

THE MIRROR

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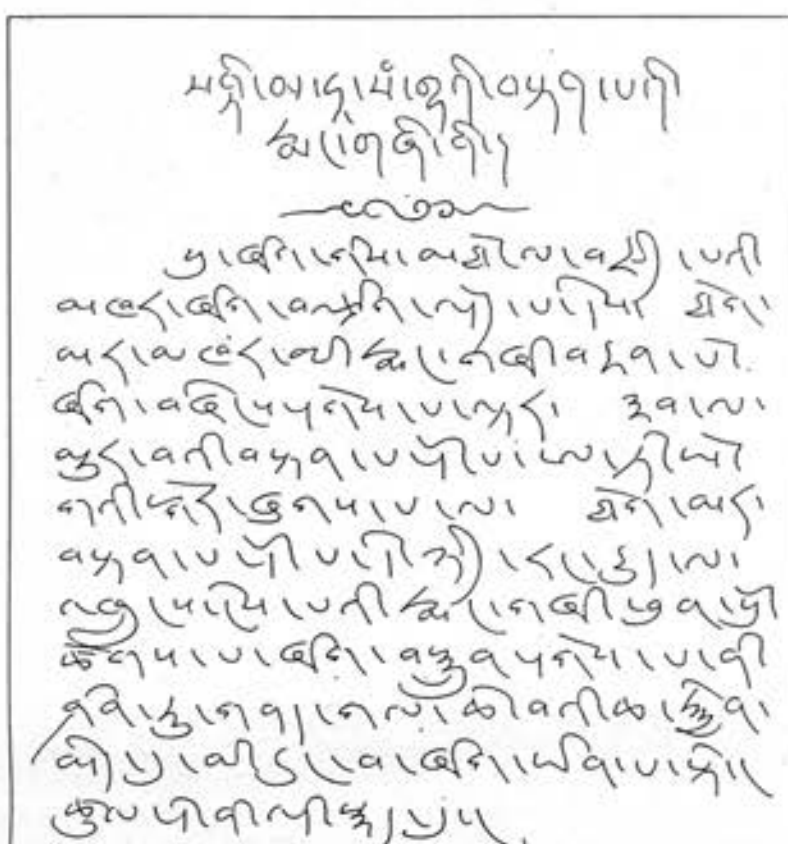
The Precious Vase of Instructions

The Teachings given by Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche in the Merigar Gonpa during the Easter '92 Retreat (between 15th and 22nd April) centered on a text he has set down this year.

Its full Tibetan title, *Santi Maha Sangha'i rMang gZhi'i Khrid, Rin Chen jBun bZang*, can be translated as "The Precious Vase of Instructions relating to the Basis of Santi Maha Sangha". As we know, some years ago Rinpoche composed "Santi Maha Sangha" (meaning "The Dzog-chen Community"). This text presents in an extremely condensed form the various stages that need to be understood and applied by a practitioner interested in realising the "Great Perfection" Teaching, and in developing the capacity to transmit it correctly and completely to other beings. The instructions Rinpoche gave during the Retreat refer to the initial aspect of this: the "Basis". In order to give a complete overview of the sense of the Dzog-chen Teaching - and above all to nurture and develop an inner understanding of this Teaching - the text first deals with topics related to fundamental concepts such as the Four Noble Truths, Compassion, Bodhicitta, correct attitude, morality and so on. It is necessary to study the theory or view illustrated in the texts of the three series of Dzog-chen, as well as that expressed in the Sutra and the various classifications of Tantra so as to gain a proper understanding of the approaches related to the different traditions.

To open one's heart to the sense of the Basis, it is also essential to train one's mind and attitude completely, taking advantage (along with the study) of the concrete opportunities provided by each moment of our day-to-day life. In this way, genuine compassion can arise as to the dimension of ignorant suffering that all beings experience. True Bodhicitta can develop, free from personal conditioning. The many techniques of meditation and Yoga are precious jewels of the transmission which, fortunately, realised masters have handed down as far as us. Practical commitment based on a real knowledge of them helps us to experience directly the meaning of contemplation, understanding of the nature of mind.

Those who wish to commit themselves in this way will study the texts and practise precisely in order to gain concrete knowledge. If, after this preparation, they concretely show Rinpoche that they have the necessary requirements, they can then commit themselves to the next stage: the first level of Santi Maha Sangha. The original text of the instruction regarding the Basis comprises roughly four hundred pages of hand-written Tibetan script. It is full of specific quotations, and it clearly describes not only the mental trainings and techniques to be applied, but also the different concepts underlying Sutra, Tantra and Dzog-chen. During the retreat, Rinpoche translated it concisely in its essence. He also let us know that he



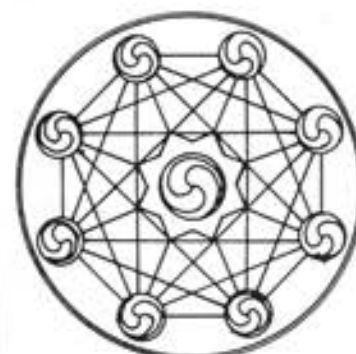
"If someone wants to build a tall house, first that person has to think about the foundation. It is the same to follow a Teaching like Atiyoga, which is very deep and a very fast way to realisation. First of all, one must build a very solid base, so that the knowledge of the true condition of the individual can arise".

First page of "Santi Maha Sangha" by Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche

has finished writing the text on the "first level" as well as part of the second. With his untiring kindness, Rinpoche has taped a literal translation of the text on the Basis - more than 130 hours of tape. Several

people have collaborated in the transcription which is well on its way to being completed and printed. In good time, an annotated translation will be written.

Donatella Rossi



Membership

New membership cards will be issued on application to the Merigar Dzog-chen Community. Membership is divided into full and preliminary members, and then subdivided again into ordinary and sustaining members, each with its own contribution. Membership will bring many advantages both for members individually and for the Community as a whole. In the near future, two other Dzog-chen gars, Tsegylgar in the U.S.A. and Tashigar in Argentina intend to adopt the same formalities.

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CONFERENCE

The Second International Seminar on Tibetan Language, organised by the Shang-Shung Institute, Siena University and I.S.M.E.O., will take place from August 30th to September 4th in Siena and at Merigar. The conference aims to offer an occasion to scholars and specialists in the field, an active exchange that will help the language maintain its identity. Prof. Tsering Thar, a researcher in Tibetan culture and religion at the Chinese Centre of Tibetan Studies in Beijing, gives some information on different aspects of the Tibetan language.

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Letters

The Mirror launches an open space within the pages of the newspaper where readers can express their ideas and experiences on various topics. In this issue, Verena Smith from the U.S.A. recounts her impressions treating Tibetans in a refugee camp in India. From South Africa, Darryl Van Blerk tells the saga of Katrina and her demon. The experience of one's master being reincarnated is described by Elio Guarisco who lives in Sorada, Darjeeling.

pages 12 and 13

World Tour



Rinpoche being welcomed in Lodz, Poland (courtesy of Artur Skura)

Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche started his international teaching tour, which will continue until March 1993, with short retreats in Greece, Germany, Switzerland and Poland. From here he continued on to Vilnius in Lithuania, Riga, Latvia and Saint Petersburg in Russia. These are Norbu Rinpoche's first visits to the Eastern European countries and the cities of Russia.

Travel schedule page 3. Reports on pages 4 and 5

Mahamudra and Dzog-chen

An Interview with Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche on May 4th, 1992 at the Kamalashila Institute in Germany.

Question: What are the actual differences in theory and practice between Mahamudra and Dzog-chen?

Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche: In general when we speak of Mahamudra, first of all, Mahamudra is the final goal of all Anutatantra Teachings. This Teaching is diffused in all schools and all traditions. In the Kagyupa school there is a particular Mahamudra tradition of Gampopa. But Mahamudra is also found in the Sakyapa tradition, in the Gelugpa tradition and that of the Nyingmapa.

When we speak of Dzog-chen Teaching, its characteristic path is different from that of Anutatantra because Anutatantra is the path of transformation and Mahamudra is the final goal of that path. The characteristic method of Dzog-chen is self-liberation which does not depend on transformation. So that is another kind of Teaching.

In general we consider that the Dzog-chen tradition of knowledge was transmitted from very ancient times, not only recently. We say that there have been twelve different teachers in twelve different periods who taught and transmitted the Dzog-chen Teaching long before the time of Buddha Shakyamuni. Maybe there were not all these kinds of Teachings like tantra, lung, commentaries, upadesa etc., and all the series of Dzog-chen Teachings at that time. But there has existed a principal transmission of knowledge since ancient times.

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Building a Solid Base

The Knowledge of the True Condition of the Individual can arise

The following Teachings were given by Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche during the 1992 Easter retreat on "the Bases of Santi Maha Sangha" given at Merigar.

Wednesday 15th April Afternoon

This specific Easter Retreat we want to dedicate to a Teaching that I myself have prepared which is connected to the basis of the practice and the knowledge which one has to have in order to continue with the Teachings.

If a person wants to follow the Dzog-chen Teachings that person doesn't need to be limited to two words - Dzog-chen. They need to have a wider, global idea of the Teachings and its characteristics. They need to understand the essence of all the various Teachings and how one can find oneself integrated in their essence. If one doesn't find this it won't become that which is called Dzog-chen. Dzog means perfected, all-perfected. Chen means totally perfected. This perfection has to be found in our condition, our potentiality. Thus with regard to all the methods of the various aspects of practice and various types of traditions, they all have to be perfected.

To talk of this in a simple, condensed way, I have prepared a book in which I have tried to deepen this. So I want to dedicate this retreat principally to that. The book is called "Santi Maha Sangha". "Santi Maha" is another name for Dzog-chen in the language of Oddiyana. "Sangha" means community. By community I don't mean an organisation. Community means all those who find themselves in the same boat. We are travelling in a boat towards realisation. I am like one of the rowers and you are in the boat. Of course you can row, too.

Certainly we've got to realise where we want to go. All those who find themselves in this boat are called "Sangha". It's not just a matter of an organisation or a limited closed group. This "Sangha" is linked to the transmission and knowledge of the Dzog-chen Teachings.

Continuing for the future

So I've prepared this book about how one can develop knowledge, and above all how one can continue for the future.

What do we mean by continuing the Teachings for the future? By that we also mean the transmission of the Teachings. It is not enough for us just to wait for some master to come. We have to be careful when we use the word "Master". We live in such a limited society, a society that is so materialistically inclined, where money is all important. The Teachings can also be brought to that level.

Many people want to be masters and



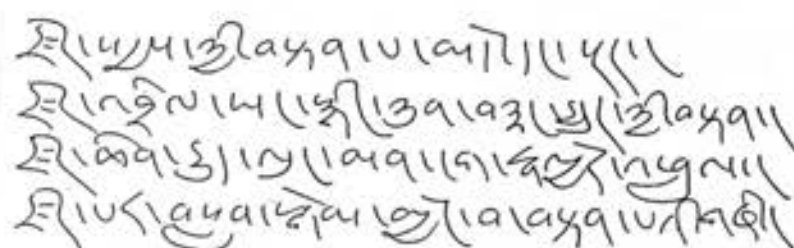
(photo Modonesi & Namkhai)

to be recognised as masters and are pointing towards that materialistic level otherwise why would they want that. If we just passively wait for the arrival of a master one day, we don't know what master will come because to throw out a couple of words isn't all that difficult.

Just to say what the Base is, what the

world people don't understand this, because by teaching and by giving Teachings people only understand the talking, the chatting.

If I give an academic lecture, people think of that as a Teaching. In such a situation one could also help someone to really understand something.



The Four Verses, bases of Santi Maha Sangha

(Calligraphy Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche)

Fruit is, what the Path is can be simply reciting the words just like a parrot.

That's not the real Teaching. The real Teaching is pointed to working with this in a living way. So there is a danger there. It's not as if I'm discovering some danger today or yesterday. Right from the beginning when I decided to teach I was aware of this.

When I received the Teaching I knew there was also the responsibility to maintain the transmission. If one becomes a practitioner of Dzog-chen, above all one who has a real state of knowledge, who feels responsibility to maintain the transmission, how should that person maintain and continue the transmission?

Only those who have real knowledge, not only knowledge in theory but also in practice, can do this. In that case such people must be qualified. When we say qualified, it's not just a matter of receiving a certificate.

Being qualified means through the application of study and practice. For years and years there is this experience and then finally capacity develops. This is the way of maintaining and continuing the Teachings.

But I am aware that in the Western

Transmission

There are three transmissions which go together and there is no being which does not have these three existences of Body, Voice and Mind. In the pure dimension there are also Dharmakaya, Sambogakaya and Nirmanakaya. Linked to these are oral, symbolic and direct transmissions and one uses these to transmit in some way.

So it's not a matter of just chattering about something. If we are just talking or giving a lecture to maintain the Dzog-chen Teachings it means we are ignorant of the transmission and we wish to bring it to an end. I don't want that so I am preparing a way in which one can continue the transmission.

So I have prepared a training of the practice where there will be a 1st, 2nd, 3rd level and so on.

These levels are not for bureaucratic reasons but according to the capacity and how the capacity of the individual develops both at the level of intellectual knowledge and, above all, of practice. So a person who has certain realisations, certain capacities is capable of transmitting, and perhaps, after a certain number of years, if people have trained seriously, they will be capable of transmitting.

Then that transmission which has

been placed in them can then have a function.

The function of transmission is to realise oneself. If there isn't that function what is the purpose of transmitting?

If it were just a matter of some kind of permission I could give it to you right now and say, "Go and teach". But it wouldn't work. I have doubts about myself many times as to whether certain things function or not.

If I myself feel at that level how can I give you permission?

As it is said in the Tibetan proverb, "The person who wants to help someone with a broken head has a twisted neck". First of all the one who wants to help others has to have at least a decent head on his shoulders without even considering that that person is beyond limitations and confusion. If you are not outside confusion how can you help anyone else to get beyond confusion? The transmission has to be something serious. It's very important that we work on this level. Doing something serious means having a precise basis.

Realisation

Even if someone is not interested in teaching anyone else, they certainly have an interest in becoming realised, otherwise they wouldn't follow the Teachings. And if one wants to realise oneself one needs a precise basis. If there isn't a precise basis one can get lost in intellectual fantasy and then the Teachings just remain at the level of temple ornaments.

When one goes into the temple there are many ornaments hanging there made of different coloured silks, umbrellas and so on. You can see how beautiful they are. Their only function is to move a little in the wind until finally they wear out. They have no other realisation. That's how we spend our lives chattering about beautiful things, not realising ourselves. That really mustn't happen.

Each of us has to remember that time passes between one retreat and another. Especially when we meet again, for example, after a year, we notice that we have aged a little. If we talk about children we say, "Ah, you've grown". But when we see somebody else we don't say, "Look how much older you've got". We only judge those who are growing. But if we look in our mirror we can notice that time is passing. It's useful to notice this so that we don't waste time.

Then when we do something like a retreat we can try to do something in a concrete way. That which we have understood we can try to use in our daily life.

At least so that it becomes something that helps us to relax and diminish a little the terrible confusion we have every day. If we achieve such a result the Teaching becomes more concrete.

Thursday 16th April Morning

As I said yesterday, we will devote this retreat mainly to a text I have prepared as a base. It is not the base in the sense of the base, the path and the fruit that we talk about in the Dzogchen teachings, because there the base means the presentation of our knowledge of the state. This base is what I call the base of the practice, the base of the teaching. For example, if a person follows a Teaching, how is one to follow it? And what is the purpose of the Teaching? Because certainly when you do something there is always a purpose for it. So to follow a path it always has its purpose and the purpose, the aim, is realisation. That is foremost.

Sometimes we don't notice that, and in a moment when you are depressed or have a lot of problems, you might think, "I am interested in the Teachings to solve this problem". This means you consider the Teachings a bit like an aspirin. Or someone might say, "I want to learn the Teachings because I want to teach", because they consider the Teachings like a job, something to make a living. But if you learn the Teachings in order to teach, that is mistaken. The motivation is wrong.

Motivation

First of all the motivation must be for realisation. If each individual cannot get realisation, then it cannot work at all for others. Certainly if you have realisation and certain knowledge, this is necessary in order for you to teach. So you must see that the motivation for following the Teaching is realisation. You must remember that.

Why must we get realised? Let's consider a smaller matter such as a problem that we have to face. Someone who is uptight and very confused might think, "Ah, the Teaching may help me resolve this problem". And it is very possible that with the Teaching they can resolve it. But there is the temporary way of resolving it and the definitive way of resolving it, and the purpose of the Teaching is to resolve the problem definitively, finally - not to resolve it only temporarily. The temporary solution is relative.

For example, if we see someone who is suffering from hunger, who has not got any food to eat, then to give them a piece of bread or offer them a meal is useful but it is temporary. It does not resolve that person's problem finally, definitively, because that person is living in time and they are suffering hunger now in this moment. But they will still have their stomach tomorrow and if they don't find a solution they will continue to suffer for years and years until they die because they have a physical body, and the physical body has to live with the material elements.

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II International Seminar on Tibetan Language



by Enrico Dell'Angelo

The organisation of the Second International Seminar on Tibetan Language is proceeding well. The project has received support from important national and international institutions such as the European Parliament and UNICEF.

The Seminar will be inaugurated on August 30th in Siena, Italy where the participants will be accommodated at the beautiful Certosa di Pontignano. Part of the morning will be dedicated to talks by officials and speeches of introduction. In the afternoon, after

an official lunch, the work of the Seminar will begin.

In the evening of the 30th, the participants will transfer to Arcidosso where the Seminar will continue until 4th September in the gongpa at Merigar.

Scholars from many parts of the world such as Tibet, China, India, Russia, the U.S.A. and Europe will be taking part.

Some of the themes that have been suggested for the Seminar and which will be presented during individual talks, round tables and specialised workshops are: standardising the language, proposals on definition, up-dating and improving the types of teaching material in particular text books for children and teenagers according to the most universal approach, professional instruction of teachers, translation of technical and scientific terms and related published material in foreign languages and the formation of an Academy of Tibetan Language.

A Common Language for Tibet

Anna Eid interviews Professor Tsering Thar

Prof. Tsering Thar is a researcher in ancient Bon culture and religion at the Chinese Centre of Tibetan Studies in Beijing. At the moment, he is on a grant from the Chinese Ministry of Education in order to do more research on Bon history at the Shang-Shung Institute in Arcidosso, Italy.

Anna Eid: Seeing that the Second International Seminar on the Tibetan Language is approaching, could you tell us the origins of this language?

Prof. Tsering Thar: I think this Seminar is very important because it concerns the Tibetan language in a specific way. There are at least two theories on the origin of the writing system and the grammar of the language. The first theory, which is the more traditional and in agreement with Tibetan Buddhism, dates its origins back to the time of the King Songtsan Gampo, about 1,300 years ago. This king sent several scholars with Thonmi Sambodta as their leader, to India and Nepal in order to learn the Indian language. They returned after a few years and created the Tibetan written language with the help of some Buddhists masters who had come from India, Nepal and even China at the invitation of the King Songtsan Gampo. This is the theory widely spread in Tibet.

But there are also some scholars who consider that the origin of the Tibetan language is much older than the epoch of King Songtsan Gampo. And in the Bonpo tradition, there is another language which is called the language of Shang Shung.

Shang Shung was an independent kingdom which was subsequently unified with Tibet under the King Songtsan Gampo (it corresponds to a part of present day east Tibet called

Ngari). In the Bonpo tradition, its founder, Sherrab Miwo, created the language of Shang Shung. Many texts are considered to have been translated from the language of Shang Shung into Tibetan.

Another important factor has been the discovery of many antique Tibetan texts in Tunhuan. In these texts one can see that a form different from the Tibetan grammar created by Thonmi Sambodta has been used. From this one can conclude that there existed a form of the Tibetan written language preceding the time of King Songtsan Gampo. I also share this idea. For this reason, I think that both this research project and the Conference are very important for the history of the Tibetan language.

Anna Eid: There are many dialects spoken in Tibet, but is there a common language?

Prof. Tsering Thar: There is not yet a common language which is spoken and understood by all Tibetans. Tibet is composed of three parts: Wutsang, Kham and Amdo, each of which has its own spoken language while the written language is the same everywhere. This fact is a great problem. While there is an exchange of ideas among intellectuals or simply between those who can read, the people of Amdo and Kham who cannot read cannot communicate with each other or with the people from Lhasa. This is a great obstacle. Today when the people of different nationalities around the world manage to communicate thanks to a single language that they know how to read and write as well as speak, in Tibet there doesn't yet exist a common spoken form of the language. This is not a serious problem for scholars or for monks, but it is for the people. Only recently have many young people learned to

speak the language of Lhasa and, thanks to radio and television transmission, the people of Amdo and Kham have also started to understand it. In this way, one hopes that gradually all Tibetans can understand and speak a single language. This is very important for Tibetan culture and it is also fundamental that people modify their ideas due to which, for example, a person who lives in Amdo does not want to speak the language of another region, whether it is Kham or Wutsang, and vice versa. This is negative because a type of mentality that remains closed and limited is damaging for the entire Tibetan culture. In my opinion, Kham and Amdo should follow the language which is spoken in Lhasa, in this way, gradually a common language could develop.

Anna Eid: At the moment you are also working for the Shang-Shung Institute. What will your contribution be to the Seminar?

Prof. Tsering Thar: For the Seminar I am preparing an article on the argument about which we have just spoken, that is a common language for all of Tibet. I have been here in Italy for six months and I will remain for another six because my grant lasts for a year. This is a centre for Tibetan culture, there are many books and the conditions are very good for studying and learning foreign languages, especially Italian. At this Institute I have had the possibility to learn Italian, English and also to make progress in my subject of specialization, religion. In fact, Professor Namkhai Norbu has taught me the *Zhang Zhung snyan rgyud*, a very important Dzog-chen text. I am very happy to be here because I have had many opportunities to learn. I hope the this Seminar will have good results for the Tibetan culture and language.

Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche Teaching Schedule 1992-'93

A= travel by Air T=travel by train

10 June Wed.	Departure for Saint Petersburg	
12 - 20 June	Teaching	
Vladimir Montlevich, Severni Prospekt, House 6 Kor. Apt. 168, Saint Petersburg 194354. Tel. 812/5531718		
24 June Wed.	Departure for Moscow	T
25 June - 7 July	Teaching dates to be announced	
Vladimir Makov, Str. Sovetskaya 14/7, Zheleznodorozhny, Moscow Region 143980. Tel. home 095 5227052, off. 2039196. Fax 9382077		
8 July Wed.	Departure for Buryatia	A
10 - 16 July	Teaching	
Alexander Viaznikovtsev. Tel. 30122 3 09 02		
19 July Sun.	Departure for Moscow	A
20 July Mon.	Departure for Paris	
23 - 26 July	Teaching	
Peter Silverman. Ave. Victor Hugo 140, 75016 Paris. Tel. 1 455 33468		
29 July Wed.	Departure for New York, USA	A
	Teaching dates to be announced	
Jennifer Fox. Tel. 212 9664427		
31 July	Departure for Tsegaygar, Conway	
7 - 16 August	Teaching	
Des Barry, P.O. Box 277, Conway, MA 01341. Tel. 413 2568883. Fax 413 6651142		
21 August Fri.	Return to Italy	A
30 Aug. - 4 Sept.	Tibetan Language Seminar	
9 October	Departure for Vancouver, Canada	
23 - 25 October	Teaching	
Peter Dimitrov, 305-11806 88th Avenue, Delta, B.C. V4C 3C5. Tel. 64 5976990		
27 October	Departure for Santa Fe, N. Mexico	
30 October - 1 November	Teaching	
Cynthia Jurs, Route 9, Box 65XX, Santa Fe, NM 87505. Tel. 505 9823846, 413 3694713		
3 November	Departure for San Francisco, CA	
5 - 9 November	Teaching	
Carol Fields, 70 Flora Court, Pleasant Hill, CA 94523. Tel. 510 5599753		
12 November	Departure for Hawaii	
14 - 19 November	Teaching	
Susan Indich, 129 Kaelepulu Drive, Kailua, Hawaii 96734. Tel. 080 2613469		
23 November	Departure for Tokyo, Japan	
27 - 29 November	Teaching	
Nagasawa Tetsu, 7-17-14 Higashi Oizumi, Nerimako Tokio. Tel. 033 924 8965		
1 December	Departure for Singapore	
4 - 6 December	Teaching	
Ian Gan, Apt. 15-04 Blanco Court, 585 North Bridge Road, Singapore 0718. Tel. home 0065 298 2711, office 298 3123. Fax 293 4472		
7 December	Departure for Sydney, Australia	
11 - 20 December	Teaching	
Hamish Gregor, 6 Grant Street, Woodford, NSW 2778. Tel. 047 586257		
23 December	Dep. for Buenos Aires, Argentina	
25 December	Departure for Cordoba, Tashigar	
27 Dec '92 - 5 Jan '93	Teaching	
Ricky Sued, Araujo 1271, Urca, Cordoba. Tel. 0054 51816222		
Alejandro Chaoul, Paseo Colon, 1131 2°11, Bs As 1063. Tel. 0054 1 361 2746		
25 January	Departure for Lima, Peru	
29 - 31 January	Teaching	
Juan Bustamante, Calle E. Palacios 1125-C, Miraflores, Lima 18. Tel. 14 791274, 14 455003		
3 February	Departure for Caracas, Venezuela	
6 - 13 February	Teaching	
Dr. Pablo Lau Rivera, PB. A. Res. Pedernales, Ave. Paez, Montalban II, 1021 Caracas. Tel. 0058 210584		
16 February	Departure for Merida	
19 - 23 February	Teaching	
Elias Capriles, Apartado Postal 483, Merida 5101		
28 February	Departure for Cumana	
Paola and Antonio Iannece, Apartado Postal 34, Cumana Estado Sucre. Tel. 0058 93662221		
7 March	Departure for Caracas	
8 March	Return to Rome, Italy	

It is obvious this is a very strenuous itinerary so nothing should be programmed for Rinpoche on the days when he is not teaching, because he will need to rest on those days.

Retreat Plans in Hawaii

by Susan Indich

The dates of the retreat with Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche have been established from November 14th to 19th, 1992. The camp where the retreat in Hawaii will take place is a very private lodge in the hills at 2,000 feet above sea level. It is reserved for an estimated 55 people. There is a meeting lodge where the teachings will be held and a dormitory with bunk beds. Camping is allowed but people must bring their own tents.

The cost of participating in the six day retreat will be a \$200 US registration fee. Lodging and three meals a day will be provided for an additional \$26 US a day. Since the lodge is situated at a high altitude, the weather may be cool and so people should bring warm clothes.

If you intend to participate in the retreat please contact Susan Indich as soon as possible at 129 Kaelepulu Drive, KAU. VA HC 5734-3, Hawaii 96734, U.S.A., tel. 001 808 2613469.

Norbu Rinpoche in Switzerland

by Aline Winterberg

The third stop on Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche's journey around the world was in Kandersteg in Switzerland. Here, about a hundred people from all parts of Switzerland and the surrounding countries were given the occasion to meet Rinpoche and listen to his Teachings.

The Teachings began on May 8th in the afternoon and, on this day, were given in the Tibetan language for a group of Tibetans resident in Switzerland. They came to the meeting in traditional Tibetan dress.

In the evening of the same day, Norbu Rinpoche gave the Teaching of the nine breathings purification and the mantra of purification of the elements. There was a more varied group of people present including some young Theravadin monks who live there.

The Teachings continued very intensely until May 10th and closed towards the evening with a ganapuja for the benefit and joy of everyone.

Dzog-chen Center "Sanggyaeling" St. Petersburg, Russia



Saint Petersburg's group

(photo Victor Logvinenko)

by Vladimir Montlevich

This group was formed in 1989. At the beginning, the group followed the practices from the tradition of B.D. Dandaron (1914-1974). Then when they read the books of Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche, first of all "Talks in Conway" (1983), the group started to correspond with him.

Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche's first letter was received in June, 1989 and was an answer of approval to their request for help with books and advice on how to act. They received communications from John Reynolds, Oliver Leick, John Renshaw and Jim Casilio from the international Dzog-chen Community and gradually became acquainted with the life of the Community.

In the autumn of 1991, Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche named the group "Sanggyaeling". The "Garuda" journal which is published by Sanggyaeling was registered. In particular the group is interested in the teachings of Longchenpa and have Tibetan texts of his works. This is one of the reasons for the publication of "Garuda".

In the summer of 1991, Fabio Andrico started his tour of Russia to teach Yantra Yoga. While he was there, he pointed out that this is the first time that Dzog-chen Communities have been created before a personal visit of Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche. The reason for this is related to the fact that Buddhism has existed in Russia for 250 years.

After Fabio's visit, the translators at Sanggyaeling translated the Yantra Yoga book, the short Tun and the Semdzin practice into Russian. They would like to take this opportunity to ask the international Dzog-chen Communities to get in touch with them and send them material on the Dzog-chen teachings.

"Sanggyaeling, c/o Vladimir Montlevich, Severni pr. 6, корпус I, apt. 168, St. Petersburg 194354, Russia.

The Yantra Yoga Book

Recently, Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche completed the new edition in Tibetan of the book on Yantra Yoga which includes a lot of additional material related to the different curative functions of the 108 movements of Yantra Yoga. The first partial translation of the text was done in 1983 by Enrico Dell'Angelo, Giuseppe Baroetto and Adriano Clemente.

Now the time has come to complete the work which consists of

re-reading and correcting the old translation, translating the original text of Vairocana which has not been translated yet, and translating the new parts (of the new edition of the Yantra Yoga text).

Norbu Rinpoche has given the task of carrying out this work to A. Clemente. The first draft should be ready for this September so that it can be corrected with Rinpoche on his return to Italy.

For the work of translation and

publication of the book, economic support is necessary and all those who are interested can collaborate by sending their contribution to the following bank account number: No. 312029, Monte dei Paschi di Siena, 58031 Arcidosso GR, Italy. Please specify that the amount is for the Yantra Yoga book.

Many thanks to Che Goh and Oliver Leick and the Austrian Dzog-chen Community who have already sent their contributions.

Teachings in Wachendorf



Kamalashila Institute

(photo Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche)

by Matthias Winter

As last year, the three day retreat from May 1st to 3rd given by Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche took place at Wachendorf, near Bonn in Germany.

This castle is the most well-known centre of the Karma-Kagyu tradition in Germany.

About 100 people attended the retreat, mostly new faces though many of them have already studied the Karma-Kagyu tradition for some time. There was a great interest in the Teachings.

Norbu Rinpoche started teaching by giving an explanation of what "dharma" means, that it is not a "religion of Buddha" but that it literally means "all phenomena, all

existence" and in the context of the Teachings it means "real knowledge", that is knowledge of the nature of everything.

He went on to say that initially the Buddha didn't start to explain the nature of mind. First he taught the Four Noble Truths because everybody could understand them. Nobody wants to suffer. Instead an explanation of the nature of mind would have created problems of understanding.

Then Rinpoche spoke about sutra, tantra and the Dzog-chen Teachings, which are linked to our three existences. Every path is valuable, depending on our capacity. The goal of the Dzog-chen path is discovering the nature of mind.

Therefore many methods are used in order to have different experiences.

These experiences are used as a key to discover our potentiality, our nature. When we are in that clarity, in that instant presence, there is no longer a distinction between pure and impure.

On the last day of the retreat, Norbu Rinpoche explained the three testaments of Garab Dorje.

He made clear that direct introduction, the first of the testaments, doesn't mean to sit in front of the teacher who is magically doing something to "switch on" realisation in the students. He said this was a common misunderstanding.

In fact, direct introduction cannot be separated from the oral and symbolic transmissions. But if the teacher introduces methods for realising contemplation and we practise these together with the teacher, reaching the same state, then this is what is meant by direct introduction.

The retreat closed with a ganapuja and an explanation of the purpose of this practice. Finally after a days repose, Rinpoche and Fabio Andrico took the train to Switzerland in spite of a train strike in Germany that caused the cancellation of every second train.

The Dzog-chen Community in Germany will be making a transcription of the Teachings given.

Reflections on the Polish Retreat

by Wojten Rewiński

From May 15th to 18th Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche gave teachings in Poland at the Unihotel Hall in Lodz. Norbu Rinpoche was greeted by a large number of people on his arrival in Poland on the preceding Tuesday and then started to give Teachings on Wednesday which was before the time scheduled.

On Thursday, Fabio Andrico gave a Yantra Yoga lesson at the Arcadia Centre for two hours. He wondered why some of us couldn't become experts in such a short time. "It's easy," he said.

From Friday until Sunday, Norbu Rinpoche gave really essential Teachings and explanations on Dzog-chen.

There was a wonderful atmosphere

during the Teachings. On the following Monday we concluded the retreat with a Ganapuja.

The retreat was very well-organised and there were a surprisingly large number of people who came to listen to the Teachings. People from all parts of Poland attended the retreat as well as people from abroad. It seems that Norbu Rinpoche was also surprised and happy with the large number of people who participated in the retreat and he commented that it was the first time that so many people had come to Teachings in a country where he was teaching for the first time.

There was a very friendly and open-hearted feeling created during these days and many people felt very enthusiastic.

Although many people have been following the Zen and Karma Kagyu traditions, it was concluded that there was also a need for a Dzog-chen Community in Poland. This was not a new idea since we had already considered this before Rinpoche's arrival. After the retreat, we considered creating an organisation and finding a house. We are still searching for good ideas.

In some ways, Poland can be considered a good basis for the Teachings. The economical situation is not the best and this causes many people, especially young people, to turn towards spiritual practices. Of course the economic problem is not the most important reason for an individual's development but it plays a part in Poland.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama visits Australia

by Sue Fielding

Members of the Australian Dzog-chen Community have been blessed by His Holiness the Dalai Lama's visit to Australia this May. Buddhist and humanitarian groups collaborated to organise the tour, in which the Dalai Lama visited the major cities of Australia. In each place, His Holiness gave Teachings and public lectures.

He also took part in television interviews and met with many individuals and groups including, amongst others, the Prime Minister of Australia and the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Wherever he went, His Holiness was met with incredible respect, warmth and enthusiasm. People from a wide range of backgrounds flocked to his public talks. The cultural and political situation in Tibet found its way more than ever before into television and radio reports.

In Sydney, the Convention Centre where His Holiness spoke was filled each night. There are 12,000 seats in the auditorium, and tickets sold out months beforehand. Consequently, two adjoining rooms were opened

to the public which enabled an extra 4,000 people to view His Holiness on huge video screens.

On the first night of the program, His Holiness spoke about peace and universal responsibility. He began by making the link between anger and war, compassion and non-violence. His Holiness' talks which are always a Teaching in the deepest sense of the word, are both profound as well as confronting. He reminded us that our greatest responsibility in regards to creating and maintaining peaceful conditions in the world, is to develop our capacity to know our true nature, and from there the well-spring of compassion naturally arises. He also reminded us of the choice that is available to us in every moment - about how we act, feel and spend our time.

On the second evening, His Holiness gave a Chenrezig blessing - once again to a crowded hall. He explained a great deal about the ceremony. With him were several Tibetan teachers who are currently living in Australia, some Australian monks and nuns and teachers from the Theravadin tradition. It was a

beautiful ceremony, and very special for those fortunate to attend.

His Holiness also met with many Buddhist groups of Sydney at a private audience. Fifteen members of the Sydney Dzog-chen Community were invited to attend. About 100 names were put into a hat and 15 drawn; it was a shame that there wasn't room for everyone to go together. We met in a function room of the hotel where His Holiness was staying.

It was a wonderful event! A representative from each group came forward to pay respects to His Holiness on behalf of the community. Lawrence Mills represented us, and presented the Dalai Lama with a beautiful katak and bunch of spring flowers. It felt as if he had touched and blessed us individually.

His Holiness then gave us a short address. He spoke about the importance of remaining open to our own culture at the same time as pursuing the spiritual tradition of another. He spoke of equanimity, of Tibet and the struggle there, and of working together.

And then he was gone.

Easter Teachings in Greece



Dancers in Greece

(photo Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche)

by Christine Cokinos

Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche's first stop on his long journey to various Dzog-chen Communities around the world this year was in Greece, where a three-day retreat was held opposite the ancient temple of Poseidon on Cape Sounion about 60 km from Athens.

Norbu Rinpoche gave Teachings on April 24th, 25th and 26th which corresponded with the Orthodox Easter holidays. About 60 people from Athens and other parts of Greece as well as practitioners from Yugoslavia, Italy, France and England participated in the retreat.

Rinpoche gave a general introduction to Dzog-chen and explanations on *rushan, semzin*, part of the cycle of the "Santi Maha Sangha" Teaching, the Tun book and "Collective Practices" as well as many other special methods. We also had the opportunity to receive instruction on the Dance of the Vajra and the Dance of the Three Vajras. The portable Mandala which had just been completed, was laid outside and since the warm sunny weather lasted during the whole retreat, we were able to take turns practising the Dances in groups of twelve under Rinpoche's guidance.

Despite our fears and nervousness while preparing for the retreat, every single one of the Community's projects were completed in time for the retreat (construction of the Mandala, publishing activities, etc.).

by Naomi Zeitz

An expanse of infinite sea, a good sailing wind, a touch of vertigo trying to relax into the state while overlooking the green blue Aegean sea from a height not in my daily experience.

There is something in the rugged cliffs, eternal monuments to the higher self and ancient ruins that naturally invokes the desire for knowledge, wisdom or some kind of relationship of another nature.

After swims in a painfully cold sea-water pool, we scurry to the Mandala to integrate with the Dance of the Vajra. Around and around, in and out, stumbling, forgetting, occasionally gliding into tranquility.

Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche generously demonstrates the potential grace and quality that awaits all dancers. He patiently teaches the movements, both for the men and women, with the tireless assistance of Fabio Andrico.

It is wonderful dancing outside in the fierce sun and strong sea breezes, feeling the elements outside and dancing with them inside. Then coming to make a turn on the Mandala with arms extended to find yourself facing the majestic temple of Poseidon in the distance like a great guardian.

New Gakyil Reports from Cordoba

The Dzog-chen Community of Cordoba, Argentina has recently elected a new Gakyil.

Blue: Marisa Alonso, Jorge Stolkner, Rafael Martin

Yellow: Alicia Caballero, Beatriz Garcia, Luisa Duri

Red: Ruben Garcia, Javier Alcaniz, Teresa Alcaniz

Gekos: Horacio Toledo

Secretary: Patricia Feldman

Newsletter Commission: Ricardo Sued, Sergio Oliva, Silvia Altamiranda, Patricia Feldman.

So far the Gakyil has been very busy this year making arrangements for the Christmas retreat with Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche. Besides this, many

members of the Community are members of the "Fundacion Amigos de la Cultura Tibetana" which is sponsoring the visit of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to Cordoba on June 12th.

The house at Tashigar is now going to be the joint responsibility of both the Cordoba and Buenos Aires Communities. This means that they will share the decisions, economic situation, building and repairs etc. A person from the Cordoba Community and a person from the Buenos Aires Community will be in communication as representatives of the two Gakyils to coordinate activities.

In order to have some outside activity that would be open to "new" people, a Yantra Yoga course led by Marisa Alonso is going to start. This will be the first Yantra Yoga course given by the Cordoba Community.

The Community also has the intention to use the "Instituto Italiano de Cultura" to show videos of Tibet regularly. In this way people can become familiar with Tibetan culture and have contact with the Teachings.

The Community in Cordoba can be contacted through:

Patricia Feldman, Mariano Moreno 382, 5000 Cordoba, Argentina, tel. 051 226845.

Summer Courses at Merigar

This summer, Merigar will be organizing several courses on medicine and psychotherapy. Some of the courses will take place at the Merigar Gampa with the use of the Capenti Hotel for accommodation and meals. The other courses will be held at Villa Gaia in Seggiano, about 15 km from Merigar.

June 13 - 14

Purification and Hydrotherapy

with Doctor Pasang Yontin

Doctor Pasang Yontin is a teacher at the Astromedical Institute of Dharamsala and the Buddhist Center of Studies in Ladak. He is the chief doctor at the clinic of Tibetan medicine at Amritsar and New Delhi. To be held at Merigar.

September 18 - 20

Shiatzu and Macrobiotics

with Rochelle Hood and Margit Martinu

Rochelle Hood practises acupuncture and is an expert in Chinese phytotherapy. Margit Martinu is an expert Shiatsu therapist.

To be held at Villa Gaia.

July 3 - 5

Tibetan Massage (2nd part)

with Doctor S. Locksang

Dr. Locksang is a Tibetan medical doctor at the medical center in Katmandu. To be held at Villa Gaia.

September 25 - 27

Gestalt Therapy

with Barrie Simmons

B. Simmons introduced gestalt therapy in Italy at the end of the sixties. For several years he has taught psychology at Salerno and Naples Universities. He conducts regular courses for gestalt therapists in Rome.

To be held at Merigar.

Registration can be made through: Associazione Culturale Comunità Dzog-chen, 58031 Arcidosso GR, Italy, tel. 0564 966837.

Vajra Dance Courses



Greece

A Vajra Dance course near Athens in June will be given by Prima Mai. Dates not yet confirmed. Contact Liakos Evangelopoulos, tel. 01 8076667.

U.S.A. Tsegylgar

A Vajra Dance course will be given by Prima Mai in the middle of July. For fuller information contact: Dzog-chen Community Tsegylgar, P.O.Box 277, Conway, MA 01341, U.S.A. Fax 413 6651142 or tel. 413 625 9263.

Valvestino Retreat House



Brescia Dzog-chen Community house

At the end of March, the Dzog-chen Community in Brescia, Italy, finished the first phase of a Yantra Yoga course taught by Giuliano Casiraghi in which ten people participated. The second part of the course will take place in May and June at the gymnasium of the Biodynamic Food Cooperative. In the meanwhile, the initial work to repair the barn on the Community property in Valvestino has been completed. The floor has been laid and the walls plastered. Many people helped with the work and besides the Dzog-chen people of Brescia, practitioners from the Zen-Soto school and other friends came to participate.

The completion of this work means that practice retreats, both individual and small groups, can be held there this summer.

When the summer arrives there will be hay-making and wood cutting to be done. The second phase of restructuring the main building will include fitting frames and windows and relaying the roof. These jobs are planned for next autumn.

Unfortunately there have been problems with the farmer who owns the barns on the borders of the Community property who has contested the right of way across his property. We hope to resolve the question as soon as possible in the simplest way.

If you would like to make use of this Community place in the mountains or if you would like to help with the structural and maintenance work there, please contact: Rocco Vassalli, tel. (030) 54146 or Fulvio Ferrari (Sabbio Chiese), tel. (0365) 825165.

Merigar Archive

by Marit Cranmer

Over the years, Merigar has collected many transcripts and audio and video cassettes of Nankhai Norbu Rinpoche's Teachings given both at Merigar and other places.

This material is now being archived. We hope to gradually complete this work in order to have most of the Teachings that have been transmitted at hand.

An index of this material will be made according to place, date, translator, etc. At the same time, we will start the work of listing the material under topics.

This will be of great benefit for those who wish to do research, write books and so on, as rapid access to the material will be possible.

In order to realise this project, Merigar requests that copies of any transcribed material including translations, be sent to this new archive.

We hope as well that you can send us a complete list of any audio and video cassettes in your possession.

For the moment we are concentrating on the written material but another aim is to establish a proper place to store the tapes.

We hope everybody will collaborate with this project and send the requested material.

Later, when classification, spelling corrections, etc., have been completed, copies will be made available to those interested.

In order to minimize the risk of losing any Teachings, Merigar hopes that other Gars and centres world-wide will work towards establishing their own archives of the Teachings.

Merigar Archive: Merigar, 58031 Arcidosso GR, Italy.

GETTING INVOLVED

Participate in The Mirror by sending us your articles, news items, photographs, artwork, poetry, ideas and suggestions. No literary genius or perfect mastery of the English language required, just a wish to collaborate. We can also translate from several languages if you have difficulty in writing English.

THE MIRROR, MERIGAR, 58031 ARCIDOSSO GR, ITALY
TEL. & FAX 0564-966608.

The New Membership Cards

The form the Dzog-chen Community has taken at Merigar is that of a non-profit making cultural association, whose aim, as set out in its statutes, is to favour the transmission of the Dzog-chen Teachings. For this purpose it offers to its members a series of structures and services.

Like all non-commercial organisations, the life of our Association is based on donations and membership contributions. Since donations are naturally sporadic and cannot be estimated in advance, the membership dues are, at present, the only financial basis on which the Association can survive and undertake its activities with a minimum of foresight.

This consideration, as well as the necessity to be in line with the laws regulating cultural associations, has given us the incentive to improve and up-date the application forms and to prepare new membership cards. These cards will be sent to those who fill in, or who have already filled in, the appropriate form requesting to take part in the Dzog-chen Community and who have made the annual contributions and abided by the conditions set out in the statutes.

You will remember that according to the statutes of the Cultural Association "Comunità Dzog-chen", one is eligible to become a member after having taken part in Community activities for a minimum of three years, participating in at least three retreats and having paid the required contributions regularly during that time.

Those who wish to take part in the activities of the Community and apply for membership, but have not yet fulfilled all of the above conditions, will receive an applicant's membership card.

The membership formalities already instituted at Merigar will be adopted in the near future at the other two main Gars, Tseggyalgar in the U.S.A. and Tashigar in Argentina, which are reference points for all members of the Community in the world.

Merigar Innovations

by the Secretary, Nina Robinson

As you all know by now this spring has brought two main innovations to Merigar: the new membership cards and the administrator. Well, how are they getting on?

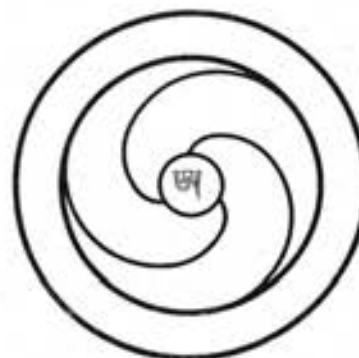
There is a certain amount of paperwork to be completed before members can be officially registered so we hope to start sending out the cards in July.

Our new administrator, Marit Cranmer, has been busy with endless meetings to find out about the present state of all the various aspects of Merigar life and what are the potentialities for development. Already various groups are being formed to deal with some of these aspects: a children's group, a culture group and a finance group. Beginners' Tibetan classes with

These new formalities of membership bring with them some inconveniences, with regards to members of the Community living in countries where no system of membership contributions has been established. People who have been active in the Community for years and years will unfortunately find that they have to have a preliminary membership card. We are perfectly aware that this incongruity is caused by our lack of ability to organise and we are sincerely sorry about it. We are also looking into ways of resolving this situation.

Those who wish to become members of the cultural association known as the "Comunità Dzog-chen" of Merigar, can put in a request for a membership card. One can become a "full" member after taking part in retreats and other activities of the Dzog-chen Community and regularly paying the membership dues for at least three years.

Those who wish to become members can request either a "preliminary" or a "full" membership card, depending on the history of their relationship with the Community. Both "preliminary" and "full"



members can choose whether to be ordinary or sustaining members:

- 1) Ordinary members contribute from Lit. 360.000 per year
- 2) Sustaining members contribute from Lit. 600.000 per year.

There will be four different membership cards:

An ordinary "preliminary" membership card (light pink)

A sustaining "preliminary" membership card (deep pink)

An ordinary "full" membership card

(light blue)

A sustaining "full" membership card (deep blue).

Members have the following privileges:

a) Ordinary members will receive a discount of 30% on retreat dues; sustaining members may attend all retreats free of charge.

b) Ordinary members can receive the Bollettino (the newsletter of Merigar in Italian) free on request, and sustaining members can have The Mirror and/or the Bollettino without charge on request.

c) Sustaining members will receive discounts on all publications of Shang-Shung Edizioni.

d) All members will receive discounts on events organised by the Shang Shung Institute and A.S.I.A.



e) Special conditions are being considered for registration for membership of the Shang Shung Institute, COABIT and A.S.I.A. for all members.

f) Sustaining members will be offered guided visits to all the exhibitions on Tibet that are organised by the Shang Shung Institute.

There will be discounts on membership dues for students, those doing military service and pensioners over 60.

Besides the above, we are in the process of contacting hotels, hot springs, garages and supermarkets in the area to negotiate discounts for members of the Association.

Comunità Dzog-chen, Merigar, 58031 Arcidosso GR, Italy.

Tel. 0564 966837, 0564 968110, fax 0564 966608.

ten years so that the present gakyil can barrage them with questions.

We are trying to prepare the library, the gonpa and Merigar 2 for the Tibetan language convention in August.

Prof. Tsering Thar is in charge of cataloguing all the Tibetan texts and carpenters and painters of the Community are constructing the ceiling and bookshelves.

Gardens are being created around the gonpa, with stone walls, benches, drinking fountain, flag poles and flowers.

The usual battle with the brambles continues everywhere. At Merigar 2 the renovation of the old farmhouse is continuing and a large vegetable garden is coming into being as perhaps the bud of an agricultural co-operative.

The Vase of Precious Jewels Easter Retreat at Merigar

by Robin Cooke

It had been a very happy surprise for many of us when, towards the end of the Christmas retreat, Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche had announced that before setting off on his many travels he would spend a week at Easter giving Teachings at Merigar on a text he was writing to explain the basis of Santi Maha Sangha. And so it was that on a blowy April night, many old and new members of the Community gathered together with Norbu Rinpoche for the first Tun of the retreat.

By the end, wind was hurtling and rain rattling against the roof and sides of the Gonpa, and in welcoming newcomers, Rinpoche reassuringly remarked that the weather was not always this way at Merigar. And indeed, in the following days, none of the active, purifying Elements was missing: after the brief spate of rain, we were swept by cold, dry winds and then warmed by a pleasant Spring sun (against the background of a brilliantly clear blue sky).

For six days, for several hours each morning, Rinpoche energetically and patiently explained the contents of his text, "The Vase of Precious Jewels" (rin chen bum bzang), in which the basis of the View, Path and Fruit of Dzog-chen are essentially and precisely expounded and set in relation to the paths of Sutra and Tantrism like wish-fulfilling gems. Although Rinpoche so often sets forth the differences between the Ways of Renunciation (Sutra), Transformation (Tantra) and Self-liberation (Dzog-chen), this was a very systematic exposition of the distinctions between the various Yanas.

When dealing with philosophical points, Rinpoche's completely clear explanation seemed to gallop almost as fast as the wind outside. ("The easy things you will be able to study at leisure once the actual text becomes available in translation", he said).

But when going into the real sense of the various teachings, or, for instance, explaining the different styles of Guru Yoga practice in Maha Yoga, Anu Yoga and Ati Yoga, he would slow down and his speaking-style would modulate. And



Merigar Gonpa

(photo Prima Mai)

so, we were lucky enough to receive extensive explanations on the different types of Bodhicitta, many different Ngondro practices, and practical explanations on the Fruit by Machig Labdron, and much else besides.

Santi Maha Sangha summarises poetically, and somewhat hermetically, the nine levels of training for practitioners who may at some stage find themselves in circumstances in which their teaching Dzog-chen could be of benefit.

With respect to the nine levels, these Teachings of "The Vase of Precious Jewels" on the basis of Dzog-chen correspond to the preliminary Level "0".

However, Rinpoche repeatedly cited the Tibetan proverb in which that famous man with the broken head tries to cure the unfortunate chap with the bent neck: as regards the Teachings, it is no good merely going "book-dancing", he said.

Anyone can be like a tape recorder and just repeat things, but a real Teacher has to have entered into the condition of what he is teaching. Rinpoche said that he was contemplating organising courses in the future, on the various levels, for those who wished to have the possibility to teach and who combined sufficient intellectual understanding with effective integration of the practice into their own everyday lives.

But for the rest of us, the intellectual side is not essential in order to

become good practitioners, he underlined.

As usual, Rinpoche actively encouraged collaboration amongst ourselves, and each afternoon, before the Teachings and collective practice, there were informal sessions in which (besides Yantra Yoga) those with longer experience could help newer members of the Community resolve their doubts about the various practices.

Whilst on the subject of collaboration, the two types of membership cards - blue and pink - for the Gar were finally unveiled ("but it's not that it's blue for boys and pink for girls, that's not the sense").

Finally, the many visitors from near and afar (including several Poles and members from war-torn "Yugoslavia") were able to see how Merigar is changing and developing. One noticeable difference is that sleeping and dining facilities at the retreat were mainly limited to those whose circumstances made it really necessary to use the yellow house's limited samsaric facilities (no judgement intended here on the excellent cooking).

The reasons for this are not hard to see.

However, the compassionate and unobtrusive watchfulness of our two Gekos brought out the relative nature of all those potentially troubling little day-to-day problems. Clearly, many thanks are also due to the new Merigar Gakyil for all their work behind the scenes.

Merigar Practice Retreats

by Merigar Blue Gakyil

This summer at Merigar there will be a full programme of practice weekends, practice retreats, karma yoga and many possibilities to meet each other. The two practice retreats will take place from July 24th to August 2nd, and from August 14th to 23rd. During the retreats we will try to develop some of the practices which Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche transmitted during the retreats at Christmas 1991-92 and Easter 1992. The retreats will be an occasion to deepen our knowledge of the

Teaching through explanations, question and answer sessions and viewing video cassettes. This will also be a chance for us to collaborate between practitioners in exchanging knowledge and experience of different practices as suggested by Norbu Rinpoche during the Easter retreat. This is one of the most important and essential ways in which we can work together.

There will be full explanations by "older" practitioners on the practices which we already know but which we often recite without remembering

the real sense or without ever having truly known it. At the same time this will also be an opportunity for all practitioners to deepen their knowledge of the Teaching on all levels by using the large amount of material which is contained in the archives, books, transcriptions, and audio and video cassettes available at Merigar. Through the summer practice retreats at Merigar, we will be able to improve our practice and increase our understanding of the Teaching through collaboration with fellow practitioners.

Merigar's New Administrator

At the Christmas retreat of 1991, Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche asked for new ideas on how the Dzog-chen Community was to continue in the future. Among the many answers were several suggestions that Merigar needed an administrator.

This year at the Easter retreat Norbu Rinpoche asked Marit Cranmer if she could take on the responsibility of administrator at Merigar.

Marit will present her ideas and suggestions for future improvements in September after three months of observations and concrete experience.

One of her tasks, as an administrator, is to co-ordinate the red, yellow and blue sections of the Merigar Gakyil as well as to administer the Gar in all its aspects.

In addition to this she will work with maintaining communication between the various activities and organisations connected with Merigar such as A.S.I.A., COABIT, the Shang-Shung Institute, Shang-Shung Editions and so on.

In this phase Marit needs the maximum collaboration from us all so we would like to ask everybody to participate by communicating information that can be of help to her in compiling her research, which is fundamental for the work of an administrator.

Marit can be contacted at Comunità Dzog-chen, 58031 Arcidosso GR, Italy, telephone 968 110.

The Merigar Programme Summer 1992

Monday 15th June	19.00	Full Moon. Mandarava long-life practice
Saturday 20th June	16.00	Meeting for practitioners
Sunday 21st June		Karma Yoga.
Thursday 25th June	18.00	Dakini Day
		Long Tun with intensive practice of Simhamukha.
Saturday 27th June		Naggon practice for 48 hours
Sunday 28th June		Naggon practice for 48 hours
Tuesday 30th June		New Moon and anniversary of Nyagla Padma Dundul.
	19.00	Guruyoga of the White A
Saturday 4th July		Karma Yoga
	16.00	Practice of Vajrapani
Sunday 5th July	9.00	Practice of Vajrapani
		Karma Yoga
Thursday 9th July		Anniversary of the birth of Padmasambhava.
	3.30	Guruyoga of Padmasambhava
Saturday 11th July	9.00	Guruyoga of the White A
		Dance of the Vajra for the entire weekend
Sunday 12th July	9.00	Purification with Sang.
	19.00	Amitayus long-life practice
Monday 13th July	19.00	Amitayus long-life practice
Tuesday 14th July		Full Moon
	19.00	Amitayus long-life practice
Friday 24th July	18.00	Beginning of the practice retreat until 2nd August
Saturday 8th August	18.00	Padmasambhava day
		Padmasambhava long-life practice
Sunday 9th August	9 & 19.00	Sang and lungta practice
Tuesday 11th August	19.00	Amitayus long-life practice
Wednesday 12th August	19.00	Amitayus long-life practice
Thursday 13th August		Full moon.
	19.00	Amitayus long-life practice
Friday 14th August	18.00	Beginning of the practice retreat until 25th August
Wednesday 26th August	18-21.00	Naggon.
Thursday 27th August	18-21.00	Naggon.
Friday 28th August		New Moon
	19.00	Six Lokas practice
Sunday 6th Sept.		Padmasambhava Day
	9 & 18.00	Mandarava long-life practice
Wednesday 9th Sept.	19.00	Mandarava long-life practice
Thursday 10th Sept.	19.00	Mandarava long-life practice
Friday 11th Sept.	19.00	Mandarava long-life practice
Saturday 12th Sept.	Morning	Karma Yoga
	19.00	Xitro practice.
Sunday 13th Sept.	9.00	Xitro practice.
		Karma Yoga

Culture and Peace

The following talk was given by His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama at the Senate in Rome on May 31st, 1990, on the occasion of a meeting entitled "Different Cultures and Environments for the Same Objective of Peace".

I have always believed that when human beings are born they are free from any religion, any ideology, any culture. However, they are not free from human affection, love. When any human child, he or she, is inside his mother's womb, the mental state of the mother is a very important factor for the unborn child. Then, the next few weeks after birth are crucial for the development of the brain.

According to modern medicine, during that period, the mother's touch is the most important factor for the development of the brain. In other words, we are not free from human affection.

So, that's about the start of human life. However, growing up year by year, certain conditions, certain causes change the human being.

The two major factors of change are culture and environment. Culture

a new meaning of life, that they changed their life, their way of life, their way of thinking. Many people express to us that Tibetans are nice and jovial people.

Due to cultural heritage and environment, Tibetans in general have a peaceful nature.

Aside from few events, Tibet has remained basically a zone of peace, some kind of de-militarised place. As a result, Tibet has acted as a buffer state, providing security to India, Nepal and the other neighbouring states, including China. This about the past.

About the present.

As some speakers have indicated, there is a real danger of the disappearance of this ancient culture, one of the oldest in the world. I think there is no need to explain this extensively.

In brief, not only the culture, but also the Tibetan people as a human community, are facing the danger of elimination, of assimilation in the vast number of Chinese settlers. This is the present situation.

About the future.

Because of the Tibetan situation, especially geographically, I have

a much longer time for recovery. This is an additional concern. Tibetans are primarily a rural people, so if climatic conditions change in that part of the world and the natural balance is disturbed, not only Tibetans will suffer negative effects, but also the neighbouring states. Within this context, I have developed a five-point peace plan regarding not only Tibet.

Another field in which I have a keen interest is science, particularly the science of the mind, psychology.

The Buddhist science of the mind compared to western psychology is quite more advanced. There is some potential for carrying out research work about the mind, about its psychology or the relation between mind and brain, about the dreaming state of the mind or about the experience of dying. In these fields, there are opportunities for comparative studies.

In India, I had the opportunity to meet some scientists of cosmology, neurobiology, psychology and physics - in particular quantum theory. In these fields I have found elements in common.

We learned a lot from their findings,

Marpa's Song



Milarepa

(Drawing by Wilvin Pedersen)

This song is to be found in the "True Life of Milarepa" translated by Lobsang P. Lhalungpa and published by Shambala of Boston & London, 1985.

It was sung by Marpa to Milarepa before Milarepa left him. Marpa said that this was the last time they would see each other in this lifetime but they would certainly meet again in The Realm of the Dakini.

He accompanied Milarepa for half a day's journey and told Milarepa to go into U and Tsang where Milarepa went to meditate in solitude.

'I prostrate myself before you who are full of compassion, and I pray. Contemplating the lives of the Masters, one sees that Even a desire for more instruction is a distraction. Keep the essence of the teaching safe in your heart,

Too many explanations without the essence
Is like many trees without fruit.
Though they are all knowledge, they are not ultimate truth.
To know them all is not knowing of truth.

Too much elucidation brings no spiritual benefit.
That which benefits the heart is our sacred treasure.
If you wish to be rich, concentrate on this.

The Dharma is the skillful means for overcoming mental defilement.
If you wish to be secure, concentrate on it.

A mind that is free from attachment is the Master of Contentment.
If you want a good master, concentrate on this.
The worldly life causes tears; abandon laziness.

A rocky cave in the wilderness was the home of your spiritual Father.
A deserted and solitary place is a divine abode.

Mind riding upon mind is a tireless horse.
Your own body is a sanctuary and celestial mansion.
Undistracted meditation and action is the best of all medicines.
To you who have the true aim of Enlightenment
I have given instruction without concealment.

Myself, my instruction, and yourself,
The three are placed in your hand, my son.
May they prosper as leaves, branches, and fruit,
Without rotting, scattering or withering.'



Yaks grazing in West Tibet

(photo Alex Siedlecki)

and environment make different people, different persons. Therefore, in order to have happier human communities, happier families or a better world, environment and culture are of vital importance. So here we are talking about culture and peace.

As far as Tibet is concerned, there are a few things I want to say about its past, present and future.

About the past.

According to some findings of Chinese archeologists, Tibetan civilisation is 6000-8000 years old. In the early part of Tibetan history war was dominant. Then, eventually, Buddhism came to Tibet, and generally speaking the Tibetan nation moved towards peace. In fact, many foreigners who visit Tibet report that there they find

tried, in the past few years, to transform Tibet into a zone of peace, a zone of Ahimsa - the Indian word for peace, non-violence. A few years ago, the King of Nepal introduced the idea that the whole area should be de-nuclearised, free from nuclear weapons and that the Indian border should be de-militarised. Consequently, I made the proposal for a zone of peace. I have also tried to draw world attention to the environmental, ecological problems of Tibet, for instance complete de-forestation.

De-forestation has created great ecological problems, particularly because of the specific natural conditions of Tibet. Vast areas of the country lie at high altitudes with a dry climate, therefore any damage caused to the environment requires

while the old Buddhist explanations and also some Buddhist techniques to carry out experiments, gave scientists new insights.

Although many other countries have preserved the Buddhist culture, the Tibetan culture or Buddhist culture that we have preserved is a complete form of Buddhism. There are more technical, more extensive explanations about the mind, the functions of the mind, the nervous system, the relation between cell, brain and mind and the different levels of the mind: ordinary, deeper and very deep.

In view of this, it seems worthwhile to preserve Tibetan culture, not only for the benefit of the Tibetan nation. If only in a small way, we can make a contribution to humanity. That's all.

A Western Yogini. An interview with Ani Tenzin Palmo

Ani Tenzin Palmo is an English woman who travelled to India in 1964, soon after the main flight of refugees from Tibet in 1959. Initially she taught at a small school in Dalhousie, North India that became known as the Rinpoche School because most of the pupils were young 'tulku' or reincarnate lamas, many of whom later became important teachers in the West. She met her principle master Khamtrul Rinpoche and took ordination as a nun just after her 21st birthday. She was one of the first Western nuns ordained in the Tibetan tradition. She remained in India for 17 years, 14 of which were spent in retreat in a cave in Lahoul not far from the border of south west Tibet. At present she lives in Assisi, Italy.

Interviewer: Could you tell us something about your experience of preparing for and doing retreats there (in Lahoul)? I mean traditionally how would an individual prepare for practice.

Ani Tenzin Palmo: The first thing is to decide what you're going to practise and to have all the texts. I always prepared first by not only getting the teachings but also by getting all the written commentaries in Tibetan so that one knew very exactly what one was doing and why one was doing it, which I think is terribly important. Then you have to go round getting all the various equipment needed. For example a Kriya retreat would require quite different objects to an Annuttara Yoga retreat. Each practice has its own various things which are needed for its particular practice. So you have to get those.

Then, of course, if you don't have anybody serving your retreat, you have to get in food supplies which I always did in Lahoul, for however long you're going to be in retreat. Then you let everybody know so that they won't come and disturb you and you put up what is called a 'tsam tor' that means a boundary mark with a special flag which gives the mantra of a certain protector who is there to protect your retreat. Every day you do a short puja to this protector who guards the retreat and prevents anybody from breaking through your retreat.

Then usually you start in the afternoon or evening. You first of all make offerings to the local spirits, the local deities of that place and you explain to them what you are going to do, and ask their permission and ask them not to be alarmed about what you are going to do, and to be helpful. And then you also make any offerings to the protectors and you set up the protection circle and you do the first session of whatever your practice is. And then the next day you begin. Usually I would do four sessions a day in which case you get up at 3, and then you start and carry on until 6 and then one breaks for breakfast. And then you start again around 8 maybe until 11 and then make lunch. And

then after lunch I would have a break until about 2 or 3, and then have another session and then have some tea. And then the evening session. And you carry on like that.

In Lahoul I was the local scribe because my Tibetan handwriting was much better than their's and I knew much better grammar and spelling than they did. So therefore in the breaks they would bring me lots of texts to write out, or I would paint Buddhas or Bodhisattvas which is nice because you can give these to people because they don't have artists there. Or I would read, some dharma book usually relevant to the practice, I would read 'namthars' (biographies) and inspirational books relating to my practice.

Interviewer: Many of us have heard of the 3 year retreat. Can you say a little bit about that? For example, why that duration and what's involved in it?

Ani Tenzin Palmo: Yes for some reason Tibetans really like this 3 years, 3 months retreat although others say you can't get anything out of doing 3 years and (you should do) 12 years at the very least. I think they choose 3 years because it does give you time to really get into your practice.

A lot of problems with doing these retreats is that by the time you really become at one with your practice, you're already seeing the light at the end of the tunnel, you're ready to finish it. And three years is a nice long period, it's very spacious. There are many forms of 3 year retreat actually. Many people do different retreats. The main difference is that some people do retreats in which they do a series of practices like first they do the Ngondro again and then, for example, in the Kagyu tradition, they do the Dorje Pagmo recitation, then they do some Demchog, then they do Milarepa and so on and they do different practices and that's one form.

Another form, the one that I did, is where you take one particular yidam and you just do that for the whole three years and you don't change the practice at all.

Interviewer: So it wasn't the case then that in Tibet one would receive all the instructions and so forth for the practice from the initiating, the vajra master, but that you would go to one of the yogis and study the texts. So the process involved working with a vajra brother in a sense.

Ani Tenzin Palmo: Yes. I don't know about other people but in Tashi Jong this is how it worked except until the very last time just before Khamtrul Rinpoche went to Bhutan and passed away; that time he told me to do a practice and he taught it himself and this was the first and only time he did that. I should have realised then that this was something different. But usually as I said; he would just give the initiation and

then send me to one of the Tokdens (the realised practitioners) or to Tulku Choegyal. In fact even more so because sometimes I would get the main teaching from the oldest yogi and then go to one of the younger yogis to get a much more expanded teaching on that, going down the line. But that worked very well because even though often there were another two Western nuns apart from myself, very often we took the empowerments together, but we never took the teachings together. It was always done on a one to one basis.

So it was not in that way an ideal situation for a retreat. However I did stay there about 5 or 6 years. I was very happy there. Then I decided that however it was not suitable for a retreat. I went into the hills above the monastery, and I was thinking about trying to build just a very small house up there which would be near the monastery but not too near. And because Lahoul is a place very famous for being blessed by the dakinis, whenever I had any problems I always turned to them for a solution. This time I prayed to them and said,



Ani Tenzin Palmo

(photo Brian Beresford)

Interviewer: I knew for many years that you'd been a nun in retreat in Lahoul in a cave but when you were actually in Lahoul, did you start off in a cave? How did you find the cave and how did you set it up for retreat?

Ani Tenzin Palmo: When I first went to Lahoul, I stayed in a very nice monastery called Tayul. The nice thing about Lahoul monasteries for me was that they were shared by both monks and nuns. Everyone had their own separate houses going up the hill but when it came to participate in the ceremonies etc., it was shared. It makes for a very relaxed atmosphere and although the nuns did all the cooking and served the monks, in every other way when it came to decisions about the monastery or working etc., it was very much balanced. It was very nice. So I had a house there and that was very fine. They were very nice, very kind. Unfortunately for me it was extremely sociable there. They spent much of their time especially in the winter having dinner parties and lunch parties and sitting around drinking copious amounts of tea and chang. So this was in fact the problem because in the winter, when I was in retreat, nobody else was. And if you are living in the middle, one is very conscious of all the activity that is going on outside. And also in the winter because everything is covered in snow, they tended to stand up on their roofs, their flat roofs and have long conversations across from one end of the monastery to the other.

"Look please find me a suitable place in which to do a retreat. And from my side I promise that I will do my best to practise as hard as I can." And I really felt that this had been heard and that everything was going to be alright. I came back from the mountain feeling really happy, sure that something was going to work out. The next day in the morning I went to see one nun and I said, "I'm thinking of building a small house above the monastery." She said, "How can you build a house when you don't have any money. Why don't you look for a cave?" I replied, "We have already discussed this for so many years. There are no caves. Where there are caves there is no water. Where there is water there are people because Lahoul is a very dry area." She said "Yes, that's really true. We have said that. But last night I suddenly remembered that one old nun had mentioned a cave she had once visited up the hill which had water and wood, very nearby and also a meadow. It sounded absolutely lovely and none of us have ever seen it but she said that she had seen it." Immediately I thought that this is it. We then found this old nun who was about 85 and persuaded her to come up the hill. She was the 'party nun' and lived to be about 98! A whole party of us went up the hill, monks and nuns and the head lama. It's about an hour and a half away from the monastery in a diagonal direction, upwards. They kept saying, "No it's too far, it's too high, you can't live so far away from the

monastery."

When we got there we found it was a long overhang which had been dug out about 7 years before by some villagers who had wanted to take care of some sheep and they had built up a very rough stone wall. I thought this is perfect. Eventually I managed to overcome the reservations of the other monks and nuns and so we built it. We built a stone wall from the stones left over from before and put in little windows and a door. I stayed there for 12 years. I was 18 years in Lahoul in all.

Interviewer: These days we see the Tibetan masters and a great development of Buddhist teachings and a proliferation of centres and so forth have developed in the last 15 or 20 years. Do you think it's possible to practise in the way that you did in India or in a similar way in the West, or do you think that the practice of Buddhism in the West has to take on a different emphasis.

Ani Tenzin Palmo: Well those are two very different questions. For myself, to a certain extent, I could practise more or less the way I was doing in India because I was not, towards the end, associated particularly with any group. So all I need to do is to have a little retreat place and to go back into retreat. Basically it doesn't matter then where I am.

However for the majority of dharma practitioners in the West, this is not a feasible option unless they are spending their time in 3 year retreat centres. Most people have families, they have jobs, they have social commitments, it's not possible for them to practise in the way that it was done for example in Tibet. I mean always it has to be borne in mind that the way the teachings are given traditionally is directed at monks and nuns who more or less had nothing else to do but their practice. They were professionals, that was their profession.

Now that kind of situation almost does not pertain in the West. For most people strict dharma practice in that sense of sitting down on your mat, doing so many mantras or so many of this or that, is something which they can only squeeze in in very short periods during their day or even at the weekend. And to always present the dharma as though dharma practice merely means sitting on your mat doing a strict practice and the rest of the time you're not doing that is not dharma practice, is an incredible misconception and causes enormous frustration for people because they don't have the time. And they always feel guilty because they don't have the time and because they are not doing this. The whole thing is that the dharma should be our whole life. And it means everything we do, from the moment we wake up to the moment we fall asleep and even while we're asleep.

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Vesak Celebrated in Milan

by Elisa Copello

Vesak or "The Reawakening Feast" was celebrated in Milan, Italy on the 23rd and 24th of May continuing a tradition started four years ago in Pomaia, when the Italian Buddhist Union thought that the time had come to call a general assembly every year of all Italian dharma centres, no matter what school, lineage or tradition they might belong to. The U.B.I. board, presided over at that time by its founder and inspirer, Doctor Vincenzo Piga, decided that the assembly should be summoned on the date of the anniversary of the "Reawakening of Lord Buddha" (usually coinciding with the full moon of May), and would provide all the participants with the opportunity of exchanging views and experiences and, at the same time, of practising together. Every year a different centre has been entrusted with the heavy task of organising the meeting and this year it was up to the Rabten Ghe-Pel-Ling Centre of Tibetan Studies of Milan to be the host. All the participants met on the 23rd in one of the most prestigious congress halls in town and on the following day in the quiet but powerful atmosphere of the Ghe-Pel-Ling gopa, inaugurated and blessed by His Holiness the Dalai Lama in the course of his visit to Italy in 1990. Many centres following different traditions such as Za Zen, Soto Zen, Vipassana, Theravada and Tibetan Buddhism have been members of the U.B.I. since its foundation, and this year, as it was announced by our delegate present at the event, Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche has decided that the Dzog-chen Community should join as well. The purpose of our joining the U.B.I., to put it in Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche's words, is "cooperation", and this spirit of collaboration among various centres has been emphasised over and over again in the majority, if not, in all of the talks of the delegates. They complained of the lack of communication among centres which has not created sufficient exchange of experiences and views. It has been suggested that if the situation improves, there would be more cooperation and openness so



that the various centres could invite masters from different traditions. In this way, prejudices, barriers and mental limitations springing from a too strict "attachment" to one's own school could be diminished, to the mutual benefit of all dharma practitioners. So "cooperation", "communication", the need for a "strong sangha" and a message to the world of "peace and non-violence" have been the passwords of the manifestation. Stimulating talks were delivered by the various guests and orators invited to the Vesak celebration. "Buddhism like a culture of peace and the suggestion directed at the communities to deepen and harmonise their relations with the local authorities" was the message of Taiten Guareschi, Abbott of the Zen Soto Temple Shobozan Fudenji and current president of the U.B.I. Father Luciano Mazzocchi, a missionary in Japan for 19 years, illustrated his experience of integrating Catholicism with Zen meditation. He said that in man's heart the whole of Christ and Buddha can manifest provided one's mind remains limpid and pure. Vincenzo Piga underlined the

inestimable value of receiving Teachings directly in our own mother tongue as is the case at Merigar, Santacittarame, a Theravada Centre near Rome, and A.M.E.CO. (Association for Meditation and Awareness), a Vipassana centre in Rome. Corrado Pensa, director of A.M.E.CO. emphasised the importance of creating a strong sangha of "passionate practitioners" ready to support old and new dharma brothers and sisters and help them in case of spiritual crisis and discomfort, because, as he reminded us, the sangha is one of the three precious jewels and, as such, a powerful instrument for liberation. Thamthog Rinpoche, spiritual guide of the Ghe-Pel-Ling Centre, gave profound Teachings on the Nature of Mind and Lama Giang Ciub, from the Milarepa Centre in Torino, explained the Four Noble Truths. Dr. Pasang Yonten, a well-known Tibetan doctor, who will, in the near future, lead a workshop on a *gyer ma* of ancient Tibetan medicine at Merigar, spoke about the history of Tibetan medicine and its strict relation with the profound spiritual Teachings of Lord Buddha.

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Unity in Diversity

Congress of the European Buddhist Union

September 24th to 27th in Berlin

The European Buddhist Union (UBE) is presenting an international congress in September 1992 in Berlin, coordinated by the German Buddhist Union (DBU).

Every traditional Buddhist school of Theravada, Zen, Tibetan Buddhism, etc., is represented in both umbrella organisations.

The EBU organises congresses in Europe at 4 year intervals.

The aim of this year's congress, "Unity in Diversity - Buddhism in Europe" is to present the common basis of the different Buddhist traditions and a lively human approach to the Buddhist teachings. The congress will bring together a broad spectrum of the Buddhist centres and communities of Europe.

The speakers will include Ayya Khema, Ven. Dr. Rewata Dhamma, Thich Nath Hanh, Roshi Gesshin Prabhava Dharma, Rev. Master Daishin Morgan, Sangharakshita, Shamar Rinpoche and Sogyal Rinpoche.

The three-day programme starts on September 24th at the Werner-Seelenbinder-Halle, Prenzlauer Berg, Berlin.

For registration and information contact:

Registration EBU-Kongress
c/o Buddhistische Gesellschaft
Wulffstr. 6 - 1000 Berlin 41

The Mysteries of Tibet

An Exhibition of Films and Documentaries on Tibet

by Paolo Brunatto

Tibet is still, today, a mysterious universe - especially her culture and her spirituality. In the West we still know very little about tantric Buddhism, Bon, traditional Tibetan medicine, the practice of yoga and methods of meditation, the impassive hermits who live for years in the mountains and the customs of the nomads of the plateau.

From April 13th to 30th, a Film Festival on Tibet was organized by Shang-Shung Edizioni at three cinematographic rooms, Chaplin, Lumiere and Melies, at one of the most prestigious Cineclubs of Rome, L'Azzurro Scipioni.

The Exhibition, entitled "The Mysteries of Tibet", organized by Giovanni Arca, Paolo Brunatto and Fulvio Rossi, was the most comprehensive one of its kind that has been organized to date in Italy.

The Festival, which presented many films that have not been seen in Italy, had considerable success and will continue in Milan, Turin, Bologna and Naples.

Tibetan Sacred Art Exhibition

The Royal Academy of Arts in London, will be opening a major exhibition of Tibetan sacred art from September 18th to December 13th. The exhibition will contain 159 rare examples of Tibetan Buddhist paintings, sculptures and tapestries from the 9th century to more recent times.

The loans are from North America and Europe with a third of the exhibitions from the Hermitage museum in St. Petersburg, Russia.

Due to the difficulty of the political situation, the Royal Academy is unable to ask for government financial support for the exhibition and is seeking commercial sponsors. In spite of this difficulty, the Royal Academy intends to go ahead with the exhibition.


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Mahamudra and Dzog-chen

Going to the Real Sense of the Teaching

continued from page 1

This, in general, is called the *nyangyud* or oral transmission. This oral transmission also integrated and developed in the ancient Bonpo tradition although the Bonpo tradition is not really the source because much earlier there had been many Dzog-chen masters. Dzog-chen Teaching was translated and introduced mainly from Oddiyana into Tibet and some Dzog-chen Teachings come also from Trusha in Central Asia, and from India. Anutaratantra also originated mainly from Oddiyana and India. If we study for example Kalachakra and Guhyasamaja tantra and different kinds of Chakra-samvara tantra, most masters went to Oddiyana where they received transmission from mahasiddhas and later this was developed from India and introduced into Tibet.

This is the history related to Anutaratantra.

The characteristic of Anutaratantra is working with clarity, manifestation and movement, that is the reason that there are many transformations. There is, for example the developing stage and accomplishing stage. These two stages are the main point of Anutaratantra. But both of these are part of Mahamudra. Maybe ordinary people who are applying the developing stage cannot, at that moment, have knowledge of Mahamudra but when they have realised it at the end, then all their visualisations such as deities and mandala, the dimension of that person, manifest as part of their potentiality. That is the real sense of Mahamudra.

"Mudra" means symbol. Many people understand "mudra" as "seal" but that is not correct. "Seal" in Tibetan is "gya". For example if there are some secret Teachings then we say "samaya gya gya gya". That means it is sealed and cannot be spoken about and the meaning must be kept secret. But Mahamudra doesn't mean that. "Mudra" means a kind of gesture, like with the hands. That is the symbol but in the real sense it is a symbol for having knowledge.

For example if we have a figure of a deity, it is a symbol, it is not a real enlightened being. An enlightened being has no form. They are beyond form but their potentiality manifests and is a symbol. So the clarity of the practitioner is represented through this symbol and working with clarity and also the dimension of all emotions and movements, then everything manifests like a personified deity or like a pure dimension of mandala. Everything is a symbol. So if we integrate all our dimension, all our existence into that symbol, then there's nothing else but that symbol, then that symbol is part of the individual himself and his potentiality. When we realise that, then we say "total symbol"; that is the real Mahamudra. So this is the final goal of all tantric Teaching.

But then we have in the Kagyupa school a very special Mahamudra of Gampopa because Gampopa with his capacity, knowledge and understanding unified the principle of the Teachings of sunyata, sutra and tantric Teaching and also knowledge of the path of self-liberation. Everything is, in the

real sense, the same thing. There does not exist any difference. For example, if we ask what is the difference between Dzog-chen and Mahamudra, there is no difference because you can call the principle Dzog-chen or you can call it Mahamudra, but the real sense is your potentiality, getting into your real nature. But how can you get into that state? You follow a path and use a method. In this case if you are using a transformation system of Anutaratantra, then that is called Mahamudra. If you are using a self-liberation system of Atiyoga Teaching, then that is called Dzog-chen. So in the real sense we cannot say that there is a difference. So this is more-or-less the principle.

Question: According to the practices of the different lineages in the West, there are a lot of forms of different practices. I am wondering how people can know what might be the very best way for them.

Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche: The best way is that first of all people should try to understand why they are following a Teaching. What is the aim? They must know that Teaching must not be considered as an object in a shop, being attracted perhaps by the colour or the form.

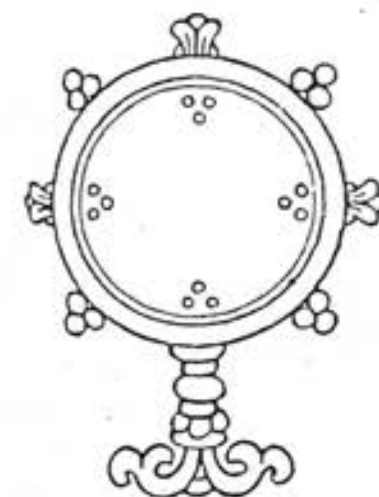
Teaching is for realising a person so if you follow a Teaching, any kind of Teaching, in a correct way, it has a perfect function. But if you don't understand this, you limit yourself and you remain in this position. If you really understand the principle of the Teaching you cannot find any conflicts. You can use different methods. Of course there are different lineages. Lineages are related to transmission and if you apply or follow a transmission, then, of course, you must follow it in a correct way. That is the main point. If, for example, you follow the path of Mahamudra, the best way is to go deeper and discover what the real Mahamudra is instead of only looking at the form and shape. Your aim is realisation. That is all.

Also the teacher teaches that way. The reason the teacher transmits is because people want to become realised. What does realisation mean? It means beyond that kind of limited vision and limited situation that we have because we are in the human condition which, from the very beginning is limited by our body, speech and mind. Everything is limited. We already have enough limitations in samsara because of our human condition so if we develop that further, it doesn't correspond with the Teaching. Teaching is for overcoming that. So if people know this and don't limit themselves, and try to go to the real sense of the Teachings, then they can follow any kind of lineage or school without a problem. That is the best thing to do.

Once the Dalai Lama was asked by

some journalists in England, "What is the worst thing for the dharma?" He replied, "Sectarianism". That's a very interesting answer because sectarianism doesn't mean you shouldn't be sectarian, that is not sufficient. You have to know that you are following a Teaching for realisation and realisation is beyond limitations. If you follow in this way it is not necessary that you mix everything. You can follow in the correct way that you are already following.

Question: The mixing of different teachers and different aspects of practices are quite widespread among practitioners.



Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche: Mixing means that you don't respect methods. That you take a piece from here and a piece from there and you put it all together and invent. This is mixing. But if you follow a lineage, following how the method is explained and you apply it in a correct way, that is not mixing. That is correct. Because all Teachings communicate the way for realisation. You need different methods and different paths until you are totally realised. So that is not a problem. It is better that you don't limit yourself thinking, "I must do this but not that". There is no reason. In Dzog-chen, it is very important when we do guruyoga to recognize that guruyoga is the unification of all teachers because the teachers transmit, and the transmission is understanding. It doesn't matter if you have teachers from different traditions such as Gelugpa, Nyingmapa, Kagyupa, Bonpo or Sakyapa. What you are doing is for your realisation. So doing guruyoga you unify all teachers together in a form like Guru Sambhava, or Milarepa, or Sakya Pandita if someone belongs to the Sakyapa tradition. You can use whichever you like, whichever form you relate to. It doesn't matter. But the real sense is that you unite all teachers and maintain all transmissions and then you apply this and you don't limit yourself. That way you can realise more and

have more possibility.

Some people say, "How can we unify a Sakyapa lama and a Gelugpa or a Kagyupa or a Nyingmapa together, will there not be problems?". That is not a problem of lamas. It is a problem of our conflict which we must overcome. If our teachers really have this problem then they are in a limited situation and it means that they are not enlightened beings. They are in samsara and they have this limitation. So that's not good.

When you do a practice for realisation you must apply all your three existences of body, speech and mind. They must go together and not be separate. And your aim, the point you wish to arrive at, is the nature of the mind. That is the final goal of all Teachings. In order to get there, you can use many types of methods linked to body, voice, energy and something like mental work such as visualisation, concentration etc. These are called methods. But methods are not the goal. You must distinguish this very well.

You can learn thousands of different methods from hundreds of different teachers but your goal is deeper knowledge of understanding. All these methods are secondary things. The main point is integration in the state of Mahamudra or Dzog-chen which is your real nature or potentiality.

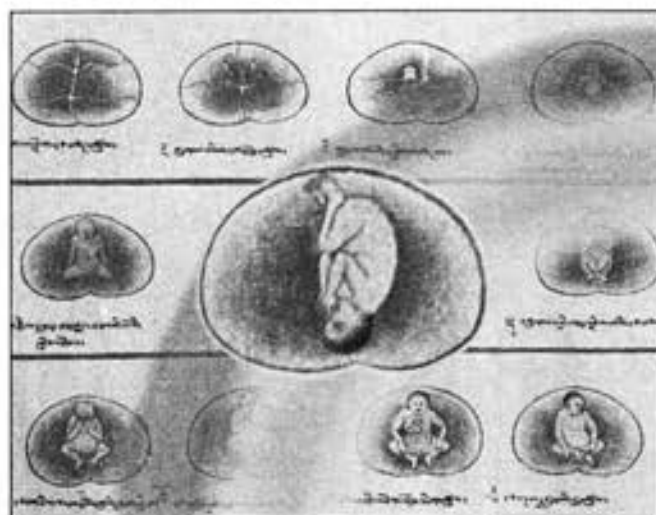
But you need different kinds of methods because you are in time, in circumstances. Circumstances change and you can have different conditions and in this case perhaps a particular method is useful one day but another day you have a different situation and you need another kind of method. So if you know that methods are secondary things and the main point is to arrive at knowledge, then you will not have any problem or confusion. If you are only concerned with method and you think that method is the principle, "The teacher told me this. I should do this," then you don't integrate your real nature into the state of Dzog-chen or Mahamudra. In this case you are conditioned by that method. But if you learn the Dzog-chen way, the individual practitioner is fundamental while the method is secondary. The method can never be number one and the individual number two. That's very important.

From May 1st to 3rd, Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche gave Teachings at the Kamalashila Institute, not far from Bonn. The Institute, established in 1981 at the Schloss Wachenheim castle, houses a Tibetan Buddhist community which is operated predominantly by lamas and monks from the Karma-Kagyupa tradition. The Institute organises seminars on Buddhist meditation and philosophy.

Namkhai Norbu

Nascere e Vivere

Secondo la Medicina Tibetana



A cura di Luigi Vitiello

Questo testo è un manuale informativo e pratico arrivato alla seconda edizione, completamente rivista in tutte le sue parti e arricchita da un'introduzione sulla medicina tibetana.

Shang-Shung Edizioni
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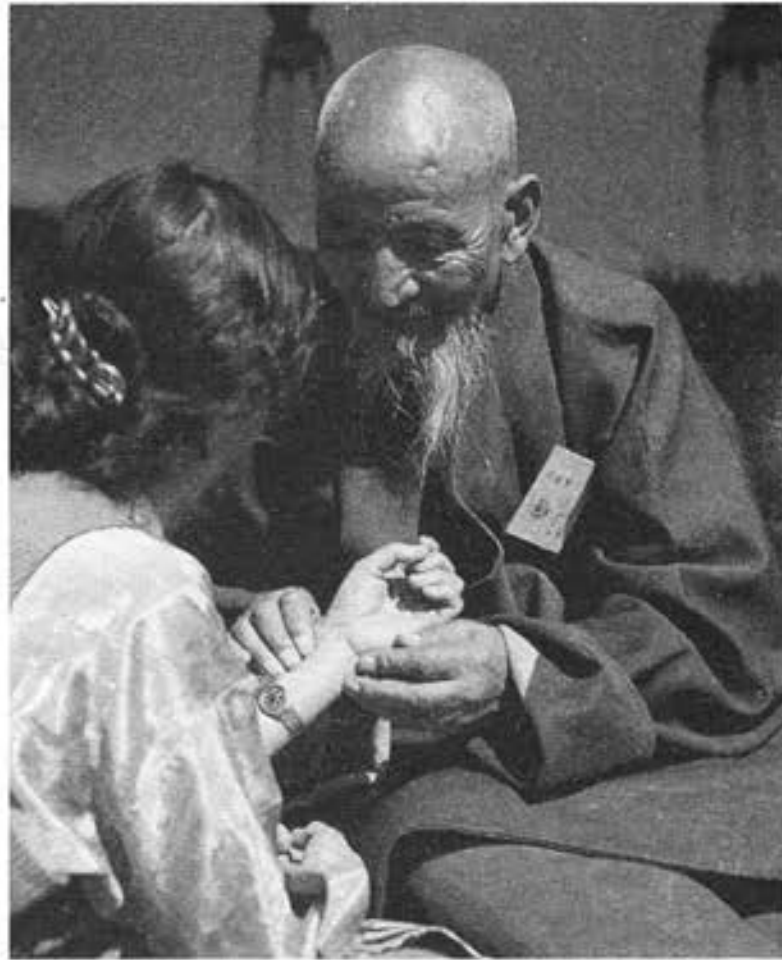
Letters Letters Letters Letters Letters Letters Letters

The "Letters" section of The Mirror contains readers' personal ideas and impressions that do not necessarily reflect the opinion of The Mirror and the Dzog-chen Community.

An Experience of Tibetans in Exile

In many ways the "Year of Tibet" brought Westerners closer to Tibet than ever before through the many talks, slideshows, documentaries and, of course, the Teachings by His Holiness and other teachers and lamas in New York City and elsewhere throughout the country. It has been a good year for learning. This year also inspired me to learn more about Tibetan medicine. I went to participate in a workshop with an old student of Yeshe Dondon, the former personal physician of the Dalai Lama, and there I learned about a project that invites practitioners of complementary medicines to India to treat Tibetan refugees for their many health problems occurring from living in a more tropical environment and being exposed to the unaccustomed micro-organisms. Their homeland is at high altitude and they are accustomed to the cold, yet India is very wet during the monsoon time and otherwise extremely hot - a breeding ground for many diseases new to Tibetans. I travelled to a Tibetan refugee camp a ten hour jeep ride away from the nearest airport, after a two hour flight south from Delhi.

Here 2000 Tibetans live at an altitude of 5000 feet. They live a very simple existence, basic and unpolluted - one car for 2000 people and a bus service to the next town one and a half hours away. There is a Gelugpa monastery representing the central powerpoint within the community and a school run by both Tibetan and Indian teachers. The people can get some healthcare by taking the bus and journeying to the next Indian town. If they want Tibetan medicine they can visit their Tibetan doctor and the dispensary in the settlement



A Tibetan doctor examining the pulse

camp for a fee.

A day after our arrival three other practitioners of Oriental medicine and myself set up the clinic. We had lots of donated medicine and needles to sort out and prepare. We filled the clinic room with benches and rows of chairs back to back. When we were finally ready to open, people poured into the room and eagerly took their seats. They knew the treatment. One of the practitioners had come there the previous year and bridged the barrier of unfamiliarity.

Within the first two weeks of working, we treated 400 people, most of whom we worked with repeatedly. The responses seemed very encouraging and many people reported that the effects of the treatments in the past lasted for months after they had been given. During the treatments you could hear the sound of the malas and mantras. It was a comforting kind of sound - very soothing and such a valuable reminder. People prayed for the whole duration of their treatment. We saw many problems of a

muscular skeletal nature and a disconcerting amount of epilepsy in children and adults alike and many manifestations of liver disturbances as well as digestive problems. Of course there was tuberculosis and a vast variety of lung ailments.

Generally the people were really even tempered and very friendly. Often our room would not be empty by the time the sun went down and electricity or not we just had to continue - people had come from far away and had waited all afternoon and by torch or candle light we had to complete our treatments.

When I left the settlement I had met many really good new people. I was sad to go and could have easily stayed longer.

Back in Delhi, I met my husband Jim who had been working at the refugee camp in Kathmandu with Lopon Tenzin Namdak, helping with building and repair projects at the monastery there. Now we were going to travel with him to Dolanji, Himachal Pradesh, a ten hour train ride on the Himalayan Queen, a relic from the British Raj.

We arrived in Solan, a busy hill town with a main square that is also the bus stop for all the traffic going through. After a taxi ride on the muddy road, we continued on foot to the Meri Monastery.

When we arrived there, the stairway was lined with all the monks each holding a katak in joyous anticipation of the return of Lopon Tenzin Namdak who had left his monastery four months previously, to journey to the U.S.A. upon invitation to give the Nature of Mind Teachings in New York.

Now he was back and there were drums and horns and sang was

burned in his honor. One by one all the monks, children and lay people came to offer him their welcome as we were privileged to watch the ceremony sipping our Tibetan tea. In the next few days we enjoyed a very thorough tour. Nyimala who had also accompanied Lopon Namdak to the United States gave Jim and myself a most insightful tour.

Dolanji is a village of about 480 inhabitants. The monastery itself has about 50 monks and 50 boys living there. Many of the boys actually come from families belonging to the Bon tradition who want their children to be raised within that religious tradition. There are also a number of orphans.

While we were visiting, an eight year old boy had been found by the side of the road in Nepal and the man who found him had brought him all the way to Dolanji. The boy had been abandoned by his parents and this member of the Bon community had watched the lonely child for a few days and then decided to take him with him to the orphanage where the Abbott accepted him as a new member of his family, shaved his head and gave the boy the name of "Special Flower".

An important part of the monastery is the school of debating. The monks spend a considerable amount of their daily time engaging in lively debate with one another. This technique heightens their feeling of clarity and knowing their purpose, because day after day they have to defend their ideas, concepts and understanding. Surely that activity alone must greatly contribute to raising people with a very clear sense of themselves.

Verena Smith

Have You Hugged Your Monsters Today?

by Darryl Van Blerk

Encouraged by Tsultrim Allione's article in the November '91 issue of the Mirror, "Feeding the Demon" (an approach which I find very useful, allowing an easily accessible attitude on what can be an exclusively esoteric practice and for which I thank you Tsultrim), I thought I might relate the saga of a friend to whom all of the above approaches presented themselves as possibilities in a very ordinary, everyday chain of events.

Now, unfortunately for her (or fortunately, depending on how you look at it), karma was up to her old tricks again appearing first as a ripple in the pool of her tranquility. Into the house next door moved a Demon, in the guise of medical student.

As we all know ripples never occur in isolation, students love company and Demons are easy, so before

long he was happily joined by fellow Demons, I mean students. The softly undulating waves had become a splash.

Katrina, being of neighbourly bent, made them feel immediately welcome. She took them a cake she had just baked, and assured them of her assistance if ever they should need it. They thanked her, wolfed down the cake and proceeded to get on with their lives, which consisted of, among other things, making lots of noise, and carousing late at night to loud Rock music as young Demons are wont to do. The splash had become a Jacuzzi Whirlpool Bath out in the backyard.

Katrina and her husband, Maurice, an elderly couple in need of their beauty sleep, bore the discomfort stoically at first, with only an occasional good natured hint to their rowdy neighbours that they would

appreciate an unbroken nights sleep from time to time, but the Demons being insensitive to such subtleties, ignored them. The hints turned to pleas which were interpreted as a sign of weakness and disregarded, and the pleas which became threats which were in turn seen as an encroachment on their right to express themselves freely, as young demons must, and they took up the challenge with enthusiasm.

Good neighbourliness had by now degenerated into bad resentment which, for Katrina, had focused itself on a constant whirring sound made by the electric pump of the Jacuzzi Whirlpool Bath, strategically placed as it was, as far from the Demons' house as possible and directly outside Katrina and Maurice's bedroom window.

This did not annoy Maurice so much. His objections were more towards

the Rock hurled through his nocturnal slumbers, but Katrina, whose sensitive ears were made all the more so by the acrimony she bore her tormentors, felt that she could indeed forgive them all their transgressions if only they would turn off their damn pump.

They agreed, in a conciliatory moment, to do so on occasion, but the occasions were few and far between and Katrina meanwhile was in danger of being consumed in the fire of her resentment. Obviously something had to be done....but what?

Mustering her resources she managed to analyze her situation. If Mohammad won't go to the mountain, she reasoned, the mountain must come to Mohammad. Having identified the source of her misery, the whirring poisonous pump, or so she thought, she

resolved, as she couldn't stop it, she would simply avoid it. She would move her bedroom to the other side of the house.

This worked for a while, and Katrina meditated on the implications of this intrusion into their apparently blameless existence, when suddenly, the neighbour on the other side of their house announced unabashed his intention to build a large swimming pool (complete with whirring pump) and sure and soon enough, with gnashing of gears, roaring of engines and spitting of black smoke, the bulldozers, those bullies of the earth, moved in. The path of renunciation denied to her, Katrina and Maurice moved back to their old bedroom.

The respite, albeit brief, had, however, allowed Katrina a measure of peace. In this time she realised

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A Sage's Wisdom in a Child's Body



The reincarnation of Kalu Rinpoche

(photo Elio Guarisco)

On Thursday, April 2nd, in the temple of Sonada monastery, it was announced that Kalu Rinpoche's reincarnation had been recognised. The announcement itself was made by Kalu Rinpoche's own nephew, Lama Gyaltzen, the father of the new Rinpoche.

As well as being a wonderful Teacher of Westerners, Kalu Rinpoche had also been important for the transmission of the Teachings among the Tibetan Lamas themselves.

Brought up in accordance with the Shangpa Kagyu tradition (a Kagyupa school founded by Kyungpo Naljor, a Yogi of Bon origins), Rinpoche spent many years meditating in solitary locations. Because of his manifest experience of the Teachings and in particular of their application in meditation, he was nominated as the spiritual head of the three-year-retreat Centre Pelpung (the main monastery of the Karmapas) in Eastern Tibet. He frequently attempted to quit this position, so as to be able to lead a more secluded life, free from ties. And in fact, on arriving in Bhutan, following the Chinese invasion of Tibet, he refused to bind himself by becoming spiritual advisor to the royal family. Instead, after setting up a three-year-retreat Centre, he silently moved on to India, where he founded his monastery and principal residence at Sonad, a little town, forty minutes drive from Darjeeling.

He had a highly charismatic personality, and it was not long before Westerners started arriving in that isolated village in the north-east of India.

This was to be the prelude to a continual pilgrimage which was to take him to a great many countries both in the West and East, where without any personal motivation, he unceasingly devoted himself to imparting advice and Teachings, and to creating facilities for the three-year retreats that are

characteristic of his tradition.

His manner was ascetic, but free from denial of the world: on every occasion, he showed deep compassion, great trust in the power of the Teachings and a capacity for transmitting them with simplicity combined with spontaneous conviction.

He lived until the age of eighty. At the last, he asked Bokar Rinpoche - an important disciple - to help him into the cross-legged position. He then gazed into space and, without any sign of breathing, left this world. It was evident that for years he had been keeping alive through the power of his intentions.

His death meant great grief and emotion for his followers. However, I would never have imagined that the reincarnation of a Lama could be more of a shock than his departure. Having always felt that the relationship one establishes with a Master is the result of an unrepeatable combination of circumstances and events, I had never attributed great importance to the reincarnation of a Lama. Nor am I able to state with the certainty of logic that a certain child is actually the reincarnation of a Master. But this time, my mental rationality was transcended by emotions and feelings, the certainty of which had little to do with logic and reasoning. Situ Rinpoche and the Dalai Lama both say that Kalu Rinpoche has been reborn as the son of his nephew, secretary, manager and friend, Lama Gyaltzen.

Situ Rinpoche has apparently consulted his dreams, made personal retreats and long pilgrimages in sacred places in India and Tibet to investigate the signs of the reincarnation of Kalu Rinpoche. It seems that his ability at tracking down reincarnations has put him several times onto the scent of the new Kalu Rinpoche. In one dream, he saw Kalu Rinpoche in his previous body, but dressed in bamboo leaves instead of ordinary

clothes. As he was there in front of him, he decided to ask him about his actual whereabouts now. At this point, Kalu Rinpoche broke into a tremendous laugh and said, "I am Gyaltzen's son", and then dissolved away while continuing his laugh. The Dalai Lama has confirmed Situ Rinpoche's intuitions, and has declared that there is no shadow of doubt as to who Kalu Rinpoche's new incarnation is. On the day of his birth, the baby looked at his father, Gyaltzen, and laughed in the same fashion as in Situ Rinpoche's dream. In the following months, some said they felt that that child might be Kalu Rinpoche's reincarnation, but no-one could say for certain. However, many circumstances and details made Gyaltzen think that his son could actually be the reincarnation. When the news became known of the observations made by the Dalai Lama and Situ Rinpoche, everybody at the monastery went to offer white scarves to the child and his parents. Everyone was overcome with emotion.

Deep down, I personally have no doubt that this is Kalu Rinpoche's mind in the body of a child. With his smile, he seems to recognise his disciples when they are in front of him, and he often points his fingers at people as if to say, "Hey, that's old there!" One and a half years old, he does not talk, and yet, without having been taught, he makes the gesture of touching people's heads in blessing and is happy handing out protection cords. The child Kalu Rinpoche is still not so very sure on his feet, but today he is cheerfully toddling around without any sign of fear or hesitation amongst the crowd of young and old monks who have gathered in a field to celebrate his arrival. He lets himself be carried around in turn by all the monks and observes attentively the face of even the smallest of them. He plays like a child, but at times seems to have the wisdom of an old man. He appears a living paradox of how someone can be a child and adult at the same time. He reminds me of what is perhaps the most beautiful scene in the film, "The Last Emperor", where the little child is running around uninhibitedly in the midst of all the court dignitaries. For anyone lucky enough to have received some portion of the kindness of the old sage that he was in his last incarnation, it does not take much doing to recognise the same mind in the child. This shattering experience of one's own master dying and being born again, revealing himself spontaneously through the intimacy of the situation, is a font of inspiration, a truth of the teaching manifesting and a collection of ripening emotions which cannot be put into words.

Elio Guarisco

International Dzog-chen Contacts

ARGENTINA Buenos Aires: Comunidad Dzog-chen Paseo Colón 1131 2º11 1063 Buenos Aires 5144572	HOLLAND Stichting Dzog-chen Johannes Verhulstraat 44* 1071 NE Amsterdam 020 6718647	USA Tsoggyalgar: Dzog-chen Community Tsoggyalgar, PO Box 277 Conway, Mass. 01341 0413 2568883; Fax 0413 6651142
Tandil: Dzog-chen Community c/o Hugo Anibal Palacio España 883, 7000 Tandil	ITALY Merigar: Comunità Dzog-chen Arcidosso, 58031 GR 0564 966837; 0564 968110	West Coast: Dzog-chen Community c/o Ruthann Corwin P.O. Box 439 Novato, California 94948 0415 8928370
Cordoba: Comunidad Dzog-chen c/o Ricardo Sued Araujo 1271, Urca 5000 Cordoba 051 816222	Azangar: Adriano Grimaldi V.le Indipendenza 8 14053 Canelli (AT) 0141 831370	New Mexico: Dzog-chen Community c/o Cynthia Jurs Route 9, Box 65XX Santa Fe, N.M. 87505 0505 9823846; Fax 0505 9868046
AUSTRALIA Victoria: Patricia Chandler 471 Canning St. N. Carlton, VIC. 3054 03 3880380	JAPAN Tetsu Nagasawa 7-17-14, Higashioizumi Nerima Tokyo 033 9248965	Hawaii: Susan Indich 129 Kaelepu Drive Kailua, Hawaii 96734 0808 2613469
New South Wales: Dzog-chen Community c/o Hamish Gregor 6 Grant St. Woodford, NSW 2778 047 586257	MALAYSIA Dzog-chen Community Tham Wye Min 8669C Klebang Kechil 75200 Melaka 06 356162	USSR Moscow: Vladimir Maikov Sovetskaya 14-7 Zheleznodorzhny Moscow region 095 5527052; 095 2039196
AUSTRIA Dzog-chen Gemeinschaft Postfach 60 8200 Gleisdorf 031 125431	NEPAL Ian Baker S.I.T. Box 1373 Kathmandu 01 413948	Latvia: Istomin Sergey Mayevich Str. Plata 26, Room 31 Riga 226016 Latvia
DENMARK Community Dzog-chen c/o Jens Rasmussen Pilegaard Alle 5 2770 Kastrup 032 521840; Fax 031 878609	NEW ZEALAND South Island: Lize Morell PO Little Akaloa Banks Peninsula South Island 03 3048731; 03 790015	Buryatia: Randol Gar c/o Farida Malikova 26, Tayozhanaya St. Novokizhinginsk Buryatia 671454
FINLAND Kaisa Liisa Puonti Visantie 19 05400 Jokela 014 81828	North Island: Mario Franchini 8/148 Howe St. Freemans Bay, Auckland 09 765774	LITHUANIA: Dorjeling 2001 P.O. Box 1183 Vilnius, Lithuania
FRANCE Perpignan: Isabelle Bienfait 9 Rue Emile Zola Perpignan 66000 068 355419	NORWAY Community Dzog-chen Gordon Crammer 4157 Utstein Kloster 4 514705	VENEZUELA Caracas: Ingrid Bertet Apartado 60580 Chacao A - 1060 Caracas
Plouray: Dzog-chen Association Dekikha, Bel Avenir 56770 Plouray 097 348113; 068 341024	SINGAPORE Ian Gan 585 North Bridge Road apt. 15-04 Blanco Court Singapore 0718 02982711; Fax 02934472	Merida: Dzog-chen Community Apartado Postal 483 Merida 5101
GERMANY Sonya Burgmeier Vorderer Lech 27 8900 Augsburg 0821 516346	SOUTH AFRICA Darryl Van Blerk 11 Upper Rose St. Newlands, 7700 Capetown	WEST MALAYSIA Chong Kwok Kee 11-A Jalan Fajar 1/5 T. Bakti Ampang Selangor
GREAT BRITAIN Richard Dixey 10th Fl. Windsor House 50 Victoria St. London SW 1H ONW 71 7992233; 7991321	SPAIN Estabanel Curro Ronda General Mitre 162- 7E 1A 08006 Barcelona 3 4173590	YUGOSLAVIA Belgrad: Jovanovic Zelika Zeleni Venac 1 Beograd 011 687123
GREECE Evangelopoulos Liakos 10 Polytechniou Street 10433 Athens 01 8971752	SWITZERLAND Aline Winterberg Schwarzenburgstr. 6 3007 Bern 031 460651	SLOVENIA Chang-chub Sami Maha Sangha PO Box 19 62250 PTUJ Slovenia 062 29874; 062 29874
TAIWAN R.O.C. Mr. C.H. Yen 4th Floor N° 333 Lung Kiang Road Taipei		

"Contacts" is a list of people who can be contacted in order to have information on the activities of the Dzog-chen Community in their particular country. In this edition we have also added their telephone and fax numbers where possible.

The Magic of Overtone

by Matteo Silva

It would be practically impossible to write the history of overtones. It would be like trying to write the history of sound and therefore of the Universe. In nature, every sound is intrinsically made up of a harmonic sequence, and so, where there is sound, there are overtones too.

What interests us here is the fact that overtones form an artistically perceivable logarithmic sequence to be found in every sound, be it the wind, the rustling of a brook, the human voice, or the roar of a motorcycle.

Infinite harmonic scales

Within each of these sounds, there is an infinite rising harmonic sequence, similar to the prime numbers. This harmonic sequence though, is not clearly perceivable to the average human ear, that is to say to a subjugated sense of hearing, conditioned by a largely unaware mind.

It is interesting, however, to know that every sound in the universe is formed by a harmonic sequence with identical logarithmic proportions. What changes is merely the intensity in the vibration of the original harmonics, thereby creating the different timbres which characterise sounds, differentiating the sound of a flute from that of a trumpet, the song of a nightingale from the 'miaow' of a cat or the rumble of an aeroplane.

Also of remarkable interest are the similarities to be found in physics, biology, astronomy and acoustics which are all due to the virtually identical proportional structures at work in these apparently unrelated fields. History has it that Pythagoras introduced his disciples to mathematical and astronomical theories by means of a monochord, and it is known that Kepler too made use of this instrument in his studies; his "harmonic" model of the Universe is in agreement with the most recent findings.

Current theories of physicists and biologists such as D. Bohm or R. Sheldrake, speak of a Universe in which the very smallest particles can no longer be considered as being "matter", but rather as pure energy. And this brings us back to the phenomenon of sound, whose nature is vibration - energy.

In this respect, the allusions made by various mystical traditions do not seem casual when they agree that the origin of the creation is the "Word", or that the entire creation is, in the final analysis, is simply "mantra", sound. Here, a Tibetan tradition goes into greater detail by stating that the essence of the Universe is the Elements, the essence of the Elements is colour, the essence of colour is light, and that the essence of light is sound. To carry on the sequence, we could say that the essence of sound is vibration, and here we find ourselves in agreement with D. Bohm who claims that the origin of matter is not material, but rather vibration, pure energy.

Now, as each sound is made up of a frequency containing a series of infinite ascending harmonics with a 1:2 ratio, we can define overtones as: "higher sounds that vibrate within a single sound whose frequency is a progressive multiple of the frequency of the fundamental sound". As this frequency is infinite, it forms an archetypal model, and as such a myth, which can, however, actually be experienced by our body, and in particular by our voice and hearing.

Therapeutic and musical applications

Every composer or music therapist is naturally interested in the phenomenon of harmonic sounds. In ancient times, in the West too, music was at the same time art and therapy, meditation and knowledge. In this respect, the myth of Orpheus is connected with many such legends, and we know that in ancient Greece music was held in high consideration by philosophers, physicians and mystics. In the East, the artistic, philosophical and

and the canned stuff.

Universally recognisable, harmonically-rich music, is played by acoustic instruments designed to that end, such as the monochord, the drum, the sarod, gongs, etc. As well as these instruments, of which only the monochord is of Western origin, the harmonic instrument *par excellence* is the human voice.

Singing harmonics

The human voice generally fulfils two functions: that of the word and that of song. In both cases, the voice mirrors our state, that is to say our bioenergetic level. In fact, just as the quality of the voice changes according to the intensity of the overtones it contains, so the aware and controlled emission of harmonic sounds modifies our energetic state. Overtone chanting, in which the singer consciously extracts the desired overtones from a held fundamental sound is a practice we use in music therapy, and is also a satisfying and effective form of meditation.

The ability to sing overtones

character. Since the overtones become perceivable on the foundation of a regular sound which is held constant and has the effect of calming the emotions, the singer concentrates on a single mirror-like sound; he thus gradually enters a state of calm until the sound and the singer become one, no longer two separate entities. At this point, the foundation sound is calm and shining like the surface of a lake which mirrors the moon without distortions. In this state, the brain waves enter the 'alpha phase', that is to say a phase characterised by great physical relaxation and mental clarity.

New perspectives

As to its creative and strictly musical aspects, overtone chanting can be said to have become a symbol of a new approach to music in many European countries (especially Germany, Switzerland, Austria and England) and in the United States. The singing of overtones to the accompaniment of a monochord or drum is possible for everyone,

listening, the effect is similar to some forms of meditation. With functional listening, when for example the listener is doing some manual or intellectual job, the person tends to remain fresh and relaxed during his work, which is done more harmoniously than usual. Another observation has been that any kind of intellectual activity can be performed for at least 30% longer and with a greater capacity for concentration and assimilation.

In some German and Swiss primary and middle schools, experiments have been done with overtone chanting being used as background music during some activities such as drawing, or during class tests in various subjects. The results of the experiments have been surprising to the extent that some German schools are trying to integrate these methods into their teaching programme. In fact, the school students proved much more concentrated and interested than usual. The drawings were much brighter and the essays were better. The drawings and essays tended to use fantasy, the adjectives were more often positive, and the essays, which were mainly ecological, concerned the defence of the environment, animals, fields and woods. In the drawings and stories, there were frequently yellow, smiling suns, rainbows, highly coloured flowers and balls, and happy characters. The teachers were generally surprised by the results and by the harmonious and non-competitive atmosphere.

One German middle school teacher could not believe his eyes after a maths test. The students, even the usually least enthusiastic ones had solved the problems without the usual stress and without fear, in a concentrated and harmonious atmosphere. The results were better too. After taking part in this experiment, the teacher has introduced the music into all his lessons, assuming full personal responsibility for the effects. Experiments of the same sort carried out in infant schools have also encouraged some teachers to revise their teaching methods, directing them towards a global structure which includes dances, singing and narrative or pictorial improvisation inspired by a piece of music; playing at school rather than "doing" school; recounting one's dreams by means of gestures and words. These are some of the many activities that aim to facilitate authentic and harmonious growth of the human being in whom body, voice and mind, left and right hemispheres of the brain, can develop in harmony. This is an educational system in which the barrier between teacher and pupils dissolves spontaneously, making way for a friendly, co-operative relationship in which teaching and learning can mean enjoyment and pleasure. The new currents of meditative music, among which figure overtone music and chanting, can provide a small contribution in this regard.



(courtesy of Matteo Silva)

therapeutic aspects of music are today still respected and practised in various traditions. Even in the West, after many years of intellectual fossilisation and specialistic divisions, new interest has sprung up. Along with the 'new' (but in reality ancient) holistic and ecological visions of the world, a new musical culture is being born, in which music is once again a practice that is creative, meditative, therapeutic and religious in the most authentic sense of the term.

As far as my own experience in this direction goes, I have noticed that, in general, music which is very rich in overtones normally creates a sense of great psycho-physical well-being, in contrast to music which is almost without overtones, such as some electronic music. There is also a big difference between live and recorded music, even when the latter makes use of the most advanced digital technology. This difference can in some ways be considered similar to that between fresh biological food

individually in several voices is a way to recognising the intrinsic harmony contained in every aspect of creation, and our human body is the instrument through which this is experienced. In this respect, overtone chanting can be seen as a very effective 'Yoga' in the literal sense of the word: 'reunification' with everything. An experience common to everyone who has so far accompanied me in this research is that after some hours of practice, the singer feels considerably energised and frequently immersed in a feeling of deep well-being. Since sound is vibration, when we sing, we 'massage' our organs with the sound. In the case of overtone chanting, the massage intensifies hand-in-hand with the intensity of the harmonics produced, and this is true, albeit at a lower degree of intensity, also for the listeners present.

Overtones and meditation

Another aspect of overtone chanting is its introspective and meditative

regardless of age and culture, and is a splendid form of music-making which combines usefulness and enjoyment, meditation and therapy, concentration and creativity.

The still-unexplored possibilities of the human voice are many, and overtone chanting, which enables anyone to sing polyphonically in two or three voices, is just one possibility among many. Anybody who has heard this sort of singing, even once, is struck by the irresistible fascination and magic of these sounds, which lead us into realms of great harmony, for which we all, whether consciously or not, feel great nostalgia.

Creative and revitalizing

During our research, we have noticed that even merely listening to this kind of music, and in particular to overtone chanting can be revitalising as well as relaxing. This is true at various levels, ranging from functional listening to total listening. In the case of concentrated, total

Building a Solid Base

continued from page 2

So you don't resolve the problem resolving it just for one moment. To resolve the problem definitively means to have knowledge of the real state, and to overcome all the limits and problems and attachments that we have. If we reach that level that is what is called being realised. Until we have total realisation there is no way of definitively solving all problems.

That is why one of the main things in the Teaching is that it is considered a definitive realisation, and also then there are many secondary things which it is not necessary to renounce. That is the aim, the purpose of the Teaching. If a master teaches a Teaching he is aiming for the person to realise that in some way. And that is what someone who is interested in the Teaching is trying to understand.

The base means to understand all of these things a little.

In reality, all the Teachings, particularly the Buddhist Teachings, from the Sutra Teachings right up to the Dzog-chen Teachings, are for a person's realisation. Realisation is what has been communicated, what we have discovered, which is the real condition. We have not only discovered it in an intellectual way, but it corresponds and it becomes real.

Intellectually we can understand that good and bad are the same thing, because they have the same principle. But it does not correspond. We can say that good and bad are the same but we are so conditioned and have such great attachment for good and great renunciation for bad that you see we are not realised. When you are realised you really find yourself in that condition, that knowledge, and at least it will diminish our tensions and our problems. So you have to understand that the meaning and sense of the Teaching is like that.

True sense

This is why I say that the main thing is not just saying a prayer, reciting a mantra or visualising something. I am not saying that these are not important. They can be important in a certain moment but these aren't the real sense of the Teaching. The sense of the Teaching is to know our condition and find ourselves in that. When we know that then we can see that all the various forms of the Teachings are all aimed at that. Then instead of creating a lot of conflict we should try and understand this, and try to find the true Teachings of the Sutra Teaching, Tantra Teaching and Dzog-chen Teachings. When we talk about the Tibetan Buddhist Teachings you may have heard of the so-called Rime school. Rime means non-sectarian but it is considered almost as a school although in truth it is not a school. It is a kind of Teaching or method of applying the Teaching by teachers who are not in limits. Those who are still limited consider them a bit different from the others and call them Rime. One can have the true

meaning of Rime if one has the true meaning of the Teaching. It is completely meaningless to say, "I am Rime, we are Rime". This means absolutely nothing because that is already limiting. Rather one should already understand a sense of the Teaching, because then one can find oneself in the central meaning of all the Teaching.

To understand this better the base is explained this way in this book so now we will look at the text.

The Text

I have written two texts on the base, one of which is a bit longer than this one. At the moment we are transcribing it and we have almost finished.

Those who are interested can study and learn it. But maybe there are too many words which is the reason I have also written this more concentrated version.

I have called this text the "Rinchen Puzang" because in general to know what text we are talking about we have to give it a name. "Rinchen" means precious. "Puzang" means vase. So precious vase. What is a vase? It is something that contains something inside it.

Remember when we do the initiation in tantrism, the first initiation is the vase initiation. In that case the vase represents our vajra body, and that vajra body contains our bodhicitta, our primordial state, our potentiality, our energy, everything. To enable us to understand that we have this vajra body that contains everything, there is this initiation of the vase. So a vase is something that contains and this book contains what is necessary as a base for someone who follows the Teaching. That is more or less the idea and that is the title of the text.

A Western Yogini

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What does that mean? It doesn't mean that while you're going about your everyday life you have to be saying mantras.

What it means is that we're trying to develop awareness, we're trying to develop kindness, sympathy, caring, trying to be genuinely nicer people, see other people's points of views, trying to alleviate something of the everyday stress and suffering of the people we meet around us. If we can't make the people around us that little bit more happy and peaceful, then what are we talking about?

Striving to become Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, it has no meaning. And because really dharma means an inner transformation of the mind, to becoming just a much nicer person on a very simple level, just much more clear and much more kind, this is something that we can all do.

It's not something we have to package into certain times of the day, it's something which should flow from us moment to moment to moment.

And then there isn't any sense at all

that we have no time to practise dharma because we're practising dharma the whole time.

And everything which happens to us is a challenge for our practice. So then we shouldn't worry about not having the right situation, not being with the right people because wherever we are and whatever we are doing, who ever we are with, that is the right time, the right person, the right situation.

Interviewed by Brian Beresford.

Reprinted from the Dzogchen Community U.K. Newsletter Spring-Summer 1992 edition

Have You Hugged

continued from page 12

that it was in fact not so much the noise of the pump which was causing her such agony, as the relentless clamor of her own indignation. Who objected to the noise? Who got angry enough to spit?

She did, of course. Still the anger was there, but at least the Demon was her own.

Wherever you go you take yourself with you. She couldn't get away, why not try an antidote, make friends, allow the soothing oil of compassion to lubricate the unfair machinations of life.

Having sown this seed of sanity, she set about cultivating it. She thought: Imagine if I lived down on the Main Road with buses roaring past on one side and trains rattling past on the other, or next to the airport, or down on one of the wild wind whipped and blasted Townships..... Young Demons must have their fun, she thought, let them be.

Of course, her aggravation did not disappear immediately, but she persevered, often bursting into tears, much to Maurice's dismay, as the knots of discontent slowly dissolved, and as they did, so her rancour gently subsided to the degree that she was able to entertain a fresh perspective, one that had never occurred to her before.

Each time she heard the whirring of the pump she was aware of her limited view and subsequently conditioned attitude. She could see the process happening, first of separation as she identified the sound, then she could watch her irritation loom large, and she would let it go. The sound being pretty well constant she was not lacking opportunity, and the more presence, the more she began to realize the wisdom of a suggestion she had once read on the front of a T-shirt: Have you hugged your Monsters today?

The sound isn't my enemy, she thought, it's my friend. Roll over Bulldozer, Rock on easy Demons. Pump up the Jacuzzi, the hotter the water, the better the bath.

Waves of karma broke on seamless shores as the splendid play of the Deva and Dakini. Experience appearing as lucid ornament, reflections in a Mirror of clarity ... she relaxed.

Awaiting Divine Intervention

by Raimondo Bultrini

In the Italian newspapers and very probably in the foreign press as well, appeared a rather strange news article about the Dalai Lama and one of his Western disciples. This woman, who was a very rich American, was suffering from AIDS and had been trying for a long time to get in touch with His Holiness to let him know about her terrible sickness and ask him to save her. "I am certain that a Divine Incarnation such as he will know how to help me," she said to her friends. And with this conviction she started to look for the Dalai Lama, following him on his long pilgrimages around the world. She finally arrived in the little village of Dharamsala which is the seat of the Tibetan government-in-exile and the place where His Holiness usually has a rest between one trip and another.

Just when the woman reached India, the Dalai Lama had already left for another destination. So then she returned to America and shut herself in a kind of closed house which she had had constructed for her last worldly retreat far from any inhabited place. "If fate has not even let me meet the Dalai Lama," she said, "then it's better to die alone."

After a period of time the Dalai Lama arrived in the United States. He had heard from many sources that there was an American woman who had been desperately looking for him high and low. So he went to her retreat cell and asked her what he could do for her. The woman told her dramatic story and implored him to do something, at any price.

It is evident that this lady did not consult the spiritual head of the Tibetans as a doctor or shaman, but as a sort of Divine Entity, as the God of a culture opposite to her own culture of science which wasn't able to save her. And so, she must have thought, where the Western God of Reason has failed, surely that of the pure spirit cannot. After interviewing the few witnesses who were present at that meeting, the journalists reported that the Dalai Lama had bent down to the woman, embraced and kissed her and had then said, "I understand your pain but all I can do is advise you to call a good doctor to your bedside and not this poor monk".

A famous Italian lead-writer, Furio Colombo, who reports from the United States for many magazines and television stations, referred to this episode saying that he had been very struck by the humility and naturalness of His Holiness' gesture especially at a time in which everyone boasts about their own almightiness.

"It's a lot easier," commented the journalist, "to promise or pretend that our powers are really unlimited." Who can verify the deeds of a God, when the word spreads round that - in the case of the Dalai Lama - we are dealing with a God? And another question comes to mind. Was it a mistake to have taken away from this woman her illusion of Divine Intervention? But is there a danger greater than illusion?

At death we must arrive at preparations and knowledge that nobody can "save us" from externally. This seems to be the moral of this story, the sad story of a woman who didn't want to die.

Communication from Japan

The Mirror correspondent from Japan, Mr. Tetsu Nagasawa, informs us that a Japanese translation of "The Crystal and the Way of Light" has just been published. Translators are now working on "Dzog-chen" which should be ready for publication next October. The Japanese Dzog-chen Community would like to communicate with practitioners in Yugoslavia their concern about the situation there. The Japanese Community is dedicating the merit of their collective practices for the peace and welfare of the Yugoslav people. Mr. Nagasawa asks the Chang-chub Santi Maha Sangha in Slovenia to communicate with him about their project to publish the Buddhist scriptures in their language.

CORRECTION

In the last issue (no. 14, page 12) of The Mirror, we mistakenly printed that Tsultrim Allione has been a practitioner of Tibetan Buddhism since 1987. This should read 1977. Our apologies for the misprint.

Vesak Celebrated

continued from page 10

Finally it was announced by the editor of Paramita, the most diffused Buddhist magazine in Italy, that next September there will be the first official gathering of the European Buddhist Union in East Berlin, organised by 14 different countries. The theme will be "Union in Diversity". East Berlin has been selected because, soon after the overthrow of communism in Eastern Europe, more and more dharma centres have been opened in the area. The Italian centres have been invited to present their

activities and illustrate their experiences. Further information on the event is given in this issue of The Mirror.

The Vesak celebration ended up with three different rituals performed by the masters representing the three main dharma traditions: the Venerable Thanavero Bhikkhu for the Theravada School, Taiten Guareschi for the Soto Zen, Thamthog Rinpoche and Lama Giang Ciub for the Vajrayana. The ceremony was intense, moving and very powerful and finished with a collective silent sitting practice meant to send positive energy, peace and love to this troubled world.

Kagyu Samye Ling Tibetan centre has been a focus for Buddhist Teachings for a quarter of a century. Located in the beautiful Scottish border country, it was founded in 1967 by the Venerable Akong Rinpoche and the Venerable Chogyam Trungpa - two young lamas who had fled their Tibetan homeland in 1959.

Samye Ling was, in fact, the first Tibetan centre in the west and in the first ten years, many great lamas such as H.H. the 16th Karmapa and the Very Venerable Kalu Rinpoche visited and gave Teachings there.

In the late '70s and early '80s a ten year training programme was organised around the cloistered retreat and two such retreats have since taken place there. The Samye Ling centre has also been actively involved in assistance to refugees through the ROKPA charity.

In August 1988, the Samye temple was opened after ten years of work. The first Teaching was given by H.H. the Dalai Lama.

Every summer, students have an opportunity to take part in a course of intensive practice and study of the Mahamudra Teachings under the direction of H.E. Tai Situpa. An annual inter-faith symposium also takes place there in the summer.

With more and more students wishing to undertake a four year retreat, in 1990, Lama Yeshe Losal, Samye Ling's retreat master investigated the possibility to purchase Holy Island, which lies just off the island of Arran on Scotland's west coast. The island has spiritual connections reaching back to the 6th century when the Celtic saint Laisren lived there in retreat.

The island has recently been bought for 350,000 pounds and now Samye Ling centre is trying to raise funds for the monastic complexes which will be built there.

Some of the plans for Holy Island include creating facilities for long-term Tibetan Buddhist retreats and for interfaith retreats with two retreat centres, one for men and the other for women which will accommodate 100 people. The centre also plans to preserve the environment there repairing the buildings that have been neglected and utilising materials that will not impair the health while creating a sanctuary where animals can take refuge. Projects there will be realised where possible using local materials and alternative energy resources.

For more information on the project, contact Thom McCarthy, Holy Island Project, Samye Ling Tibetan Centre, Eskdalemuir, Langholm, Dumfriesshire, DG13 0QL, GB.

UNIVERSAL TIMETABLE

July 8th	03.30 Rome, Berlin, Oslo, Paris, Madrid
16.30 Fairbanks, Hawaii	04.30 Moscow, Nicosia, Helsinki, Athens
17.30 Dawson	06.00 Tehran
18.30 San Francisco, Los Angeles, Vancouver	08.00 ODDIYANA, Delhi, Kathmandu
19.30 Denver	08.30 Rangoon
20.30 Chicago, Mexico City	10.00 Ulan Bator, Jakarta, Singapore
21.30 New York, Montreal, Lima	10.30 Beijing, Lhasa, Manila, Hong Kong
22.00 Caracas	11.30 Tokyo, Seoul
22.30 Buenos Aires	12.30 Sydney
23.30 Rio de Janeiro	14.30 Wellington, Marshall
July 9th	
01.30 Reykjavic, Capo Verde	
02.30 London	

PRACTICES FOR SPECIAL DAYS

Tibetan date: 4th Month, 15th day
Full Moon
This is the anniversary of the Parinirvana of Buddha Shakyamuni, as well as an important day for the Long-life practice "Cycle of Life's Vajra". Therefore try to do this practice early in the morning, and in the afternoon or evening do a Ganapuja.

Western date:
Monday 15th June 1992

Tibetan date: 4th Month, 25th day
This is the anniversary of Ngor Chen (a great Master of the Shakyapa tradition and initiator of the Ngor lineage), therefore it is a good day to do the Guruyoga "A Kar Lamai Nalgyor", either collectively or alone.

Western date:
Thursday 25th June 1992

Tibetan date: 4th Month, 30th day
New Moon
This day is the anniversary of Nyagla Padma Dondul (1816-1872). He was one of the Masters of Chang-chub Dorje, the main Master of Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche. He discovered the Term "Tsedrub Gongdus" which two of his disciples, Ayu Khadro and Changchub Dorje, transmitted to Norbu Rinpoche. Therefore you should try to do this Long-life practice, "Tsedrub Gongdus", "Union of Primordial Essences". The time to do it is the early morning. Later in the day or in the evening you can do the Guruyoga with White A, "A Kar Lamai Nalgyor".

Western date:
Tuesday 30th June 1992

Tibetan date: 5th Month, 1st day
This is the anniversary of mChog-gyur gLing-pa (1829-1870) a Nyingmapa Master of Dzogchen, one of the most important Rimed masters of the XIX Century. Try to do a practice of A Kar Lamai Nalgyor, Guru Yoga with White A.

Western date:
Wednesday 1st July 1992

Tibetan date: 5th Month, 10th day
According to many masters, the anniversary of the birth of Padmasambhava is on the 10th day of the sixth month. But according to the great Dzogchen Master Jigmed Lingpa, it is on the 10th of the fifth month. So this year to celebrate this important anniversary we Dzogchen practitioners all over the world communicate in the state of contemplation, practising guruyoga with the Tundrin, Tungyas or Ganapuja according to our possibilities. We do this practice when it is 8.00 in the morning in Oddiyana.

Western date:
Thursday 9th July 1992

SEE THE UNIVERSAL TIMETABLE

Tibetan date: 5th Month, 15th day
Full moon
This is a special day for the Long-life practice of Amitayus, so you can do the Long-life practice U.P.E. early in the morning. If you cannot do it at that time, it is still good to do it later in the day.

Western date:
Tuesday 14th July 1992

Tibetan date: 5th Month, 25th day
This is a Dakini day and an important day for the practice of Ekajati. Therefore, according to your circumstances, try to do the long Tun collectively or the medium Tun if you are practising on your own. In either case, repeat the heart mantra of Ekajati as many times as you can.

Western date:
Saturday 25th July 1992

Tibetan date: 5th Month, 30th day
New moon
This is a special day for purification practices. It is best to do the Purification of the Six Lokas either collectively or alone, preferably in the early morning. Otherwise you can do a medium or short Tun.

Western date:
Wednesday 29th July 1992

Tibetan date: 6th Month, 4th day
This is the anniversary of the Dharmachakra (the first turning of the Wheel of the Dharma): the first time that Buddha Shakyamuni gave the teaching of the Four Noble Truths to his disciples at Sarnath, after his illumination. On this special day to honour the Lord Buddha you can do a Ganapuja with your Vajra brothers and sisters.

Western date:
Sunday 2nd August 1992

Tibetan date: 6th Month, 10th day
This day is a special day of Padmasambhava so if you have the possibility, do a Ganapuja, if not practise Guruyoga with Padmasambhava and the Long-life practice U.W.U.

Western date:
Saturday 8th August 1992

Tibetan date: 6th Month, 14th day
This is the anniversary of the third Karmapa, Rangjung Dorje. On this day it is good to do "A Kar Lamai Nalgyor", Guruyoga with White A.

Western date:
Wednesday 12th August 1992

Tibetan date: 6th Month, 15th day
Full moon
This day is the anniversary of Gampopa, the disciple of Milarepa. Therefore it is a day to do "A Kar Lamai Nalgyor", Guruyoga with White A. It is also a good day to do the Long-life practice of Amitayus, "Union of Primordial Essences".

Western date:
Thursday 13th August 1992

Tibetan date: 6th Month, 25th day
This is a Dakini day, so it is a positive day for reinforcing the function of your energy and creating a vital contact with the energy of the universe by doing a Ganapuja with your Vajra sisters and brothers. If there are no other practitioners nearby you can do a medium Tun on your own. In either case, when you transform yourself into the Dakini Simhamukha, it is good to recite her heart mantra as many times as possible.

Western date:
Sunday 23 August 1992

Tibetan date: 6th Month, 30th day
New moon
This is a very important day to do purification practices, especially the "Purification of the Six Lokas". If you have the chance, you can also do a short, medium or long Tun.

Western date:
Friday 28 August 1992

Tibetan date: 7th Month, 10th day
This is the anniversary of Jomo Menmo (1248-1283), a very famous woman Tertön, reincarnation of Yeshe Tsogyal. She was the consort of the great Tertön Guru Chowang. It is also a very special day of Guru Padmasambhava. Therefore it is an ideal day to do a Ganapuja and Long-life practice associated with Padmasambhava, "Universal Wisdom Union". If you have the opportunity it is beneficial to do a Ganapuja.

Western date:
Sunday 6 September 1992

Environmental Training Course for Tibetans

ApTT, Appropriate Technology for Tibetans, a non-profit environmental organisation based in the U.K. and the United States, is currently running an Agroforestry and Environmental Training Project in Bir, Himachal Pradesh, India.

The curriculum for agroforestry and environmental training programmes, aims to train groups of Tibetans who can share their acquired skills and knowledge by setting-up projects in their communities of origin. These groups will thus provide the Tibetan communities in the Himalayan areas of India (including Ladakh), Nepal, and on the Tibetan Plateau, with the skills to begin community-based agroforestry projects, including

re-forestation and tree nursery maintenance and development. The expressed aim being to redress the now-critical forest depletion occurring in the region in a way which is best suited to the Tibetan peoples who inhabit the area.

Thus the deleterious effects of de-forestation in these extremely sensitive geographical regions can be counteracted. Some of the specific objectives in setting up a curriculum and development strategy will be:

- i) to re-forest and sustain the forests in a manner most suitable to the peoples who live in them.
- ii) to improve the quality of life in the local communities.
- iii) to help maintain and enhance,

where appropriate, the wildlife, especially those species, of which there are quite a few, which are currently endangered.

The Project also aims to help minimise flooding problems caused by excessive and rapid snow melt in the de-forested areas of the eastern Tibetan Plateau and the Himalayan regions of India and Nepal, and to minimise river siltification, which has resulted from heavy erosion of de-forested lands in the flood basins of Bangladesh, China, Burma, Thailand, Kampuchea, and Vietnam. Further information on this and other ApTT projects can be obtained from: ApTT TRUST-UK, 6 Rockhall Road, London NW2 6DT, U.K. Tel. 081 452 2820.

THE MIRROR

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