00, Rs. 65.

Yarlung Publications Dolkar House, D-10, Kalka ji, New Delhi-110019, India

Highlights of the Year of Tibet: Autumn 1991

New York

Exhibitions

Wisdom and Compassion:

The Sacred Art of Tibet
IBM Gallery of Science and Art
590 Madison Ave.
New York, N.Y.

Special preview of the exhibition for members Wednesday, October 16
October 15-December 28

Visions from the Silk Road:

Multi media works by the artists of the Cultural Arts Expedition to the Himalayas by Carole Elchert, John Westmore, Philip Sugden and Roger Sugden, The Nicholas Roerich Museum, 3199 W. 107 St., New York, N.Y. Opening reception presentation, "White Lotus" by Philip Sugden, and Carole Elchert, Sunday, October 27, 2:00 pm.

October 21-November 17

Film Festival

The Tibet Film Festival:

Film screenings, video installations and television programs that will focus on religion, ritual, contemporary politics, history and common perceptions of Tibet.

"Ritual and Religion" Documentaries, The Asia Society, 725 Park Avenue, New York, N.Y.

"Dreams and Documents", Hollywood fantasies, Asian features, and

new documentaries, including the U.S. premiere of LUNG-TA:

Horseman of the Wind. Anthology Film Archives, 32 East 2nd St., New York, N.Y.

Dates TBA

Vajrakilaya Dance:

Ritual Dance performed by the monks of the Sakya sect wearing costumes and masks, Columbia University, New York, N.Y. For further information call (212) 781-3866.

Nature of Mind/Kalachakra Initiation

For information and registration call the Tibet Center (212)

Visions of Perfect Worlds, St. John the Divine Cathedral, New York, N.Y.

Open to the Public

Thursday, October 10, 7-8:30 pm.

Nature of the Mind Teachings by Ven. Lopon Tenzin Namdak, Ven. Trulshik Rinpoche, Ven. Tenga Rinpoche, Kyabje Sakya Trizin Rinpoche and Ven. Tara Rinpoche, Forum at Madison Square Garden, New York, N.Y.

October 11-15

Public Talk by His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Forum at Madison Square Garden, New York, N.Y. Open to the public. Sunday, October 13, 6pm.

Path of Compassion Teachings by H.H. the Dalai Lama, Forum at Madison Square Garden, New York, N.Y.

October 16-19, 1:30-5:00 pm.

Viewing the Ritual Dancing, Forum at Madison Square Garden, New York, N.Y.

October 20, 2:00-4:00pm.

Kalachakra Initiation by H.H. the Dalai Lama, Forum at Madison Square Garden, New York, N.Y.

October 21-23, 1:30-5:00 pm.

Viewing the Sand Mandala/Long Life Ceremony, Forum at Madison Square Garden, New York, N.Y.

October 24, 9:00-11:00 am.

Lectures

President's Forum: Interview of H.H. the Dalai Lama by Robert B. Oxnam, President of Asia Society, Asia Society, 725 Park Avenue, New York.

For registration call (212) 288-6400.

Friday, October 11, 4:00 pm.

Wisdom and Compassion: The Sacred Art of Tibet

Lecture by Robert Turman, Professor of Indo-Tibetan Buddhist Studies at Columbia University, for the series Meet the Author, The Asia Society, 725 Park Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10021

Tuesday, October 29.

Fear and Fearlessness:

Discussion and introduction of methods from Tibetan Buddhism that work toward decreasing the effect fear has on our lives, by Gelek Rinpoche, Aura Glasser, and Alan Ginsberg, Open Center, 83 Spring St., New York, N.Y.

Saturday, November 23, 10 am.-5:30pm.

Courses in Tibetan Art

Tibetan Calligraphy:

Study of the thirteen different forms of characters, preparation of a wooden board for practicing writing and the use of a special one-foot bamboo pen. School of Sacred Arts, 133 West Fourth St., New York, For registration call (212) 475-8048.

Tibetan Thangka Painting:

Scroll painting in the Tibetan Buddhist tradition taught by Pema Wangyal, School of Sacred Arts, 133 West Fourth Street, New York, N.Y. 10012.

For registration call (212) 475-8048.

Children's Programs

A Tibetan Adventure:

Museum tours and art workshops that take place in the museum's gallery which resembles a Himalayan temple. Programs about Tibetan Culture, people and art held weekday mornings by appointment and are suitable for grades 2 through high school.

Jaques Marchais Center of Tibetan Art, 778 Lighthouse Ave., Staten Island, New York.

For reservations and fee information call (718) 987-3500.

For further information contact:

Tibet House, 241 East 32nd St., New York, N.Y. 10016 (212) 213-5592

Fax (212) 213-6408



The hand of Padmasambhava, holding a Vajra in the mudra dispelling all negativities

(© Brian Beresford)

Germany

Tibet Weeks, Hamburg

28 September to 8 December

Introductory Talks on Tibet

Place of events: Hamburg University, Edmund-Siemers-Allee 1

Organizer: Tibetan Centre Hamburg

28 September, 4 October, 7.30 pm

Visit of His Holiness, the 14th Dalai Lama, Tenzin Gyatso

Organizer: Tibetan Centre Hamburg

Sunday 6 October

Teaching for Buddhists only

His Holiness the Dalai Lama

Initiation: The Four Main Dieties in the Kadampa Tradition

9:30 am

Public Buddhist Event

His Holiness the Dalai Lama

Introduction to Buddhism

2:00 pm

Public Lecture

His Holiness the Dalai Lama

6:00 pm

Films on Tibet

Film Weeks (20 films and documentaries on Tibet)

Place: Abaton Cinema, Alhedeplatz 3

November 25-December 8

Weekend Seminar on Buddhism

Geshe Thubten Ngawang

Place of event and organizer: Buddhist Society Berlin

November 8-10



(© Brian Beresford)

London

Tibet Forum

A series of lectures will take place every month in the Bar Hall at Westminster Cathedral Conference Centre, Frances Street, London SW1

(Tube: Victoria) at 6:30 pm.

The Tibet Forum is organized under the auspices of the Office of Tibet, the Tibetan Community in Britain and the Tibet Society and Tibet Relief Fund of the UK.

Tibetan Language Course:

Seven sessions, The Tibet Foundation, London, U.K.

October 2-November 13

Australia

Public Lecture:

Ven. Kagyurwa Geshe Khensur Rinpoche, Buddha House, Fullarton, Adelaide, South Australia

October 6

Holland

Thangka Painting Course:

Classes by Andy Weber, Maitreya Institute, Emst, Holland

September 16 - October 11

Canada

Buddhist teachings:

Zasep Tulku Rinpoche, Tashi Choling Society, Nelson, British Columbia, Canada

September TBA

Spain

Tibetan Week:

Thangka and photo exhibits, lectures, slides and films, organized by Ediciones Dharma, Alicante, Spain

November 4-10

USA

Snow Leopard:

An opera by William Harper and Roger Nieboer, performed by Minnesota Opera New Music-Theater Ensemble, MN

November TBA

Chile

Tibet Week:

Exhibits, Performances, Films and lectures on Tibet, Santiago, Chile

December 10-15

Festival Gar



Dancers showing the way

(photo Jean Mackintosh)

by Paolo Brunatto

A few comments on the celebrations of the tenth anniversary of the founding of Merigar and its official inauguration.

I'd like to share with you my feelings because I was really moved by the performances organized during the celebrations on August 16th.

The first image that came to my mind was like a dream of clarity: the sublime dale in Merigar 2 where actors performed a bucolic dance representing the element space; giving a first taste of the performances which were to follow until late at night, a fusion between classic and avant garde, between tradition and innovation.

I have been following the avant garde theatre since the early 60's with the arrival of The Living Theatre in Italy till the Medea of Pasolini recently staged by the I.R.A. Theatre in Australia, and I have to admit that what was put on stage by the people of Merigar during those two days - in spite of their inexperience and their naive and moving attitude - is in no way inferior to the various groups of experimental theatre that I've watched performing in all these years.

Usually if all these performances (theatre, music, dances, happenings) are prepared in a few days with no budget by creative people and by non-professional actors, the outcome of it is pathetic and pretentious. Here, I watched fresh and essential parts of performances where self-commitment and seriousness were never heavy nor pedantic but, on the contrary, brightened by irony, good taste and moderation.

Wonderful was the use of the scenery, that is to say, hills, meadows, woods, paths and ridges: a route with a dreamy flavour where lots of theatre pieces led the spectators along the way inviting them to visit Merigar 2 and the "historical places of Merigar", from the Gonpa to the hill of the nomads. Then spectators were invited to look in the distance in the direction of the ridge leading to the main house, to the children's playground and eventually to the stupa. It was like passing from a "koan" or a single gesture reminiscent of Japanese theatre - to the symbolic abstraction of a meadow, a girl and a big white screen - to a gentle fairy tale where children turned into group of "little princes".

I felt as if I had been carried away, a weightless active spectator fully integrated with all the performances in some way symbolic, linked to the essential principles of the teaching without being rhetoric or showy.

I enjoyed the performances more than I had enjoyed others in a real theatre context. During the days that followed, thinking about the creativity shown by the people of Merigar, I thought that these types of performances could become a kind of yearly appointment.

Every year in the summertime for two or three days, we could organize dance, theatre, music and video performances, a sort of multi-media festival, a festival gar which could move from one gar to another: one year in Merigar, the following year in Tsegialgar, then in Tashigar, then in Australia and then ... who knows, one day in Khamdogar as well.

Lately a lot of dreams have come true and this could be one of them.

Poems

by Liakos Evangelopoulos

Joy and bliss
Just coming from the sky
The Master in front on the way
and you still by my side

Trapped in the form
amazed by the formless
Just living in the dreams of others
no time of my own
so few the moments of silence

I cry in the natural quality of
crying
for no reason, no sense, no
meaning
so don't ask me what and why
pain, no pain

sorrow
eternal joy.

O, land of Merigar
your fire arms
mother care
for all of us
growing experience
on the windy valley
above the river
The Master's smile
in Guru yoga

Dreams come to life
life looks like a dream
Who knows the dreamer
who is in the dream.

10th Anniversary of Merigar

On a fine, hot summer's day on August 16th, Merigar celebrated its 10th anniversary. People had been preparing for several weeks to make this a festive occasion. A giant dragon was gradually constructed over many weeks, with two artists working and directing their assistants to bend wire, mix paper maché and multiple ingredients until a huge dragon's head with bulging eyes, open mouth and curling red tongue emerged. At the same time the dragon's body adorned with green, red and orange scales was growing under the needles of busy hands and sewing machines. Daily in the gonpa and on the hillsides people were seen practising what seemed like strange dance rituals. The kitchen was filled with workers chopping and cutting, basting and baking for two days beforehand. But until the festive day arrived the programme remained a mystery.

The night before August 16th, the programme was placed on the door



The lion's roar (photo J. Mackintosh)

of Merigar. It was entitled, "10 years Later. Anniversary and Inauguration of Merigar 16th August 1991."

The day began in the Capannone with Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche and many people present. Twelve practitioners dressed in white performed the Dance of the Vajra while the others participated singing. Immediately afterwards everyone walked up the hill, past the main house and along the road overlooking the wide expanse of fields on the slopes of Monte Labro to the new house and land that had been bought earlier in the year and which Norbu Rinpoche had named Merigar 2. Along the way people were entertained by masked and costumed dancers, beckoning them on, showing the way.

They called from rocks and trees. Musicians with pipes and bells accompanied the dancers and led the people through the fields and down the road to the river below Merigar 2 where they performed dances in the fields, in costumes of five colours and masks of feathers and jewels.

They arranged and rearranged themselves into human sculptures in the midst of the grass on the new land.

A fire was built by the river and small branches were taken from the cypress trees to burn and purify the land in the ancient Tibetan way, singing purification mantras. Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche began the ritual and then everyone circumambulated the fire and placed some cypress leaves on the fire to burn - the smoke drifted over all the people. Rinpoche sat with the children as we rested in the shade before walking onwards to the wood along the faint and rocky track, over fences and fields.

A crush of people gathered at the spring near Rinpoche's house waiting for a cool drink. A walk up the hill into the cool shady woods was enough to cool most people after the hot walk. The path winds up through the heavily shaded little wood below the Gonpa. The work that Rinpoche and others had carried out in previous weeks was evident in the clean, cleared groves, the wooden bridges and the small paths that wind their way underneath the trees. Rinpoche had prepared places for retreat cabins in special locations. This small wood was pleasantly cool with its dappled shade, the sun sparkling and shining brightly through the leaves. Lunch was brought down to this place and everyone sat on the ground, on the rocks and under the trees and ate a Merigar birthday lunch with Rinpoche.

The afternoon brought a full programme of music and dance, in the Gonpa, in the fields and in the garden at the main house. The huge coloured dragon wound its way from the Capannone around the hills to the Gonpa and over the grass to the hill of the nomads. The dancers followed and performed dances of

Tables were laid under the stars in the warm summer evening and a dinner was served to all with Rinpoche at the head of the table. The pizza oven outside was prepared and the smell of pizza wafted out from the hot coals until about 3 in the morning. A fire was lit nearby and the musicians and dancers gathered around it. The drums beat and dancers jumped and pirouetted around the sparks of the fire. Dancing and singing, with guitars, drums and flutes continued until early in the morning and the celebration of Merigar's tenth birthday was complete.

The children's party

The day following the 10th Anniversary celebrations of Merigar was dedicated to the children. The festivities started mid-morning in the garden where pipers and drummers heralded their arrival and they chose colours and designs to paint their faces.

The children all sat together in the small Gonpa and ate a special lunch, served by the adults. After lunch Rinpoche launched multi-coloured kites high into the air over Merigar filling the space above the stupa as small hands tugged at the lines to send them even higher. As the afternoon progressed the children had the opportunity to try their artistic talents in various activities - painting their ideas of the Greek story of the minotaur which was read to them or making their own plaster masks.

Down in the children's play park, games such as the egg and spoon race, three-legged race and bobbing for apples, continued with hilarity and prizes for everyone.

Adults and children gathered



Rinpoche with the children

(photo Mario Maglietti)

the wind and the air, and then earth, space and water. The dance of fire came later that night. In the Gonpa a programme of poetry and music with Tibetan singing bowls and overtone chanting continued into the evening. An amusing performance portrayed the lack of water at Merigar with the participation of the children as parched and thirsty flowers on the lawn at the side of the main house and the intervention of the spirit of the plants and Merigar's gardener to solve this problem.

together for a repeat performance of "The Queen of Flowers", a satirical account of Merigar's lack of water and the magic hose pipe of the Countess.

Early in the evening everyone gathered together in the Gonpa where Norbu Rinpoche explained to the children how to do a short ganapuja, in this case with lots of cake and ice-cream.

This brief offering went down very well with the children and provided an appropriate end to the party day.

BOOK REVIEW

Jewel Ship

You Are the Eyes of the World
by Longchenpa, translated by
Kennard Lipman and Merrill
Peterson

under the inspiration of Namkhai
Norbu Rinpoche
Lotsawa, California, 1987.

You Are the Eyes of the World is the English title of the famous teaching of Longchenpa originally called, "The Jewel Ship: A Guide to the Meaning of the Supreme Ordering Principle in the Universe, the State of Pure and Total Presence". The "Jewel Ship" could have been a more appropriate title because it gives the idea of the teaching at once - as precious and weighty as jewels, as strong and buoyant as a ship.

Longchenpa points out several times in this text that there is no centre and no periphery.

This struck me most powerfully since I had been searching for my centre for a long time, imagining that there really is a place like that!

I read the text like a thirsty person drinks water, this 'water' has the quality of going straight to the head, making it clear and full of spirit!

Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche has written a most clarifying textual introduction to the book, and from beginning to end you can find clarification about the history and structure of the Kun byed rgyal po, which has been denied to be authentic.

Some scholars maintain that it was fabricated by unknown philosophers and that it lacked the famous nine points which are required for a tantra to be authentic. Norbu Rinpoche argues the matter most eloquently and gives unanswerable proof of its authenticity and sources.

Kennard Lipman and Merrill Peterson have done an introduction and commentary which for me was like an inviting wrapping around the most wonderful gift. The text itself shines within like a sparkling diamond, so sparkling that you cannot leave it for one reading.

In the introduction, Lipman and Peterson say that the teachings in this text advise us to "relax our focus and allow the wider perspective of total openness to flood through us and light our world from within. This openness may be as simple as being alone and quiet, at peace".

"... direct, relaxed, free experience is all that really rises" is what they say about the effects of the teaching. The "Jewel Ship", besides giving you the possibility to open yourself also gives total relaxation.

I offer some jewels of light and bliss from a section of the book that tells about the way of life. Longchenpa writes,

"Even attachments, anger, and stupidity
Arise from the path of that great pure presence
Even the five objects of sensuous pleasure
Are ornaments of the reality-field".

And from the section that tells about the way of living which masters appearances,

"Know the state of pure and total presence to be a vast expanse without center or border.
It is everywhere the same, without acceptance or rejection.
Blend the nature of the mind and its habit patterns into non-duality.
Because entities, whether subjectively conceived or directly experienced,
Are present as ornaments of one's own state of being,
Do not accept or reject them".

Leena Larjanko



Longchenpa

Reflections in the Mirror

by Naomi Zeitz

True collaboration is not easy. It really is a practice within itself.

We are all trapped in the cage of our own egos and limitations. This makes it difficult, sometimes, to find that place where the collaborative energy can flow smoothly and productively.

Rinpoche has often said that practice is not only sitting for hours alone in meditation on a mountain top. But, that the real test for a practitioner is when they are required to work with others and integrate the teachings in to their daily existence. It seems we have the opportunity to find our "real condition" when we are seeing each day our actual capacity, not some fantasy of the state of our development.

At *The Mirror* we have experienced many phases and qualities of collaboration.

Within these phases of the

newspaper itself, are the aspects of the needs and qualities of each individual; as well as the collective needs of the newspaper in order that it be produced on a relatively regular schedule and that it reflects as clearly as possible the International Dzogchen Community.

One important point is to try to see the broader view as the greater issue of producing the newspaper. It is something of great value to the people of the International Community and keeping this in mind can help overcome the narrow vision of our own self interest and investment.

For myself, I have found that at times I will completely fix on an idea or concept and will become rather stuck in defending this notion for the sake of my ego. This becomes a big obstacle for the newspaper and for my own growth.

As time goes on, this fixation will

ease, the strong conviction fades and the ability to collaborate more clearly and have more energy available increases greatly. Sounds a bit like a law of physics.

It is important that we help each other as members of this editorial staff, and, as well, maintain some overall value and integrity of the newspaper in the context of everyone's need to participate fully and creatively.

This is also not always easy. It seems that things flow more smoothly when we meet regularly, try to make the actual organization or 'base' more soundly concrete, and also when we are able to express honestly and consciously how we are feeling with each other and our collaborative efforts. This helps to maintain *The Mirror* as a place for us to explore, grow and develop, as well as produce something of benefit for the Dzogchen Community.

Bertolucci researches the life of Buddha

by Yeshe Namkhai

On Wednesday, August 21st, Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche was visited by the well-known film director, Bernardo Bertolucci.

The director wants to make a film on the life of Buddha and in order to have a clear idea on the subject and above all enter the world of Buddhism, Bertolucci is consulting several Tibetan lamas and scholars. During their meeting, Norbu Rinpoche spoke about the life of Buddha from birth to enlightenment explaining in detail the true sense of the teaching.

Rinpoche spoke about all the different types of Buddhism and described their similarities with and differences from Tibetan Buddhism. Bertolucci, who was accompanied by two assistants, listened to Rinpoche's explanations with great interest.



Rinpoche with the film director Bertolucci

(© Modonesi & Namkhai)

The director was fascinated by the fact of recognition of reincarnations which often brings such great responsibility since childhood. Rinpoche advised the director to create a film that could be an introduction to Buddhism and spent a lot of time describing his ideas.

Paolo Brunatto, with producer Fulvio Rossi, is making a documentary on Bertolucci's film, an international co-production of Rai 2, BBC 2 and TFI. Brunatto began filming that day and said that this footage will probably be the first scene of the documentary.

Making collaboration come alive

The possibility of a bookstore mail-order catalogue cooperative

by Liza Morell

We have received a letter from Liza Morell in Little Akaloa, New Zealand concerning a way to collaborate internationally.

We publish here some excerpts from her proposal and some ideas of *The Mirror* about international collaboration and the project of a book store mail-order catalogue.

Since Norbu Rinpoche's first visit to New Zealand over four years ago, I have been importing various books and practice-related materials to make available to people here who would like to deepen their knowledge and understanding of Dzogchen.

Through the experiences in organising this little 'bookstore', without much expertise, I have begun to see the many benefits that come through bringing our various activities more in touch - the

potential which a real flow of coordinated information, material goods and financial return can bring us towards accomplishing some of the goals of the world-wide Dzogchen Community.

There are so many projects developing in the Dzogchen Community now.

The question is how to coordinate our energy collectively and harmonise our work in a practical way so that what we create and contribute to the world works well on the outer as well as inner level. A mail order catalogue could create a viable means of distribution of various Dzogchen related books and goods to a broad range of people, while also returning proceeds from the sales to the Community.

In order to work, a mail-order catalogue would have to be professionally produced, have the input and on-going involvement of

a core group to run it, and begin with a lump sum of capital invested.

There are a few mail-order catalogues in the USA which could be utilised as working examples as a base to model ourselves on.

Such a catalogue would need to be of a high commercial and professional standard, and could perhaps best be organised around a 'theme' such as 'Discovering quality of life', 'Indigenous cultures of the world', 'Environmental integrity', 'Renewing human awareness' to develop the catalogue format around.

It has been suggested by a gakyil member here that I begin making a draft version of the 'catalogue' as a next step in making this idea more tangible.

This 'draft' will hopefully be sent on progressively to all the various international gakyils so that people interested can give their suggestions.



During this period, Dzogchen Community activities are rapidly developing and proposals and suggestions such as that of Liza Morell are very welcome. The idea of a bookstore mail order catalogue can be of great interest to people who are producers of goods like books, crafts, or other goods that can be advertised in such a way. Organizing the catalogue could be

done by a gakyil and those who would directly run the project on the basis of a clear agreement which could satisfy the Community, the management of the project and those who produce goods for it. This organization could be in the form of a non profit cooperative which is a good way of financing the Community, giving a small percentage of the income as a donation and increasing the private profit of the various people of the Community who, in some cases, do not have the necessary strength to commercialize and distribute the products of their activities.

Suggestions and ideas on this project or others that concern international collaboration can be sent to: *The Mirror*, C.P.47, 58031 Arcidosso GR, Italy
Liza Morell, P.O. Little Akaloa, Banks Peninsula, South Island, New Zealand.

Viewing the Body

by Phra Khantipalo (L. Mills)

Here in Australia, as elsewhere in the Western world, the body's end is something to gloss over decently and have done with as quickly (and sanitarily) as possible. Many people I have spoken to tell me that they have never seen a corpse.

The sight of dead bodies is now restricted to people working in hospitals and, of course, undertakers, who these days prefer to be called "funeral directors" or even morticians (to rhyme perhaps with "beauticians"?).

Our town planners now deny us the reminders of death that people still have in more traditional societies, where the local church is surrounded by the graves of the former parishioners. If we go to elegantly planned cities here, such as Canberra or Darwin, we shall not expect to see graveyards or crematoria. Such institutions are tucked away safely out of sight behind a screen of decent bushes and trees. We shall not be reminded of our mortality.

This fearful attitude is quite different from the openness to death found in traditional Buddhist countries. I remember attending forest cremations of bodies in Thailand where everyone was welcome to watch the body burning—it takes many hours on an open pyre of wood. And I have an earlier picture of Tibetan cremation on a hilltop near Kalimpong, which was accompanied by a feast while the corpse burned a few yards away. Such ordinary attitudes to the dispersion of the body's elements are rather more healthy than those commonly encountered in Western society. For instance, at the few cremations of Western Buddhists where I have been asked to speak, numbers of mourners have looked startled when addressed on the subject of impermanence; yet a discourse on this is standard fare in Buddhist countries.

The roots of Buddhist attitudes go right back to the Buddha Shakyamuni's days or before. In that culture, bodies were frequently not cremated but just left to rot away and feed the animals in the secluded parts of the forest. These charnel grounds or boneyards (a nice English dialect word) were open to anyone's inspection, anyone who was brave enough to go there and view the sequence of the physical body's decay. Perhaps only a few availed themselves of this opportunity, for there is no doubt that they were commonly believed to be places haunted by ghoulish spirits and hence to be avoided, at least after dark. However, religious practitioners of all sorts often went to meditate in these places.

Again, a monk, as if he were to see a corpse thrown aside in a charnel ground, one, two or three days dead, bloated, discolored, festering, compares this body with that, thinking: "This body is of the same nature, it will become like that, it is

not exempt from that fate."

Because in those days it was a possibility to go to such places and contemplate the body's dissolution, quite a variety of literature grew up classifying and enumerating the advantages for practice.

Walking or standing, sitting, lying down, one bends it or stretches it: this is the body's movement. This body by bones and sinews bound, bedaubed with membranes, flesh, and covered up with skin—is not seen as it really is. Filled with guts, with belly filled, with liver-lump and bladder, with heart, with lungs as well, with kidneys and with spleen, with snot and spittle, and with fat and sweat, with blood and oil for the joints, with bile and grease for the skin. Then by nine streams the unclean flows forever from it: eye dirt from the eyes, from the ears earwax, snot from the nose, now from the mouth bile is spewed, now is spewed out phlegm, and from the body sweat and dirt. And then its hollowed head is stuffed with brains—the fool thinks all is beautiful—led in by ignorance. But when it's lying dead, bloated up livid and blue, cast away in the charnel ground, even kin do not care. Dogs gnaw on it and jackals, with wolves and worms, crows and vultures eat it, and whatever other creatures there are. Wise is the monk in this world who having heard the Buddha word knows this body thoroughly, sees it as it is: As this living body, so that the corpse was once, as that corpse is now, so will this body be. So for the body, inside and out, desires discard. Such a wise monk, desire discarded and lust for the world, attains Deathlessness, to Peace, Nibbana, the unchanging state. While pampered is this foul, two footed, foetid thing, though filled with various sorts of stench and oozing here and there: One who with such a body think to exalt himself—or should despise another—what else is in this but blindness?

The Buddha himself is said to have held a contemplation session at a boneyard where the body of the famous and—while she was still alive—extremely beautiful courtesan Sirima lay decaying. The king commanded all citizens to go and contemplate Sirima's body, while the Buddha went there with the Sangha of monks and nuns. No one in all that assembly wanted the body at any price, the Buddha remarking on men's changed attitudes now that it was dead. A monk who had been infatuated with Sirima is said to have been cured by this spectacle.

Some of his verses may strike us as rather extreme in their expressions of loathsomeness, perhaps as a counterweight to Indian sensuality. On the other hand, it is easy for a dispassionate survey of the body to pass, because of suppressed desires, into less healthy attitudes. According to the account given of Shantideva or Bhusuku among the Eighty-Four Siddhas (assuming we are talking about the same Shantideva), a monk he was subject to slothfulness, and idle wandering, so perhaps he did have a problem with bodies.

Before we look again at the siddhas and their lives, here is a monk of the Buddha's time, Mahakala by name, because presumably he was large and black. He came from a merchant family and followed his father by trading, in those days a risky business taking bullock-carts in convoy through rutted jungle tracks, and arrived eventually at Savatthi (Savasti), where the Buddha Shakyamuni was staying. After he heard the Dhamma taught, he decided to become a monk and after some instruction went to dwell in a "boneyard".

There a woman called Kali was



employed as a crematrix (to use Mrs. Rhys Davids' word). It was her job to break up corpses so that they would burn better or be more easily eaten, and also to prepare heaps of bits and pieces for wandering practitioners to contemplate. When she had done this for the monk Mahakala, he exclaimed (Theragatha, 151-152, author's translation):

Large and dark skinned as a crow the woman Kali thigh bone breaks and breaks an arm and then another sunders skull like bowl of curds and seated piles them all together, The fool who knows not this makes strong the roots of being born again, again to experience pain. So people should not grow these roots!

And never may I lie again with a broken skull!

The message is typical of Theravada texts. It is said that Mahakala did become an Arhat, but of his life we know no more. Whether he passed his days thereafter in retreat or whether he taught the path of liberation to others the Pali texts do not tell us.

Though the types of people who used cemeteries in later Indian Buddhism change—they were mostly yoginis and yogins—the cremation grounds remained much the same: places only to go to if one wanted to practise intensively. The terror of such places inspired in ordinary folk guaranteed solitude, if not always peace. There were, of course, the

numerous invisible inhabitants of these boneyards to deal with. Some of them were willing to help these brave yogins and yoginis, but others look from their descriptions to have been very obstructive.

In later Indian Buddhism, monks (and perhaps nuns if they were still in existence) lived in secure and well-established temples, a far cry from the really homeless life of the Buddha Shakyamuni's early days. In those temples, they engaged in a great deal of study and debate and forms of lengthy devotion (puja), which took up most of their time. Practice, by this time meaning

meditative practice. Shakyamuni Buddha, in the Discourse on Mindfulness, suggests that the whole contemplation may be a mental event—"as if he were to see a corpse"—and visits to or long vigils in boneyards are unnecessary.

Later yogis often lived in such places but were not so much concerned with the actual corpses, though they contributed to the terrible (ghora) nature of their surroundings, as with the energies that could be evoked and visualised there. These "beings" took frightful forms which accorded with their environment. Perhaps it is fair to say that both kinds of practitioner went to cemeteries to face their fears and discover the path to transcend them, the monk by direct meditation on bodies, the yogi by visualising the fears transformed into fearsome "beings". Both would eventually find that

bodies and fears were all void in their nature. However, the yogi of later times had more skillful means at his disposal than the early disciples.

The images of the cemetery find a place in many tantric rituals, as well as in teachings such as Chod (gcod). Returning now to the end of our physical bodies, it is proper to consider sky-burial as a practice still performed in Tibet. (Batchelor, S. The Tibet Guide. London: Wisdom Publications, 1987.) After consciousness has departed, then it is good to make an offering of the body to whatever creatures will eat it, often vultures. This Tibetan tradition thus continues the ancient Indian ways of disposing of the body as illustrated above by the story of Kali and the monk Mahakala.

When animals of any size die in the bush around here, they are quickly disposed of by a tribe of universal undertakers dressed, mostly, in very sober hues. They go about their business quietly and clean up any corpses they find. They are well established in their business, having engaged in it for 100 million years. Their names? Ants! But human beings are not allowed by the powers that be to use their services, although other animals do so.

Some years ago, we had an idea that we might start a crematorium at the Wat for the benefit of local Buddhists. Officials from the Health Department who came to see us were most discouraging, even with this proposal for cremation, usually accounted a "clean" way to dispose of bodies. What would they think of "sky-burial" or other kinds of boneyards? We were assured that a crematorium was unlikely to be allowed here, and a burial ground never, as we are within Gosford City's water-catchment area. Yet animal bodies may decay within this "pure" zone but not human ones. There is a little that is rational about Western thinking on this subject, but the Buddhist approach is well-balanced and honest. Perhaps Western Buddhists are missing a dimension of their practice when they have no boneyards to visit?

Harmonising the elements through the Namkha

by Cheh Goh

This article is based on the transcript of a teaching by Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche in 1984 in Devon, England, edited by Cheh Goh and Nina Robinson.

Introduction

Namkha is a Tibetan word, which means space. This word is also used as the name of an object made of sticks and coloured threads. This type of construction is not exclusive to Tibetan culture. Similar objects, sometimes known as "God's eye", are found all over the world. They can be found in the American Indian culture and in Africa, and some people also say that they might have originated in India. But very few people have any idea of the practical use of such objects.

In Tibet, Namkhas have been used a great deal yet few people understand exactly how they work. They are usually regarded as ornaments for rituals.

In 1983, Norbu Rinpoche clarified the ways that Namkhas can actually be used by a person to harmonise his or her energies. This involves a certain understanding of Tibetan astrology related to the individual. Once the astrological signs and aspects of an individual are understood, a Namkha can be constructed and with the use of appropriate rituals, it can become a practical aid in making one's life more harmonious.

The Principal Aspects of a Namkha

In general, we know that in the astrological make-up of an individual, there is not only one, but several elements of energy. Related to the Namkha, we have four specific aspects to consider: the Life element, the Body element, the Capacity element, and the Fortune element. These four aspects exist for an individual not only internally, but also externally in the universe. The outer energies are represented by the four aspects of the Mewa and appear in the lower part of the Namkha while the inner elements are represented in the upper part. In total, therefore, there are eight elements to harmonise.

The Life Aspect

In the centre of the Namkha is the Life aspect. This is the most important part of the Namkha, because when one is conceived, the first thing present is life. At the moment of conception there is a characteristic energy, which is represented by the Life element. This is the element with which the elements of all other aspects should be harmonised.

This aspect is analogous to the head of a person, in that if a person loses his head, he will die. Similarly, if a person's Life aspect is threatened, his life is in danger.

The Body Aspect

After conception, the various elements gradually come together to form the body. The Body aspect



Authenticating the Namkhas

(courtesy of Daniela De Santis)

has a characteristic energy represented by its corresponding element. This aspect is, in general, associated with a person's health. As the health of a person is also very important, it is considered analogous to the hat of a person. Outside Tibet it might not seem so essential to have a hat, but there it is very important to have one because it protects the head from the strong sun and wind. It means that the Body element protects the Life element.

The Capacity Aspect

When a baby is born, he has his first contact with the outside world: the contact of light, sound, smell, touch and taste, the experience of the five senses. The prevailing condition at that moment determines the Capacity aspect of the individual. The element associated with that energy will remain the same throughout one's life.

The Capacity aspect is related to one's position and situation in life in general. For example, if a person becomes president of a country, or the head of an organisation; this means that the energy of his Capacity is very positive.

The importance of the Capacity aspect is analogous to a person's clothing. Just as we need clothing to protect ourselves, we also need positive Capacity energy.

The Fortune Element

During the course of life one has contact with all kinds of energy in the world through the physical body. A person's energy inherently has both positive and negative sides, and these are reflected in the external dimension. When a person has strong internal positive energy, external negative forces cannot influence him very much. However, if a person's inner energy is weak, then he will become passive and receive negative forces from the outer dimension.

When the energy of a person is reinforced internally and externally, everything seems to go well. We often hear people making comments about "How fortunate so-and-so is." Even when such people do things half-jokingly they gain tremendous success. The contrary is also true. When one's energy is weakened internally and externally, everything goes wrong, and even if a person is doing his best, nothing comes out right.

We can see that contacts with

positive and negative forces are linked with secondary causes. Nonetheless, a lot depends on the person's own energy, which is represented by his Fortune aspect. The energy of a person's Fortune aspect determines how easily he might be influenced by external forces.

The Fortune aspect is analogous to a person's belt. In Tibet, a belt is considered to be very important because the wind is strong and without a belt a Tibetan is at a considerable disadvantage.

The Four Aspects Together

The Life aspect is the most important for a person, so it is represented in the centre of the construction, surrounded by the other three aspects.

In Tibetan astrology, an element can have any of the four relationships with the other elements: mother, son, friend or enemy. (See the article on Tibetan astrology by Maria Rita Leti in the previous issue of *The Mirror*.) If the characteristic element of a person's energy of the aspect of Body, Capacity, Fortune or Mewa Life is in opposition to the element of Life, then it is clear that there is a disadvantage for the aspects in conflict. For example, if one of those aspects has the water element and the Life aspect has the fire element, this is a friend-enemy relationship, so these aspects are in conflict.

Such a disharmony can manifest in many different ways. For example, if there is an imbalance between the Fortune aspect and the Life aspect, an individual might win millions of dollars in the lottery, but his Life force would therefore be affected and he could die from a heart attack before he can enjoy even a penny of the money. This is not an unheard of example! Similarly, a person could become the managing director of an international company as a result of his positive Capacity energy and yet have a problematic life if the Capacity is in conflict with the Life energy. It is because of these conflicts that harmonisation is needed in order to improve our lives.

Mewa

The Calculation

Mewa is an extremely ancient calculation in astrology. It represents the universal aspect of existence and is calculated with the use of the numbers from 9 to 1. Every year the

Mewa number is decreased by 1 so that if 1991 has Mewa number 9, 1992 will have Mewa number 8, 1993 number 7 and so on, while 1990 has number 1, 1989 number 2 and so on.

These nine numbers are combined with the sixty year cycle of the element-animal combinations. The beginning of the first sixty year cycle is the wood-mouse year, and the Mewa number is 1. For the second year in the cycle the Mewa number is 9, then 8 and so on. At the end of the sixty year cycle, another sixty year cycle begins. But the Mewa number is not 1 at this point. Only when three sixty year cycles are completed will the Mewa number 1 coincide with the wood-mouse year again. So the three cycles make 180 years, and this is called a wheel of Mewa, made up of three necklaces of Mewa of sixty years each.

The beginning of the calculation of Mewa started from the first Bonpo master who taught astrology according to this system. Historically, therefore, we are in the third necklace of Mewa of the twenty first wheel of Mewa.

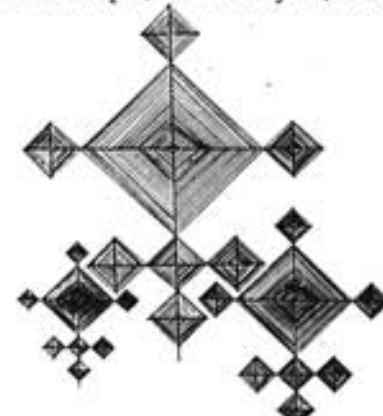
The Significance of Mewa

If we look carefully at history, at the time of the changing of the wheels of Mewa (every 180 years), there are many major changes on earth. At the time of the changing of the necklaces of Mewa (every 60 years), the corresponding changes on earth are not so great. This goes to show that the universal energy always influences the condition of our existence.

Elements of the Mewa

The elements of Mewa represent the total energy of our circumstances. Mewa has its own characteristic energy functions corresponding to Life, Body, Capacity and Fortune for any particular year or month.

For example, in our birth year, there



is the global energy of Mewa with the energy of each of the four aspects we have talked about. Every Mewa number is associated with a corresponding element. From the Mewa numbers, we can, therefore, derive the Mewa elements. These elements constitute the lower part of the Namkha.

As we want to harmonise both the internal and the external energy of any given individual, we put all the eight aspects on the same construction.

The Principle of Harmonisation

In the construction of a Namkha

there are two main materials. One is straight sticks of various lengths, and the other is threads of five colours. The sticks form the main skeleton of the construction and the threads are woven on the sticks in a particular way. The sticks represent the positive and negative forces when they are put together to form crosses. The process of harmonisation involves positive and negative energy. The two sticks represent these two aspects on the material level; and since the junction of any two sticks on the Namkha is a support for the element of the relevant aspect of the individual, we write the syllable that represents the element in the joint.

The main frame of the Namkha is a central vertical stick and two horizontal sticks, with the top horizontal stick longer than the lower one. The three of them form two junctions, the top junction is where the centre of the Life element of an individual is represented, and the lower one is the position of the Life element of the Mewa.

The Life element has as its neighbours the other three aspects of the individual, namely the Capacity, the Body and the Fortune. Their locations are then established by making little crosses with shorter sticks. The aspects of Mewa are represented symmetrically in the lower part of the Namkha. All the junctions of the sticks should, of course, have the relevant syllable representing the element written on them.

The Threads

Thread is a symbol of the continuation of energy and the colour of the thread represents the element of the energy concerned. We know that the five elements in Tibetan astrology are represented by five different colours, hence five coloured threads are required in making the Namkha. The use of thread is not limited to the construction of Namkha; there are many rituals in Tibetan traditions in which threads are used. It is a way of representing the flow of energy.

The real condition of energy is not colour, but energy manifests as a particular colour. We already know which colour represents which element in astrology: green for wood, red for fire, yellow for earth, white for metal and blue for water. In this way, we have all the material representation for the harmonisation process.

The Harmonisation Process

When two elements, such as fire and water, are put together, there is conflict, because they have inherently opposite characteristics. The way to harmonise such a situation is to use an "intermediary" element. Using the example of fire and water, we can see that between them is the wood (or air element). Wood is the mother of fire and is also the son of water. This means that wood is harmonious with both the conflicting elements and is

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Anja's story



Anja, Lara and friends at Merigar

(photo Wilvin Pedersen)

I had a good time in Merigar. This is a place I will come back to for many times. Here we can do a lot of things with nature, building a hut in the woods, playing with the other children, getting friendships with a lot of them, and learning the Italian language. I have experienced a lot. All people were nice to me, except a few. The landscape is very beautiful.

The first time I came to Merigar was at Easter in 1987. In every year that I come back, I have made other experiences. Sometimes it's rather boring, and I am sorry about the language difference when I cannot repeat in Italian or French or English.

My friend Lara, from Stuttgart, was with me the whole time in Merigar and therefore I also felt very comfortable.

Please, if somebody of the children wants to write to us, do it at the following address:

Anja Greiner (10 years old) and Lara Coll (8 years old)
Paulusstr. 4 Grunewaldstr. 31
7000 Stuttgart-1 7000 Stuttgart-1
Germany Germany

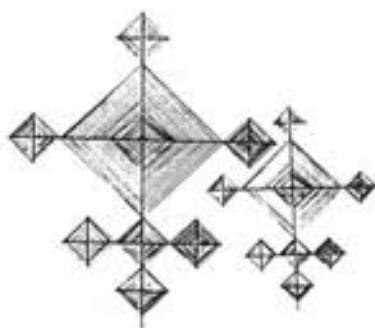
Namkha

continued from page 14

capable of mediating the conflict. All the aspects surrounding the Life element of the individual are to be harmonised with the Life element itself. So, Capacity, Body, Fortune as well as the Life element of Mewa are to be harmonised with the individual's Life element; similarly the external energies represented in the lower part of the Namkha, the Mewa Capacity, Mewa Body and the Mewa Fortune are to be harmonised with the Mewa of Life. Normally the progression of elements from one to another is according to the mother-son relationship, i.e. the change of element is from wood (green) to fire (red), fire to earth (yellow) and so on. So, the functioning of the Life energy of a person is represented by threads continuing through the five colours in this order. If a person's Life element is fire, then the flow of the Life energy is represented by red, followed by yellow, white, blue and finally green thread, forming a complete forward cycle. The whole of this sequence is repeated three times because the Life aspect is the most important.

If there is an imbalance between the Life aspect and a secondary aspect in the Namkha, the progression of elements is reversed. If water is to be harmonised with fire, then the representation of water will be blue (water), followed by white (metal), yellow (earth), red (fire) and green (wood). Notice that both elements finally arrive at the "intermediary" element of green (wood), which is exactly how it should be. If this does not happen, and the fifth colour is not green but, for example, yellow, we put the intermediate colour, which is red in this case, in order to reach the green. If the two elements are harmonious to begin with, because either they are the same, or

they have a mother-son or son-mother relationship, then there is no need to reverse the order. The colour of the threads with which the harmonisation process concludes, represents the mother element of the Life element and so it goes around the entire Namkha. If the Life element is fire, for



example, then at the end of the construction, when all neighbouring elements have been harmonised, green thread will be used to surround every single aspect represented in the Namkha. This is because the mother element, air, gives birth to and protects the Life element, fire, and is considered positive for the Life of the individual.

Working of the Namkha

It doesn't take long to construct a Namkha. However, it remains just a material object until a ritual is done to authenticate it. Basically the rite involves first using mantras to purify any mistakes we may have made in its construction, then inviting the three roots to come and stay in the Namkha, and then further use of mantra to turn the material representation of energy into reality. Once authenticated, the Namkha can be placed somewhere in one's home. From time to time, it is useful to do a short Namkha rite to "recharge" the construction. Perhaps one can enjoy a more harmonious and peaceful life thereafter.

Working with children

Auckland, New Zealand

I'm moved to respond to the thoughts and questions posed by a 'Merigar Mum' in the Mirror concerning children who are present at Merigar during retreats there. Having lived in and around Merigar for a year or so I will recall the hum of children's voices which so often accompanied teachings. But with the number of children growing I do agree that something needs to be done for them! For two years I have worked part-time as the supervisor of a children's nursery. This takes place in a hall where everything needs to be packed away afterwards so there may be some similarities with your situation in Merigar.

I think that there are several factors to be mindful of when caring for large groups of children in a confined space - it's not always easy, planning is important and chaos always a possibility! My own method has consisted of trying to ensure that children are absorbed wherever possible. Bored or frustrated children can start an episode of noise and

confusion which can escalate and involve other children very quickly. Here we set out low chairs and tables for activities before the children arrive and the old favourite playdough is something that always seems to calm and absorb children. Other tables can have paper and crayons, glue and collage work, chalk, etc. Also a painting corner with painting trestles and pots of paint will occupy children happily. We stick completed paintings to dry on the walls with masking tape. I've found that carpet squares which can be rolled up when not in use can break up the spaciousness of an empty room which can simply invite some children to just run about.

I like to have a time that is structured. This can include reading the children a story and singing and action games and rhymes. Coming together as a group can be an important experience for the children and a time of centering. Certainly it is not enough to expect children to look after themselves.

It is the responsibility, I think, of parents and the wider community, too. After all, they are part of our community.

I encourage everyone to give thought and attention to making a children's place that not only creates a quiet space for the teachings but also nourishes the children as well.

Of utmost importance ultimately are the people who care for the children. However, my sense is that if a structure can be created, that is something that could be passed on to hired workers.

For me the challenge is always to stay calm and to open my heart to the children.

I have found getting children to change air as in Yantra Yoga and to sing 'A' and also shaking out arms and legs can often change energy in a group for the better.

Perhaps my suggestions seem rather obvious or perhaps they don't suit your situation now. Anyway please know that I, too, think our children are important.

Gabrielle Kearney

Water, water

by Liz Granger

It's been a hot, dry and dusty summer at Merigar. As usual at this time of the year, water becomes a very precious commodity and taps are turned on begrudgingly in the fear of discovering that final splurt of air and water which indicates that the water supply is giving out for another few hours.

In the last days of August, the municipal water supply to Merigar was rationed due to the fact that local consumption greatly increased in proportion with the summer tourist population.

It has meant having absolutely not a drop of water from the tap for many hours at a time. This has been a bit of an inconvenience from every point of view especially since the shortage started the day of the Tenth Anniversary and Inauguration of Merigar when several hundred people arrived to take part in the festivities. In fact for some of the "old timers" here, it was very reminiscent of the early days of

Merigar when there was no mains water and the valuable liquid was literally carried up by hand.

These days, we have become somewhat spoiled by the modern convenience of running water so when rationing was suddenly put into action we were unprepared.

After a couple of days of dry taps (and throats), it was obvious that the authorities would not be able to permit us more than the trickle of water which was arriving.

After a practice on Sunday morning at the Gonpa, Norbu Rinpoche suggested that we try and put into use a natural fountain of water which is located in the middle of a field on the property of the nearby Merigar 2.

This water source already supplies the house and the stable at Merigar 2.

Our Merigar engineer, Giovanni Boni assisted by Spartaco Vitiello and a group of enthusiastic helpers immediately set to work to investigate the possibility and to

see what materials would be necessary.

On Monday the materials were collected, mainly more than 550 metres of plastic tubing with appropriate water connections and valves, and on Tuesday the pipe was laid from the source of the water as far as the reservoir which accumulates mains water for Merigar and from where it is pumped up.

Now that the fountain water is ready to be collected and pumped up to the main house, the water must be examined for its potability by the local health authority before mixing it with the municipal source of water. The happy ending may not arrive before going to press with this issue of The Mirror.

However, this little happening has made all of us who are working on various projects at Merigar very aware of the preciousness of water here during the hot months.

It has also been an impetus for us to work together collectively in finding a solution to a very basic need.

We are three

Beate, Carmen and Rosemarie - living in a triangle in Stuttgart, West Germany. We meet each other on every new and full moon to practice together. When we stay together first we chat a little about our lives. Sometimes we make a short ritual in which each of us has time to tell about what is going on deeply inside. We call it our time to be without a mask. It is a space where there is attention and a kind of compassion. But we do not have discussions about these problems, we speak and listen. After that short "mind clearing", we are ready to practise.

When we are practising, the energy can become very different. Sometimes it is very powerful and strong. Sometimes we fall into laughing. All kinds of emotions and

feelings can come up, and there is a space where they can dissolve. Normally Lara and Anja (the children) stay with us and they like to play for a time, but when we sing the Song of the Vajra they fall into sleep. These meetings are good to make new connections to the practice and the teachings; because sometimes daily life overruns one's mind. One often finds oneself stuck in distracted situations.

The Mirror is a valued newspaper for us. It is like a direct telephone line to the teaching and the other practitioners. Everytime one of us opens the newspaper and reads a part, it is like an anchor and the mind can calm down a little.

In this way we handle our daily life and practice.

Correction: in the last issue of The Mirror the author of the article "Sweat lodge" was Barbara Paparazzo not Woody.



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Music for Meditation

Kyareng Dawn



Louise Landes-Levi, in collaboration with Paul Leake, Steve Taylor and several other individuals, is issuing a commemorative tape of meditation music with the intention of raising money within the Community for A.S.I.A. Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche has graciously entitled the tape 'Kyareng' or Dawn and Rita Leti has contributed a beautiful cover photograph of the Dolma Pass, Mt. Kailash taken on her pilgrimage there in 1988.

The tape is dedicated to His Holiness Tenzin Gyatso in honor of the International Year of Tibet. It is a remix of a previous tape entitled 'Padma', but will be new to the many practitioners who never heard of Louise or her music, an

adaptation of oriental instrumental music, sarangi, flute, tabla and tambora, mixed with natural bird and ocean songs.

Each tape costs \$10 and may be ordered through Naomi Zeitz c/o The Mirror. Money orders and checks should be addressed to A.S.I.A. at Merigar or can be sent directly to account no. 3893.50 at Monte dei Paschi di Siena, Arcidosso 58031 GR, Italy. All proceeds will be considered as a direct donation to the Association for International Solidarity in Asia.

Santacittarama

The first Theravada Vihara in Italy

"Santacittarama" or "The Garden of the Peaceful Heart" in Pali, is the name of the first Theravadin Vihara.

In March 1990, Santacittarama was officially opened with the support of both Italian and Asian Buddhists resident in Italy.

The Vihara itself was sponsored by the Maitreya Foundation, the Association for Meditative Awareness (A.M.E.C.O.) in Rome, the Sri Lankan Embassy and community as well as individual Thai and Burmese people in Italy and abroad.

The Venerable Thanavara, who was born in Italy, was asked to take on the management and spiritual guidance of the temple, where a monastic schedule is kept similar to the monasteries in England.

The location in Sezze Romano was chosen because of its peaceful surroundings and also because it is half-way between Rome, which has a Sri Lankan community of about five thousand, and Naples which also has a large Asian community practising Theravada Buddhism.

The support and growth of Buddhism in Italy has culminated, in January 1991, with the legal recognition of Buddhism as an official religion in Italy (through the collective representation of the U.B.I., Buddhist Union of Italy).

For further enquiries about Santacittarama, contact:

Thanavaro Bhikku, Santacittarama, Via dei Casali - III° Tratto, 04018 Sezze Romano (LT), Italy. Tel. 0773-88032.

Kamalashila Institute

The Kamalashila Institute is a religious association and Tibetan Buddhist community established in 1981 at the castle Schloss Wachenheim in Germany. The Institute organizes seminars on Buddhist meditation and philosophy under the guidance of notable Buddhist teachers, mainly from Tibet, but also from other countries with Buddhist traditions such as India, Nepal, Bhutan, China and Japan. Also western lamas and occidental scholars transmit their knowledge of Buddhism.

The Institute is predominantly operated by lamas and monks from the Karma-Kagyu tradition. Their main monastery was Tsurphu close to Lhasa in Tibet. After their flight from the Chinese it was substituted by the Rumtek monastery in Sikkim, India which was founded in 1963. The spiritual guide of the

Karma-Kagyu tradition is His Holiness the Gyalwa Karmapa. Since the death of the 16th Karmapa in 1981 and until the enthronement of the 17th Karmapa, the four lineage holders Shamar Rinpoche, Jamgon Kontrul Rinpoche, Gyaltsab Rinpoche and Situ Rinpoche have guided the Karma-Kagyu school. The Kamalashila Institute is run by their superior, Shamar Rinpoche. According to the wishes of Shamar Rinpoche, the Kamalashila Institute for Buddhist Studies is a place where the teachings of Buddhahood, for centuries transmitted by enlightened teachers in their original and pure form, are to be preserved and taught. At present, two Tibetan lamas, Lama Chogdrup Dorje and Lama Tashi Dondrub live and teach at the Institute. This guarantees continuity in the direct transmission of the teachings. There are also German

It is important to try to communicate with all practitioners, linked to the same transmission, through entering together into the state of contemplation. In this way we all develop the potentiality of the transmission we have received, and through that we also develop our understanding and ability to integrate practice into daily life.

Tibetan date: Western date:

8th Month, 25th day Thursday October 3rd

This is a Dakini day, and also the anniversary of two great Dzog-chen masters, Rigzin Kumaraja, who transmitted the Dzog-chen teachings to Longchenpa and to the third Karmapa, and of Rigzin Tsewang Norbu, a great Dzog-chen master of the Nyingmapa school. It is therefore an excellent day to do "A Kar Lamai 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.

NEW MOON

Tibetan date: Western date:

8th Month, 30th day Monday October 7th

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

Tibetan date: Western date:

9th Month, 3rd day Thursday October 10th

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 "A Kar Lamai Nalgyor", the Guruyoga with the White A.

Tibetan date: Western date:

9th Month, 10th day Friday October 18th

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

FULL MOON

Tibetan date: Western date:

9th Month, 15th day Wednesday October 23rd

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 or in the evening.

Practices for special days

Tibetan date: Western date:

9th Month, 22nd day Tuesday October 29th

This day is the great 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.

Tibetan date: Western date:

9th Month, 25th day Friday November 1st

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

NEW MOON

Tibetan date: Western date:

9th Month, 30th day Wednesday November 6th

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, 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.

Tibetan date: Western date:

10th Month, 10th day Saturday November 16th

This is an important day of Guru Padmasambhava, so try to do the Long-life practice associated with the Universal Wisdom Union (U.W.U.) which is included in the medium or long Tun, or if you have the possibility it is beneficial to perform a Ganapuja.

FULL MOON

Tibetan date: Western date:

10th Month, 15th day Thursday November 21st

It is an important day to do the Long-life practice of the Dakini Mandarava. The best time for this is in the early morning.

Tibetan date: Western date:

10th Month, 25th day Sunday December 1st

This is a Dakini day, and the anniversary of Tsongkhapa (1357-1491), who 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.

THE MIRROR

The International Newspaper of the Dzog-chen Community
founded by Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche

Published by the Associazione Culturale Comunità Dzog-chen.
The Mirror, Merigar, P.O.Box 47, 58031 Arcidosso GR, Italy.
Tel. and fax 0564-966608.

Direttore responsabile: Raimondo Bultrini
Editorial desk: Tuula Saarikoski, Liz Granger, Naomi Zeitz, Tiziana Gottardi, Yvonne Zuiker, Jean Mackintosh
Lay out: Shang-Shung Edizioni
Printer: Tipografia 2A, Arcidosso

© 1991 Ass. Cult. Comunità Dzog-chen.
Registrato presso il Tribunale di Grosseto al n. 5/1990 del 26 Aprile 1990

This newspaper is not for sale