

THE MIRROR

The International Newspaper of the Dzog-chen Community

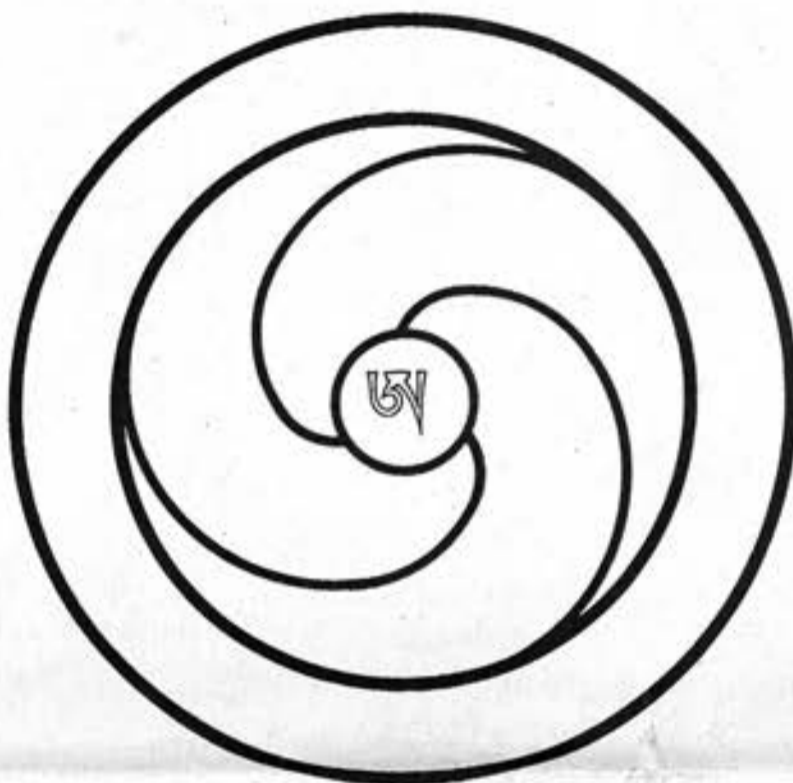
Issue 17

STILL POINT OF THE TURNING GAKYIL

"Years ago in Naples, together with the people interested in the Teaching," Norbu Rinpoche recalls ... We are in the Gonpa at Merigar where people have come from all around Italy. The subject of discussion is the Merigar Community and its organization: the problems that have arisen since the time that small group of people became a large nucleus of practitioners with the responsibility for managing grounds, buildings, cultural initiatives, not to mention the specific activities concerning the teachings that are the *raison d'être* of the Dzog-chen Community.

"All those years ago in Naples", Rinpoche explains, "with those first few people interested in Dzog-chen, we thought of buying a house, a base for an association, a place for Yantra, for teachings. We had already found a large flat and even put down a deposit on it. But that night I couldn't sleep. I felt that out of it would grow a type of organization that wouldn't correspond to the teaching. And that I feared at that time".

Over ten years have gone by. Time and circumstances have matured and the organization has now been born through favourable circumstances and out of Rinpoche's awareness - his constant knowledge of when the time is ripe. And through Rinpoche's constant guidance as to the creation of an organization in perfect correspondence to the principle of Dzog-chen. Otherwise it would have been quite impossible for the many hundreds of people to come to



Merigar for the teachings; or for that matter, for the cultural activities such as seminars and courses to be held.

THE MASTER'S EXAMPLE

So Rinpoche found the courage to start up an activity that has since spread to many other situations in different parts of the globe. Everything began from his mind. Then he employed his energy (voice) and finally realized on a material plane (body) the things that served his purpose. He dug the earth, cleaned the rooms and rebuilt the roof of the new Merigar: what is known as Karma Yoga, something

many do not want to do because "it is not very intellectual". So one can say that he set an example. Not just one, but many.

The first example was the structure of the organization. From the start everything hinged around the Gakyil, the three sections of which are an ideal synthesis of the principle of body, voice and mind. We are used to considering things in intellectual terms, and so we have always 'limited' ourselves by thinking of the Blue Gakyil as the organism representing the mind and thus cultural activities; of the Red as being voice or energy and therefore

physical work; and of the Yellow as the earth, body - economic sustenance. But what does all this really mean?

In the Gonpa, Rinpoche is explaining the reason why we are all gathered there again to discuss the organization. A few months back, he recalls, many people posed the problem of how to improve the financial running of the Community, and we had thought of creating the figure of an 'Administrator'. Some were of the idea that this person was in one way or another replacing the Gakyil. The real problem - and this is the real point - is that the members of the Gakyil have not shown themselves capable of confronting their task. It is difficult to run such a large organization, and even more so if people accept posts in order to make themselves feel important.

SACK OF YAK HORNS

And Rinpoche goes on to use a metaphor to illustrate the egoism with which we tackle problems. He explains how if a lot of people all try to make their own point of view prevail, then what one ends up with is something like a sack full of yak horns - lots of sharp, uncomfortable spikes. Certainly not a shining example of the principle of collaboration. Another example: of all the levels of existence, the mind is foremost, Rinpoche reminds us. For the body will end up in the cemetery and the energy and voice will be interrupted too.

What does this mean with respect to *continued on page 3*

IN THIS ISSUE

Educating Children
Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche
page 2

International Dzog-chen Retreats
page 3

Tsegyelgar News
page 4

TIBETAN LANGUAGE CONFERENCE
special section
pages 5-12

Report
pages 5 and 6

Speakers Views
pages 7 and 8

The Basis of Tibetan Culture
Professor Namkhai Norbu
pages 9 and 10

Repairing the Bridge between the Old and New Language
Mr Rakra Tethong
page 11

Standardizing the Tibetan Language
Dr Thuptan Chogdup
page 12

Book Reviews
The Song of the Vajra, 21 Semzin, Dream Yoga
page 13

Shamanism in Kazakhstan
Conversation with a Kazak haealer
page 14

Practice Calendar
page 16

HISTORIC LANGUAGE SEMINAR



We are happy to report that the Second International Seminar on Tibetan Language, which took place at Siena and Arcidosso, Italy, between Sunday 30th August and Friday 4th September, was generally felt to have been a great success.

The event, organized by the Shang-Shung Institute, proved to be a historic moment, the first time that Tibetan scholars from every part of the world have had the chance to discuss the issues facing their language.

After the inauguration in the beautiful Charterhouse of Pontignano near Siena, the bulk of the discussions took place in the Merigar Gonpa, appropriately furnished for the occasion. Among the subjects of debate was the topical issue of the standardization of modern Tibetan, as well as a reappraisal of the ancient Shang-Shung language. A pleasantly relaxed and friendly atmosphere surrounded the event.

Educating Children

Means Making Them Understand Their Dimension

Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche

There are many ways in the world of educating children. People of all kinds, of different social categories, and above all parents, know very well that children represent the future of the world. Just thinking of a single country, we can see how its future depends on its children and how they grow, how they are brought up. So everybody considers that it is very important for children to be well educated.

But it is not only a question of education. In Tibetan medicine, right from the very beginning of life in the womb, the parents' behaviour, attitude and diet are also considered to be important because all these things affect children, the state of their three humours (i.e. wind, bile and phlegm), their health and even their mental condition, which are all relative things.

But even if we cannot bring the whole of society to this level, children keep being born. When they are born, children have their own ideas that are fresh, innocent, beyond dualistic concepts and limitation. But then they have to grow up with their parents, who love them and try and do their best teaching them what they have learnt, not only through education but also through their experience in society, through how they have lived, knowing what one has to face, how many problems there are. On the basis of all this, parents try and do their best, and then many of them try and limit their children's dimension, telling them what they must and mustn't do, considering that it is important that children be educated and that parents also have an important responsibility and a role to play in this.

As I said, little children do not have precise concepts. So they don't know what is dangerous and what is not, what they can and what they can't do. For this reason, parents, who already know and have experienced this condition, try and teach them their limits: this means that the parents love their children and that the children become aware of their condition, and this is why the parents take responsibility.

This is certainly important, since if parents did not take responsibility, children would surely find many problems because of their lack of experience. So, it is true that until children are capable of reasoning enough - i.e. until they are about ten years old, or even less, even seven or eight, since it also depends on the children and their individual capacity - parents try and explain, teach, follow them, to defend them from all the problems.

There are many ways of doing this: some parents do it in a way that is almost military, others do it in a



(photo Mario Maglietti)

more gentle way, letting children know through collaboration that there are things to avoid. Certainly, the best way is not just through scolding and hitting them, but trying somehow not to let them do the thing. Sometimes children can be persuaded not to do something through allowing them to have a little bit of experience of what they are trying to do, but it is very important that parents always take responsibility until the children can understand reasoning.

There are some theories that say that children should be totally free and be left free to do anything they want. I don't think that this is a good idea, because children have no idea of freedom or "non-freedom": they simply don't understand because they lack a precise idea, and so they may find a lot of trouble. In this case, leaving them alone means abandoning them, failing to give them help and collaboration.

There are many ways of collaborating, not necessarily giving orders or scolding them, but not remaining indifferent either. In some way, one should communicate and make them understand as much as possible, when children are capable of reasoning, when they are about seven to ten years old; particularly these days, in our modern world, there are such intelligent children, who can reason so well.

For instance, when children begin to speak and say their first words, they learn how to ask, "Why?" and reasoning starts from there. If parents say something, then the children ask, "Why?". This means that they want to understand why, which means they are reasoning. In this

case, if parents are not interested or available and maybe indifferent, with the excuse that children should be free, the children will certainly feel abandoned.

Little children need a lot of help and attention from other people and parents: even if they are not capable of reasoning, at least they feel that somebody is watching what they are doing, communicating. And then, when they are capable of asking

and dies, could be the mummy of a little baby-insect, who may be waiting for his mum at home, and then mum doesn't come: and what will the baby-insect do then?

If one explains to children in this way, they won't think of killing animals anymore, because they know that animals are sensitive, and sensitivity also arises in children. This means reasoning and understanding, and parents can

If we consider that children are the future then this generation must be based on a principle of evolution of our knowledge of our own condition, respecting our human dimension. If today's children learn something about this, this experience will certainly also arise in their children, for future generations.

"why?" and reasoning, then certainly one can make them understand many things, good and bad.

For instance, some children like to squash little insects, because first they see them moving and then afterwards they don't move anymore, and this feels strange to the children. They do this because their parents have never told them what an insect is, that it is a being who walks because it has legs, just as men have legs and walk, and if someone squashes it the insect will definitely feel pain, just as if we get squashed by something big, we certainly don't feel happy. And then maybe, this insect, which feels pain

explain and make their children understand everything in this way. This means giving children help, collaborating with them and educating them according to a principle of knowledge, knowing what their condition is, without abandoning them or neglecting their capacity to understand.

Giving them assistance from the beginning when they are still very small, means we are helping them. This is a very important part of education. Above all, when parents are practitioners, they know very well what to do when children start reasoning, because the principle of the Teaching is to find oneself in

one's dimension and through this to be able to respect other people's dimensions, too. And if children feel this, then they also understand what it means to find oneself in one's dimension. Finding oneself in one's dimension also means being responsible. In this way, explaining everything and collaborating, parents make children feel that they themselves are responsible.

They can do this not only through explanation, but by giving them a chance to be responsible as they grow up, instead of always cuddling them, saying: "Oh my little one!", reminding them of how it used to be when they were in mummy's lap, as if they were their parents' toys. Some parents like to think of their children in this way, even when they are adults. They may have fun in this way, developing their attachment to the children, but children can't always live in this way, as if they were on their mother's lap. They have to live their own lives, be able to face all the problems in society and those relative to their condition. And to be able to face all these problems they must be aware and responsible for themselves.

If their parents have educated them and helped them do this, those children definitely won't have any difficulty in society: they will know very well how to face life and why they have to study and become responsible. They will know very well that everyone has their own dimension, and that they have to be able to govern themselves within this dimension.

In this way, the parents will be happy too, as they won't have to worry. Otherwise even when the children have grown up, they always remain 'big children', 'mummy's boy' or 'daddy's boy', depending on mum and dad. And then, they can't make anything of their lives. And also when parents have forced their children, limiting them, then they only study to make their parents happy. And then they feel studying to be an obligation, but don't understand that it is also an obligation towards themselves and their own lives, because they have to get on with their own lives.

Parents themselves don't think about this: a father physician tells the child to study medicine and maybe the child doesn't like it, but has to do it as he is the son of his father, and daddy is a famous physician. Children try to make their parents happy and keep the family tradition alive, but they don't feel like doing it, and maybe there is a reason behind this. Maybe if something does not feel quite right, the fact itself that one doesn't feel

continued on page 15

Still Point...

continued from page 1

he Gakyil? It means that everything we have created materially can be destroyed, and one day will no longer exist. But this is not the fate of the Teaching, because the transmission of the Teaching is beyond the circumstances of time and space. Just as the mind has no particular place, colour or smell. But nonetheless it is there, it exists; and it is for its development that Merigar has been created.

SHARED INSPIRATION

One more example. Rinpoche tells us that in the United States, Tsultrim Allione has offered to unite her "Tara Foundation" (a point of reference for many people with its own autonomous administration) with the Dzog-chen Community of Tsegylgar. But, Rinpoche explains, this is not the principle. The Tara Foundation works fine autonomously. So why insert it into another organization? The Tsegylgar Gakyil would have to take on its administration when maybe it already has enough problems as it is.

The real principle is the shared inspiration. As for example in the relationship between the "Associazione Culturale Comunità Dzog-chen" and the other organizations that have grown up alongside it over the course of the years. *A.S.I.A.*, the *Shang-Shung Edizioni* publishing co-operative, the *Coabit* co-operative, the *Istituto Shang-Shung*. "They operate in close collaboration" as Rinpoche states at the start of a brief written communication which he reads out at the end of the discussion in the Gonpa. "However they maintain complete organizational autonomy. The activities of the individual organizations are linked", the statement continues "by means of a co-ordinating committee formed by members of each single organization, its task being to facilitate the exchange of information and to foster co-operation". Here is the rest of Rinpoche's written communication. It is an organizational model for the Dzog-chen Community. It regards Merigar. But Merigar is an example.

THE ORGANIZATION OF THE DZOG-CHEN COMMUNITY.

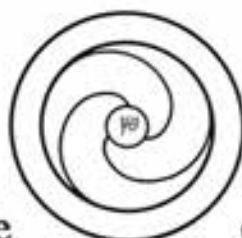
The principle of the organization of the Dzog-chen Community is based on the Gakyil composed of nine people divided into three groups corresponding to body, voice and mind.

The Gakyil and this form of organization has been envisaged in order to prevent the creation of bureaucratic structures and positions of power, and so that the life of the Dzog-chen Community will revolve around the Master and the principle of the Teaching.

Recently the malfunctioning of the Gakyil led to the need to explore the possibility of it being supported by an administrator who, for a few months, has been given the task of

studying the situation and recommending adequate solutions. At the end of this trial period I have come to be more convinced than ever of the importance of the principle underlying the creation of the Gakyil and therefore of the necessity that the "Associazione Culturale Comunità Dzog-chen" be based upon it. It is necessary, however, to examine the weak points that act as an obstacle to the smooth running of the Gakyil.

In the first place, the way in which the members of the Gakyil are selected: in order to avoid people unsuited to their tasks entering the Gakyil, and so as to allow sufficient time for applicants to be accurately assessed, it seems to me that it is



The life of the Dzog-chen Community revolves around the Master and the principle of the Teaching.

necessary to request (by way of the "Bollettino", "The Mirror" etc.) that those who intend to take part in the new Gakyil make themselves available at least five months before its formation.

Although the roles within the Gakyil are assumed on a voluntary basis, they comport precise responsibilities without conferring any power or special prestige. Rather, they are an essential service, without which the Dzog-chen Community could not function. So it is important for everyone to become aware of this, making themselves available to offer in a responsible way a little of their time and work.

The second point to be considered is the way in which the Gakyil operates. It is of fundamental importance that at the start of each working year a plan, which should be as detailed as possible, is drawn up regarding the activities to be performed, and that at the same time the budget and estimated costs are presented. Likewise, at the end of the working year a report must be presented on the activities carried out, together with the final balance and accounts.

The various tasks and responsibilities should be divided up on the basis of the initial programme. This brings us to the third consideration, which has to do with the organization and distribution of tasks within the Gakyil. Up to now, apart from the three overall fields of activity corresponding to the three colours, individual responsibilities have practically never been defined. This has allowed many people to play only a nominal role in the Gakyil, which is one of the causes behind the malfunctioning of the organization. So it is important that at the start of each working year, on the basis of the initial programme, individual tasks and responsibilities be allotted which are to be reported on at the end of the year.

In addition, the position of 'Director' needs to be assigned within the Gakyil, whose job it is to co-ordinate the various activities and make sure that they are carried out in the appropriate manner.

ARE WE SCARED?

A week later, in another Gakyil meeting Rinpoche reassured us once again there is no reason to feel scared of organization as such. Organization is necessary and depends on the circumstance. Without it, how could the Gonpa, "barn" and yellow house ever have manifested. "They certainly didn't jump out during the night like mushrooms in autumn!" The important thing is not to become slaves to organization. There is space for work and space for having fun. Daily life is not in some way 'outside' the teaching. On the contrary, the teaching is a guide to life. There is the *Dava* (View), *Gomba* (Meditation) and *Jyodba* (Attitude), and there are explanations as to how to continue after meditation

sessions and integrate the teaching into day-to-day life. Recently, Rinpoche has pointed out more than once that even the survival of Merigar itself is all relative, whereas the teaching itself continues forever, until all of samsara has dried out. Therefore, it is important that things go ahead correctly, as otherwise the transmission will inevitably suffer. In this respect, we are all responsible for the transmission and, in particular, the Gakyil at Merigar must become a model for elsewhere. "If we don't manage to get it to work here, where I've spent the most time, then where will it work?"

This was the gist of the message. Rinpoche then presented a written motion for everyone's approval and for any specific comments. "In no way should you feel that it is an order", he said. But it is the opinion of the Master, and therefore certainly precious.

LOOKING AHEAD

The figure of the Administrator did not actually appear in the motion. Rinpoche explained why: "the Yellow Gakyil must take the responsibility for these tasks - otherwise, there would be no reason for its existence".

This did not stop Rinpoche though from remarking on all the hard work Marit Cranmer has put in as Administrator.

Due to her own professional needs, Marit has said that she will not be able to take part in the Yellow Gakyil; unfortunately, this means temporarily losing the benefit of her experience, but no doubt she will be back in future Gakyils.

The next Gakyil will be decided upon at the Easter '93 retreat, following a trial period at the start of the year in which new working procedures will be put to the test. In the coming months, *The Mirror* will do its best to keep readers everywhere up to date on developments. We have all been very struck by the energy Rinpoche has been devoting to getting the Merigar Gakyil to work properly in correspondence with the teachings. Quite clearly it is not something confined to Merigar. It is valuable to everyone.

COORDINATION COMMITTEE

The motion presented in the second meeting principally regarded the creation of a Coordination Committee made up by the President of the Association, (Namkhair Norbu Rinpoche), the Director of the Gakyil and individuals chosen by Rinpoche, representing the various separate structures within the Community. The aim is that the committee should represent a practical way of co-ordinating the many programmes and working-strategies related to the individual structures in such a way that they can be of the maximum benefit for everyone. The principle is that the secondary organizations all form part of a single project, in which the Dzog-chen Community Association constitutes the original, central body from which all the other structures were born. These secondary structures represent relative aspects of the Association's activity (research, publishing, etc.) The representatives of the secondary structures will each present their own programmes, annual budget and final balance to the Coordination Committee and report on their activities. The second point was that a temporary advisor (Gualtiero Bosio) would dedicate three or four months to organizing and improving the functioning of the many aspects of the Association.

INTERIM GAKYIL

It has also been decided that, until next Easter, the Merigar Gakyil will be as follows:

Blue - Carlos Ramos, Otello Balducci, Mario Maglietti (Director);

Red - Clara Juliano, Michele Bricaire, Antonio Di Gianmarco;

Yellow - Rita Bizzotto, Enrico Dell'Angelo, Gualtiero Bosio.

(Sad to say, at the time of writing, Clara is gradually getting over a particularly nasty ankle fracture following a fall. All our very best wishes to her for a swift recovery!)

Namkhair Norbu Rinpoche Teaching Schedule 1992-'93

12 November	Departure for Hawaii
14 - 19 November	Teaching
Susan Indich, 129 Kaelepu 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, P.B. 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	
9 March	Arrival in New York
	Tsegylgar, Mass., U.S.A.
16 - 21 March	Teaching
P.O. Box 277, Conway, MA 01341, U.S.A. Tel. 413 2568883, Fax 413 6651142	
2 April	Conference in New York
3 & 4 April	Seminar in New York
Tsultrim Allione, 361 Old Mill Road, Valley Cottage, NY 10989 U.S.A. Tel. 914 268 3050	
6 April	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.

Tsegyelgar News

Development of Tsegyelgar for the Future

Before the summer retreat at Tsegyelgar, Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche met with the Gakyil and many Community members from all over the world to discuss the development of Tsegyelgar, as one of the three main Gars of the Dzog-chen Community. This is a slightly edited account of what was talked about.

The discussions were centred around four topics: Community membership, finding a central location for meeting to encourage growth, the future development of Tsegyelgar and how to have Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche's physical presence there more often.

Rinpoche spoke about the membership cards:

"Some time ago, I asked people for their suggestions concerning my ideas about the organization of the Dzog-chen Community for the future. Many people agreed with the ideas set out in the document which I asked people to read, and others manifested contrary views. Some also protested very strongly. If someone doesn't want to do this, it's OK, because everybody is free. Some people think we are planning a strong organization with a hierarchy. But that's ridiculous. I am always explaining that we must be responsible for the future, but I'm not interested in arguments with people. So I thought let's forget this idea about every Community issuing cards, then.

But at least at Merigar, Tsegyelgar and Tashigar I want to do the membership cards. I want to spend more time in these places, and teach Santi Maha Sangha. Now, I'm not asking people what they think. The transmission and teaching are in my hands so we are going to do this. If it's not too expensive we can produce the same cards here or in Italy. If there is a base, like Merigar, it must maintain itself even when I'm not there. We need a precise membership system for those who take responsibility. But we must do everything through understanding the different situations of each Gar: Merigar, Tashigar and Tsegyelgar.

I don't think we have to do cards immediately. We can do this slowly. Many other places wanted to be able to issue membership cards too, but people in other places should be members of Merigar, Tsegyelgar and Tashigar, if they want to be members of the Community. Maybe later there could be memberships in other places. We are going to go the gradual way, now."

The new secretary of Tsegyelgar, Des Barry, explained the membership cards based on the current situation at Merigar.

An Ordinary Aspirant gets a light pink color card and would pay

around \$300 for the year, for example.

A Sustaining Aspirant would pay around \$600 for example and get some advantages such as free retreats or discounts on books.

After three years an Aspirant can become a full member.

An Ordinary Member would pay \$300 and get a light blue card.

A Sustaining Member would pay \$600 and get a dark blue card with the same advantages as a Sustaining Aspirant.

Tsegyelgar, they will prepare their rules because they know their situation there."

A question was posed to Rinpoche about the ways of becoming members. Could a person become a member of the Community if they had no money?

"Of course these people can work something out with the Gakyil. The point is they don't just stand back and criticize. People who wish to be members can do so

they hadn't understood what Rinpoche wanted. Now the point of view had gradually changed and the California Community now wanted to participate fully.

Rinpoche replied: "We will go slowly. The responses I got to the original document were many. Some people criticized each of my proposals, one by one. They said that this type of organization doesn't correspond with Dzog-chen teaching at all. So I understood that there are people who think in different ways. So now we'll go slowly with three gars. Having a card isn't only a kind of hierarchy, but a way of assuming responsibility. People will learn what autonomous and free means. But at the same time there is collaboration because we share the same transmission. If we go slowly, things will clarify. And later, of course, we can change everything. But we must work with the circumstances of the situation so we are doing these membership cards. If people take responsibility with their membership, the work will not all fall on people who live around here. And people who live farther away

won't criticize so much.

I think we need a place at Tsegyelgar where people can do practice. We also need a place where people who come from outside can spend a short period of time such as two weeks, for example. Perhaps a place where 200 people can do a retreat."

The discussion continued among the people present who tried to identify types of property available, whether in the town, in the country, using properties that already have structures on them, or building from raw land. The conclusion was that these details needed investigation, but, above all, Tsegyelgar needs active participation from all members, whether they live close by, or at some distance. Everyone understands the difficulty for people who live at some distance to come here and find a place to stay. It goes without saying that, if all members of Tsegyelgar are willing to invest time, energy and money in the efforts of the Community, the possibilities for development of the Gar, for the continuation of the teaching, can all be realized.



Under cover during the retreat

Rinpoche explained:

"If there are more members, the amounts can go down. One important thing for me is that a member means someone wants to be responsible for continuing the teaching of Dzog-chen teaching. This year I am preparing the base of Santi Maha Sangha training, to qualify people for teaching. Last year I prepared a book on the base for everybody who is interested. So, now, we are doing a transcription of this book.

I have also written two shorter versions of this. One is longer than the other, one is more concentrated. I've prepared how to do the first level of training. People who want to do this training must pass an examination on this base - not just in an intellectual way. In the teaching we have *Ita ba*, *sgom pa*, *spyod pa*. So you must have these three if you want to be a teacher. It's not sufficient to know a book. You must have the experience, *sgom pa*. You must know how to collaborate with people in a non-intellectual way.

Next year, somewhere, we will start the first level of training and people will take a test. People who are present must be members of the Dzog-chen Community to show their interest in being responsible for the teaching. I will ask non-members first to become members, if they wish to participate in the training, because we are trying to continue the Dzog-chen teaching. People who are not interested can criticize and do things as they feel like doing them. I want everything to be precise. In

through the three Gars. For example, in California, we can't do the cards because there is no base there. There are only three places in which people can be members now. The Gakyil in California will not have these cards now. The membership cards must be from Tsegyelgar. If California wants 1000 cards, they must come from Tsegyelgar."

In a later written communication Rinpoche added: "For the present, if any Gakyil or interested person wants to be a member of the Dzog-chen Community, they should participate in a Gar and be a member of that Gar. That means that the New York (or California) Gakyil or any other person must be members of Tsegyelgar and, of course, they must pay their membership contributions to Tsegyelgar. But that doesn't mean that Tsegyelgar should control them or take care of their responsibilities. On the other hand, in the Dzog-chen Community system all Gakyils are free and they also need money for many things. For that reason I think that a Gakyil like New York or California should ask Tsegyelgar for the number of membership cards they need, and should take the responsibility of registering them. Then they should pay half of the income to Tsegyelgar and use half for the needs of their own Gakyil."

People from the Dzog-chen Community in California said that

Spring Retreat with Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche

Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche has agreed to give a spring retreat at Conway on his return from South America.
The dates are March 13 - 21.

Practice Weekends

Intermediate Yantra Yoga: November 7 - 8
Conway area; Tom Garnet, Coordinator

Rushen Retreat Weekend: January 23 - 25
Valley Cottage, NY; Tsultrim Allione, Coordinator
Information 914 268 7110

Gakyil News

President: Woody Papparazzo
Vice-President: Vern Harrington
Secretary: Des Barry

Gekos: Joe Zurlyo
Yellow: Kathy Smith, Vern Harrington, Sandra Green
Red: Woody Papparazzo, Gerry Steinberg, Reid Fossey
Blue: Paula Barry, Tom Hirschi, George Quasha

Mirror: Jack Ellison, Kathy McGrane, Gaby Harrington

The Gakyil is looking for a temporary group house where they can hold weekly practices, small retreats, maintain an office and house visitors. Long term plans are to develop the present site for personal retreat. In addition, they are searching for a place that will be multi-purpose - space for retreats with 200 people, a mandala for the dance and private quarters where Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche can stay during longer visits.

Dance of the Vajra

Mandalas are being built in Barrytown and at Valley Cottage, NY for indoor dancing this winter. Prima Mai will return to give a course in the spring although dates are not yet confirmed.



Shang-Shung
Institute

THE MIRROR

The International Newspaper of the Dzog-chen Community

Special section
dedicated to
Tibetan Language Seminar

༄༅། བོད་སྐད་མིག་སྐོར་གྱི་ཀླུ་ལྷན་ཁྲིའི་གོ་ས་དཔྱད་ཚོགས་འདུ་ཐེངས་གཉིས་པ།༄༅།

SECOND INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR ON TIBETAN LANGUAGE

The Second International Seminar on the Tibetan Language has now come to a successful close after six days of lively deliberations divided between Siena and Arcidosso, carried out under the auspices of the University of Siena and the Shang-Shung International Institute for Tibetan Studies. Over thirty Tibetologists from all over the world, including many who were able to come from Tibet especially for the event, read and discussed their papers. This is the first time that Tibetans from within Tibet have been able to talk about the major issues involving their language with colleagues from the communities in exile. As such, the Conference can be considered something of a historic occasion.

The official opening was held on Sunday 30th August in the lovely Mediaeval charterhouse at Pontignano, just a few miles from the centre of Siena. Professor Luigi Berlinguer, the Rector of the University of Siena, expressed his sympathy and support for the Seminar and the kind of research it entailed. Then, Professor Namkhai Norbu, as President of the Shang-Shung Institute thanked all the official bodies who had given their recognition to the Seminar, including the European Parliament and the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and then presented his own paper in Tibetan (the official language of the Seminar, along with English).

He outlined what would turn out to be the major themes of the Seminar. Among the topics: the language's inner homogeneity despite the many spoken dialects; its origins going back, as he as well as other speakers see it, to the truly ancient Shang-Shung language; the necessity for creating new and standardized terms by making use of existing elements of the Tibetan language; and the potential for survival of the language itself.

After some more papers, we all moved on to Arcidosso, where from the following day through to Friday 4th, many scholarly papers were read and discussed in the Conference Hall (the Gonpa at Merigar, suitably



Conference participants in front of the Gonpa at Merigar at the close of the Seminar

furnished for the occasion).

There appears to have been unanimous agreement on the part of the thirty or so speakers that the Seminar was a real success. Before presenting their papers, many manifested their great pleasure at having the opportunity to participate, and that the event itself was taking place, expressing in particular their sincere gratitude to Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche and the Shang-Shung Institute for having made it all possible.

By the end, a general consensus emerged that not only had the quality of the deliberations exceeded expectations, but also that much valuable work had actually been done. However, it was essential that all this scholarship should now be followed up by putting into practice the constructive ideas that had emerged, especially as regards the very necessary business of coining new terms, standardizing them and incorporating them into modern school textbooks.

To succeed in this logistically complex task, communication is clearly essential, and there seemed



to be a general feeling that the Shang-Shung Institute could usefully act as a centralized body to co-ordinate this. In this way the Shang-Shung Institute could become an important bridge between Tibetan linguists both inside and outside Tibet promoting further research both historically and linguistically.

Another generally held conviction was that there should definitely be a further edition of the Seminar at a venue yet to be decided on. Here

again, the Shang-Shung Institute could play an important organizational role, although as more than one speaker stressed, funds or other support would be most welcome from Universities or other academic bodies in any way connected with the project.

In the meantime, Tibetan scholars coming from all around the world (including Lhasa and elsewhere in Tibet, Beijing, India, Japan, Switzerland, Denmark etc.) have

As academic conferences go, the Tibetan Language Seminar was something rather special. For it was the first time that scholars living outside Tibet had had the chance to sit down and discuss the situation of their language with colleagues from within Tibet. True, a first edition of the Seminar was held in India in 1987, but sadly, no Tibetans coming from Tibet itself had been on hand to speak.

Now, thanks to the organization of Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche and the Shang-Shung Institute, it was finally possible for Tibetans from all parts to gather, describe the differing situations of the language, and put forward concrete suggestions for its protection and continuation.

One of the main themes of this historical conference was the need for standardization of the language. The choice of a basic standard does not seem to entail too many problems. As Mr Tsering Thar briefly pointed out in his paper, the Lhasa dialect had always represented the principle means of national communication, owing to Lhasa's role as a central meeting point for so many traders, pilgrims and monks. Other speakers pointed to the fact that when educated Tibetans of all different native dialects met, as at this conference, they would immediately start communicating in the language of Lhasa.

In the concluding session of the second day of the conference, the

continued on page 6

been able to take advantage of an unprecedented opportunity to discuss and agree on priorities regarding the vital subject of their language, the vehicle of a priceless cultural heritage. As well as this, there were also the valuable contributions of non-Tibetan speakers from China, Japan, Europe and America.

Not altogether surprisingly, the event received good press coverage in Italy, both in the major newspapers and on national television.

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Mr. Dorje Ngodup Changopa



Gheshe Lobsang Gyatso

continued from page 5

Chairperson, Mr. Rakra Tethong Rinpoche, underlined how just about everyone present was in agreement as to the necessity of taking this 'common language' as a standard.

More difficult is the question of how to preserve and actively promote the language. As we all know, Tibetan has been catapulted into the technological era, and as a result, a whole set of new technical terms has to be introduced and standardized. Now too, much work is being done in this way by Tibetan linguists both inside and outside Tibet so as to prevent the language from becoming swamped by an excess of haphazard borrowings from other sources. A distinguished example is Acharya Karma Monlam, an interpreter of H.H. the Dalai Lama, who spoke on his work in compiling a new comprehensive Tibetan-English dictionary incorporating around 60,000 new terms complete with brief



Prof. Namkhair Norbu and Dr. Enrico Dell'Angelo greeting conference participants

explanations, which should be of considerable help to secondary school students.

Language and education clearly go hand in hand, and several interesting papers touched on educational matters. Many speakers,

such as Professor Dunkar Losang Trinlas Rinpoche from Lhasa, underlined the advantages of teaching modern subjects to Tibetan children in their own language: studies have shown that this simply produces better results. Apropos of

this, Mr. Lobsang Tenzin Rikha of the Council for Tibetan Education in Dharamsala remarked on the excellent quality of the modern Tibetan scientific text-books produced in Lhasa.

This is just one of the areas where greater communication and co-operation could benefit the future of the language and of Tibetans in general. After all, as one delegate pointed out, a subject like mathematics is the same the world over, independently of politics or philosophy. Indeed there was an overall feeling that an information network would help promote the language as a whole. And, in response to a generalized request from speakers, Professor Namkhair Norbu confirmed that the Shang-Shung Institute would be pleased to act as a centre for pooling and exchanging information among delegates, and was happy to help co-ordinate preparations for a third edition of the Seminar.

The following papers were presented during the conference:

A) UPDATING THE LANGUAGE

Acharya Karma Monlam, Lexicographer at the Publication Unit of the Council for Tibetan Education in Dharamsala - "Modern Tibetan Lexicography"

Prof. Dunkar Losang Trinlas of the Tibetan Language Department of the Tibetan University in Lhasa - "The Development of Dialect and Common Speech in Tibet"

Mr. Lobsang Tenzin Rikha, Director of Research and Publication Dept. of the Council for Tibetan Education of H. H. the Dalai Lama in Dharamsala - "Ways and Means to Bridge up the Written and Spoken Tibetan Language"

Prof. Fosco Maraini, Università di Firenze - "Modernizing an Ancient Asian Language: the Japanese Case"

Prof. Namkhair Norbu, President of the Shang-Shung Institute, Arcidosso GR, Italy - "Bod kyi shes rig gi rmang gshi brda sprod rig lam skor, On the Tibetan Language, the Basis of Tibetan Culture"

Prof. Sonam Paljor from the Chinese Centre for Tibetological Studies in Beijing - "Some Notes on the Usage of Standard Tibetan"

Prof. Thuptan Chogdup from the AEC Training College & Center in Pachmarhi, India - "The Standardization of Tibetan Language"

Mr. Tsering Thar, Researcher at the Chinese Centre for Tibetological Studies in Beijing - "The Popular Language of Tibet"

Mr. Tsewang Namgyal Shelkar Linpa, Official Translator, Kashag Office, Dharamsala - "Foreign Influence on Tibetan Language both at Home and Abroad"

B) GRAMMATICAL PROBLEMS

Mr. Dorje Ngodup Changopa, Deputy Director of the Education Department of the Tibetan Autonomous Region in Lhasa - "A Short Discussion on the Traditional Tibetan Grammar and Spoken Language"

Prof. Hu Tan from the Chinese Center for

Tibetological Studies in Beijing - "On the Typological Features of Tibetan Language"

Dr. Kristina Lange from Humboldt Universität Zu Berlin Zentralasiatisches Institut in Berlin - "Some Remarks on the Various Titles Given to the Chronicle of the Fifth Dalai Lama and Other Historical Texts"

Dr. Pema Bum, Researcher for the Council for Tibetan Education in Dharamsala - "Tibetan Literary Styles Found in the Dunhuang Manuscripts"

Mr. Sangye Tandar Naga, Research and Cultural Officer at the Library of Tibetan Works and Archives in Dharamsala - "Prosody in Tibetan Language"

Dr. Lobsang Tarab, Royal Library of Copenhagen, Oriental Section - "Influence on Pronunciation of Tibetan Initials"

Mr. Tenzin Jigmed, Director of the Tibetan Education Research Institute in Lhasa - "General Outline of the Structure of Tibetan Language"

Prof. Wang Yao from the Department of Tibetan Studies at the Central Institute for Nationalities in Beijing - "On Chab-Srid, an Example of the Historical Semantics Study of Tibetan Language"

Prof. Zhang Jichuan from the Nationalities Research Institute of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences in Beijing - "The dngos po bdag dshan in Tibetan Grammar"

C) EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM AND PROBLEMS OF TEACHING

Gheshe Lobsang Gyatso, Principal of the Institute of Buddhist Dialectics Theckchen Choeling in Dharamsala - "Teacher Training"

Dr. Andrea Loseries Leick, Lecturer of Tibetan Colloquial Language, GMG Graz, Austria - "Lion Baby Theatre. A Playful Experiment for Tibetan Colloquial Studies"

D) TRANSLATIONS

Dr. Hubert Decler, Academic Director, School for International Training, Battleboro, Vermont, USA - "Songs by His Holiness the VI Dalai Lama: the Newly

Discovered Grand Collection and the Translations"

Dr. Maret Kark, Lecturer of Classical Tibetan and Sanskrit, Cabinet of Oriental Studies at Tartu University in Estonia - "An Estonian Experience of Translating Tibetan Buddhist Terms"

Dr. Cristina Anna Scherrer Schaub, Research worker at the University of Lausanne, Switzerland - "Translation, Tradition, Transmission: Suggestions from the IX Century Tibet"

E) LITERARY THEMES AND THE HISTORY OF THE LANGUAGE

Prof. Tshultrim Tsanlha Ngagwang, Deputy Director of Minority Languages and Literature Research at the Southwest Institute for Nationalities in Chengdu, Sichuan - "Rgyal mo rong pa'i skad gyi skor rags tsam dpyad pa, Research on the Tibetan Language of Gyal mo rong"

Prof. Kalsang Gyurmed from the Central Institute of Nationalities in Beijing - "Bod skad kyi skul tshig thob than skor gyi chos gnid rgned tshul rags tsam brjod pa, Research on the theory of the way of using the imperative"

Prof. Kalsang Yeshe from the Tibetan Academy of Social Sciences in Lhasa - "Origins of Tibetan Language"

Prof. Tadasu Mistushima, Professor at Kokushikan University, Japan - "Shang Shung Language Seen in the Texts of Bonism"

Gheshe Namgyal Nyima from the Tibetan Bonpo Monastic Center in Ochgat Solan, India - "Bon gyi yig cha las drangs pa'i bod yig gi byung rim, The origin of Tibetan language based on Bon texts"

Mr. Thubten Chodag Nyichang - "Bod kyi bde skyid lha yul la 'gran pa'i dus kyi skad yig, The language of Tibet in the Golden Age"

Mr. T. C. Rakra Tethong - "To Repair the Bridge Between Old and Present Tibetan Language and Literature"

Mr. Tenzin Lhundrup, Researcher for the Chinese Center for Tibetological Studies in Beijing - "Deng rabs bod kyi skad yig dang rig gnas, Modern Tibetan Language and Culture"



Prof. Dunkar Losang Trinlas



Gheshe Namgyal Nyima



Prof. Hu Tan

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A glance at the list of papers gives an idea of the wide range of topics covered. In particular, the widely felt need for standardization did not prevent space being given to the richness of the spoken language in its many regional forms. Other focal points included translation, poetic diction and, of course, grammar.

Fascinating were the parts dealing with the origins of the language. Some speakers actually said that they were now changing their mind as regards the independent existence of the Shang-Shung language.

In the past, the generally received opinion amongst scholars has been that the Shang-Shung script was artificially created by Bon monks in the time of King Songtsen Gampo, when the official Tibetan literary language was introduced.

However, convincing arguments are now being made that not only

was Shang-Shung an independent language in its own right, but that its script was a real one, related to the Sanskrit alphabet.

Another particularly lively moment for the non-specialist was Professor Fosco Maraini's brilliantly presented speech comparing Japan and Tibet, both as regards their assumption of a Buddhist culture, and the history of their languages.

A paper which attracted widespread interest was that of the Chinese linguist Professor Hu Tan from the Chinese Centre for Tibetological Studies in Beijing. It was generally agreed that his modern approach to Tibetan grammar should have very valuable applications in the teaching of Tibetan as a second language, a subject that no doubt directly interests some Mirror readers.

From the organizational point of

view, the dedication of the Shang-Shung Institute staff and in particular of the General Secretary, Enrico Dell'Angelo, had a great deal to do with the success of the conference.

Also, before it started, many members of the Community gravitated to Merigar to give a hand in the preparations and organization. And being the remarkable building it is, the Gonpa quickly transformed into a delightful venue for a conference.

Everyone's assistance was of very real importance, since despite the generous contributions given by individual members of the Dzog-chen Community, the budget was decidedly limited for an academic event of this significance.

The delegates' social programme included a visit to the remains of the ancient Etruscan city of Roselle. Mauro Nascari, who has frequently

participated in digs in the Swat valley in Pakistan, was their guide to the site.

As well as "The Lost Mystery" film exhibition, compiled by Paolo Brunatto with music by Matteo Silva, there was also a picnic in the garden of Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche's house, Gadeling.

Most delegates stayed at the nearby Capenti Hotel. One evening, when Rinpoche was there, the wining and dining turned into a spontaneous party, with all the Tibetans (and one or two others besides) joining in with traditional songs and dancing.

Finally, mention must be made of the two highly erudite simultaneous translators, Elio Guarisco and the untiring virtuoso Tsepak Rigzin, himself author of a well-known Tibetan-English dictionary of Buddhist terminology.



Prof. Kalsang Gyurmed



Prof. Kalsang Yeshe

SPEAKERS VIEWS

We asked some of the speakers who participated in the language seminar to express their views on the conference.

Prof. Dunkar Losang Trinlas:

Tibetans living outside Tibet have had the chance to describe the state of the language where they live, and the same is true for Tibetans living in Tibet. So it has been very important for mutual understanding. I am very grateful to Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche for having made the conference possible and for having invited so many people from different countries ... I hope that the success of the conference will lead to further opportunities for scholars from Tibet and elsewhere to meet.

Prof. Hu Tan:

“ It's been very good ... the first time that Tibetan scholars from all parts of the world have got together to exchange opinions. It's been a very good opportunity for everyone, including non-Tibetans interested in Tibetology. ”

More and more people are becoming interested in Tibetan culture. And if you want to know about the culture of a nation you have to know the language. There is a centre in Beijing dedicated to the teaching of Tibetan as a second language. We have been teaching Tibetan as well as Mongolian and other minority languages for over forty years. So we have compiled some text-books, dictionaries and grammar books to help non-Tibetans learn Tibetan as a second language. Our basic method is to help them learn the grammatical structure of Tibetan,



An informal moment during the picnic

and to give them good pronunciation in the classroom, and also in the Tibetan areas, so that they can have a chance to learn the language from native speakers.

So we have some teachers working on analysing these minority languages to find out what grammatical, lexical and pronunciation rules there are. I myself am working on the grammar of spoken Tibetan, as there is a difference between the spoken and written languages.

My work will probably be published next year. I am writing it in Chinese as well as Tibetan, but not in English. If the work is felt to be useful, it can probably be translated.

Q. Many people from outside China are also interested in learning Tibetan, but there is a scarcity of didactic material. Maybe there's room for some co-operation?

A. Yes, there are a lot of problems. It takes a long time to publish a grammar text like this. So if we have a co-operative project it might be easier. For example, if we want to translate it into English, the best way of doing it is to have English speakers who are interested in Tibetan. That way, they can see what problems there are and what the best way of explaining the grammar is.

Prof. Per Kvaerne:

“ It seems to me ... that the Tibetans from exiled communities and from Tibet itself have been thinking along the same lines (about the language). I think that's a very good sign, very encouraging ... I think that we should be very optimistic for the future. ”

I think the Tibetan language is preserving itself, it doesn't seem that the scholars from Tibet and India who gathered here need much help from our side. They seem to be doing very well on their own. So I think that those of us who are here from the West, are here to learn and see how they themselves

continued on page 8



Dr. Maret Kark



Acharya Karma Monlam



Prof. Per Kvaerne

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Mr. Lobsang Tenzin Rikha



Dr. Andrea Loseries-Leick



Prof. Fosco Maraini



Prof. Grazia Marchionò



Prof. Tadasu Mistushima

continued from page 7

are thinking about the future of their own language and it seems to me that it was right what was said this afternoon, that Tibetans from the exile communities and those from Tibet itself have been thinking along the same lines. I think that this is a very good sign, very encouraging for the future, because it really shows that there is a natural development, which is very strong. So I think that we should be very optimistic about the future of the Tibetan language.

Q. Can you say something about the conference that you organised in Oslo this summer?

A. Yes, that was the 6th conference organised by the International Association of Tibetan Studies and it covered the entire range of Tibetan studies, from linguistics, history, anthropology, economics, history of art, religion, philosophy. This was the first conference with a really considerable participation from Tibetans not just from the exile communities but from Tibet itself; there were seven Tibetans from Lhasa and also from other parts of Tibet and China. In fact there were also Tibetans from Taiwan, so we had all groups represented. It is very clear that Tibetan studies are expanding throughout the world, but we do not have too much of institutionalised Tibetan studies. I mean that a lot of people do studies in various fields, but it is difficult to get universities to give you chairs or establish new institutes. So, perhaps because of this, I think the Shang-Shung Institute will become significant, because of its independence, having at the same time a good co-operation with the University of Siena - which could be a very fruitful connection - and a good library here. There should be many possibilities of doing serious academic work.

Q. Do you see that continuing in the future?

A. Yes, absolutely. Tibetan culture has now been generally recognised, not just by a small group of interested people, as one of the major cultures in the world, so I think that Tibetan studies will develop, as a consequence. There are so many interesting projects and contributions to these projects being developed, all sorts of anthropological work taking place in Tibet itself, too. I think there has been tremendous progress in just a few years.

Q. Do you think that it is inevitable that Tibetans will take on a lot of borrowings - as is happening with most languages - and do you think that this is a danger to the language or not?

A. Any language will absorb borrowings from other cultures, obviously. It seems to me that Tibetans are very aware of the risks, and they don't use them indiscriminately. It seems to be a natural process that is going on. And again, Tibetans are so conscious of their own traditions, their own literary heritage that I don't see any danger, unless you take an extremely purist point of view.

Mr. Lobsang Tenzin Rikha:

“ So I think this conference has been very successful. I think more attention is needed, because after all these discussions and interesting papers, we have to implement the ideas, not just leave them as discussion. ”

When the first conference took place, our main aim was to invite people from Tibet to discuss something on the common ground, but at that time no-one could come. But this time, since so many people have come from Tibet, we have been able to hear many ideas ... such as the standardization of the language as a whole, and in particular the standardization of the technical terms, which is one of the current shortcomings of the Tibetan language. So I think this conference has been very successful.

I think more attention is needed, because after all these discussions and interesting papers, we have to implement the ideas, not just leave them as discussion.

Q. So the project needs continuing?

A. There is really so much to do because language, as so many participants commented, is the basis for everything: religion, culture, tradition and so on.

Prof. Rakra Tethong:

“ What we have been discussing in the last few days has been very fruitful. But what to do now from the practical point of view? ”

For example, there are scholars coming from China or Tibet, and there are scholars from elsewhere, and we want to communicate with one another. We would like to know what they are doing, and they should also know what we are doing. I feel it is very important to do this for Tibetans in Tibet and for those abroad.

Having easy books for children is very important, too. We have a lot of literature on tantrism, philosophy and so forth but there is a lack of literature like poems, stories and what in Sanskrit are called *Jataka* (tales of the past lives of the Buddha - ed.).

Now, for many generations, no research has been done on these valuable books, and they are lying there. But people think they are something very high which nobody can touch.

In the Kanjur and Tanjur, though, there is not only philosophy, there are many beautiful stories about, for example, the life of Buddha.

We have to tell ordinary people these stories. We have to approach them in this way.



First day at the Charterhouse, Pontignano, Siena

Prof. Thuptan Chogdup:

“ I hope that in the future this unique kind of seminar could be organized anywhere ... The Shang-Shung Institute could be the ideal place. ”

On the basis of the experience I have gained over the last few days, I would like to suggest that there should be a central organization where study of the Tibetan language and literature can be smoothly carried on, so that the language, literature and culture can receive proper attention around the world. It could be at the Shang-Shung Institute, in America, anywhere. The Shang-Shung Institute could be ideal as some other activities are already going on in many places, whereas only literary work is going on at the Shang-Shung Institute. The most interesting thing is that scholars who have presented their papers here have started thinking along a new line. Some of the scholars here live in Tibet, some in India, Denmark, the U.S.A. and so on. But now, because they have met here, they have exchanged ideas amongst one another, and have started to think along a new line.

Dr. Hubert Decler:

The creation of new terminology is, if not a bone of contention, to say the least a genuine concern: the gradual differentiation between Tibetan within and outside Tibet; with, on the one hand, massive input of Chinese and Hindi/English terms respectively, and on the other the creation of divergent neologisms, especially as regards scientific terminology. The navigational challenge is how to move on from such descriptive analysis and to set course towards some sort of agreed-upon normative planning. How to avoid various diasporas creating their own Creole out of a 'mainland' standard French. ... While no-one actually came up with a proposal for setting up a Tibetan equivalent of the Académie française - a central dictionary council which, on the basis of live evidence, tries to establish an ever-changing norm, decade after decade, from one century to the next - just about every Tibetan speaker had his or her own idea on 'what to do about it' ... Suffice it to say that the vast majority agreed on accepting the central Tibetan speech (not to be confused with the Lhasa dialect and its own 'effort') as the basis for the standard Tibetan-in-Tibet.

Seminar coverage for The Mirror by Robin Cooke, Cristiana De Falco and Giacomella Orefino. Translation by Tsepak Rigzin. Photos by Gualtiero Cocco on behalf of the Shang-Shung Institute.

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TIBETAN LANGUAGE THE BASIS OF TIBETAN CULTURE

Prof. Namkhai Norbu

A slightly edited version of the paper presented by Prof. Namkhai Norbu at the Seminar.

IDENTIFICATION

According to historical records, the people of Tibet originated from six tribes, therefore the name *bod skad* or "Tibetan language" should refer to the language commonly used from the beginning of Tibetan history by the various ethnic groups of Tibet to communicate with each other. Needless to say, this common language, due to the different local dialects of the six original tribes and to other circumstances has, in the course of time, undergone many changes as regards its pronunciation and other aspects. But this basic language, from the time it was written down in the characters of the Tibetan script in a very ancient epoch, has been able to preserve its basic character unchanged until the present time.

It is only this language, which is linked to the structure of its ancient script, and whose foundation has never undergone changes or corruption from its origin until now, that can be identified as "Tibetan language". Regarding its future development, I think that all the new words and expressions of this century which are necessary must be introduced through skilful devices on the basis of the pure tradition of the past, without losing the real character of that "Tibetan language" that allows communication between all Tibetans, and it is in this way that it should develop.

As regards the identification of the Tibetan script, we must clearly distinguish the period of the origins of the spoken language from the period in which a systematic language was first used, and this is a very important point, to be established after due analysis.

It is generally accepted that Thon mi Sambhota, minister of the king Srong btsan sgam po, was the one who first devised the Tibetan script and laid down a stable foundation of the Tibetan grammar based on that script, by composing the grammar text called "The eight sections of Byakarana". So it was thanks to the kindness and capacity of this minister and his king that this system of Tibetan language spread in Tibet, and that the important event of the translation of the Indian Dharma into Tibetan took place. But regarding this historical view it is



important to distinguish between two opinions: 1) that before Srong btsan sgam po the Tibetans did not have any script; 2) that before Srong btsan sgam po the Tibetans did not use any script.

According to the historical records of the Bon tradition, from the time of the first Tibetan king Nyag khri btsan po to Srong btsan sgam po, which means for more than thirty generations of kings, there had been a written language in Tibet (whose place of origin was Zhang Zhung), even if we don't know if it had a grammatical structure as did the classical Tibetan. They explain that in the country of Zhang Zhung, which was inhabited by the sBra or Khyung, one of the ancient six original tribes, the founder of Bon, gShen rab mi boche, had first created a written language known as "the ancient script of Zhang Zhung". As proof of the characters of this script, we still have the royal seal of the dynasty of Khyung Lung, which is very ancient and kept in the treasury of sMan ri monastery:

in the Zhang Zhung language:
kha tshan pa shang lig zhi ra tsa;

in Tibetan: *thams cad dbang bsgyur srid pa'i rgyal po*

(The King of Existence who subdues everything).

This script which spread in the Zhang Zhung country, known as *smar* (in Tibetan *lha*) was subdivided into two scripts: the *smar chen* or great *smar*, and the *smar chung*, or small *smar*, and these were used by the Tibetans. In fact, many branches of the culture of the

ancient Zhang Zhung Bon had spread into Tibet, and on the basis of this culture Tibetans started to develop many new branches of knowledge. Moreover, the Buddhist dharma in general and the Vajrayana in particular spread with great facility in Tibet (thanks to the existence of a script).

As regards literary proofs, the Bon ritual text *Srid pa spyi mdos* reports in its colophon to have been written by Ra sangs Khri na khod, who was the *gshen po* or priest of the king sTag ri gnyan gzigs (579-619), and there are different copies of this text found in regions of Tibet such as Kham and mNga' ris. Moreover, in the *chos byung* of mNga' bdag Myang it is asserted that in origin the script used by the early Tibetans was prior to the time of Srong btsan sgam po, and in the biography of Pa gor Bairotsana, known as 'Dra bag



chen mo, it is clearly stated that Thon mi Sambhota "transformed" (*bsgyur*) the Tibetan script.

There are many quotations which support this thesis, for which reason we can accept that before Srong

btsan sgam po the Tibetans used both the *smar chen* and the *smar chung* of the Zhang Zhung language, and that from an ancient past in Tibet there had been a strong cultural base. But Srong btsan sgam po wanted to create a new culture and a new language without depending on the culture and the language of Zhang Zhung, and I think for this purpose he introduced a new specific system of language known as *bod yig*, "Tibetan script". Those who want to know more about my ideas concerning this topic are requested to refer to my books *Nor bu'i do shal* and *Zhang bod kyi lo rgyus*.

SURVIVAL OF THE LANGUAGE

Tibet, from mNga' ris in the west to 'Jang and rGya rong in the east, is a huge country, whose regions are separated by long distances, and the only way of communicating between two far-away regions was by travelling on foot or horse back. Nonetheless, the Buddhist dharma spread extensively in every region of Tibet through the basic Tibetan language, and thanks to this the Tibetan language has had the power to become a common language for all Tibetans and to survive uncorrupted until the present day. This has also prevented the Tibetans from separating into different groups and fostered the unity of Tibetans as one big family.

During the Cultural Revolution in Tibet, many words and expressions from local dialects were used in the written language and some books and magazines were published to modify the traditional system of Tibetan language. But the wise Tibetans of those regions, worried about the unity of the language, re-established the old traditional system, and this was a very great contribution to the preservation of Tibetan language.

As regards the question of using words from dialect in the Tibetan language, we must distinguish between two cases: 1) the usage in the written language of words or expressions from local dialects already existing in the traditional Tibetan language, which is ruining the common Tibetan language; 2) the usage in the written language, in a correct way, of words from local dialects to express terms not found

continued on page 10



Prof. Tshultrim T. Ngawang



Mr. Thubten Chodag Nyichang



Dr. Pema Bum



Dr. C. A. Scherrer Schaub

ཨོ་ཁོ་མེད་ཀྱི་སྐད་ཡིག་སྐོར་གྱི་ཐུན་མེད་ཀྱི་ཁྱེད་ཀྱི་སྐད་ཡིག་ལ་ཕྱི་རྒྱལ་སྐད་ཀྱི་ཆོག་མཁན་ལ་ཐེངས་གཉིས་པ།



Prof. Sonam Paljor



Dr. Lobsang Tarab



Mr. Tenzin Jigmed



Mr. Tenzin Lhundrup



Mr. Tsering Thar

continued from page 9

in the traditional Tibetan language, in which case the Tibetan language can be extended. In this way the pure traditional system of the Tibetan language should be preserved, and this must be an aim for all Tibetans, a responsibility for all of us to share.

NEW TERMINOLOGY

It has not been possible for the Tibetans to introduce opportunely into their vocabulary all the terminology linked to the transformation of the times, the names of countries and towns, all the expressions used in specific branches of science, and all the neologisms devised. Some efforts

me to talk about them. Rather I will tell you about a phonetic system of transcription that I have used in some of my writings, because it is very different from all the others. It was mainly devised for westerners who study the Buddhist dharma and are interested in its practice.

I have devised a phonetic system based on the one in usage to learn modern Chinese. For example, taking the five vowels ("i u e o" plus the "a"), the acute accent added is a sign of strong intonation; the circumflex accent is a sign of smooth intonation; the grave accent is a sign of nasal intonation; where there is no accent it means that the intonation must be flat. Through these four phonetic signs, even a person who

Tibetan language has had the power to become a common language for all Tibetans and to survive uncorrupted until the present day.

have been made, but most of the new terminology has been created from a mixture of Chinese, Hindi and English, while in some cases the foreign words have been roughly translated in a literal way.

If we analyze the way in which Tibetan scholars of the past devised new terminology, we will find that, for example, from two verbal stems like *slob pa* ("teach") and *shyong ba* ("learn") the word *slob shyong* ("study") was created. In this way many terms were included in the Tibetan vocabulary, and in the same way, on the basis of the tradition of the past, modern scholars should try to devise new terms according to the real meaning of the term and the scientific context to which it belongs.

Tibetan scholars should take up their responsibility to make all Tibetans and especially the young ones understand this situation, and, to help further this aim, to publish and spread magazines and illustrated booklets etc. containing easy words and expressions and at the same time to develop their knowledge through legends and stories introducing very simple new terms and containing different kinds of glossaries.

PHONETIC TRANSCRIPTION

As regards phonetics, there are two main aspects: 1) the transcription of Tibetan terms into foreign languages; 2) the transcription of foreign terms into Tibetan.

Regarding the transcription of Tibetan terms into foreign languages, the most widespread is the transcription into Latin characters. There are a few systems of Latin transcription which all the scholars present will surely know well, so I don't think it is the case for

doesn't know any Tibetan in a few days can learn how to pronounce the various phonemes of the Tibetan language, which is the aim of the phonetic system.

This method is mainly directed to those who study and practice Tibetan Buddhism, but on a few occasions I have used it for beginners in Tibetan language for the purpose of providing them with a simple means to pronounce correctly. Nonetheless, this system is only a provisional method to learn correct pronunciation and not a complete system of transcription into Latin characters.

Regarding the phonetic transcription of foreign terms into Tibetan, the scholars of the past, having as their first model the system of transcription of Sanskrit terms into Tibetan, mainly based themselves on this system also for terms belonging to other languages. Of course this means that whenever any non-Tibetan phoneme had to be transcribed into Tibetan characters, the traditional system should have been followed, i.e. according to the way Sanskrit terms were transcribed (combining the letters one on top of the other). But in recent times some followers of the English system have based themselves on English to transcribe terms. This way of transcribing terms, which has been used for names of countries, towns and people and is still being used, shows that the old traditional Tibetan system of transcription has not been taken into consideration.

Of course the names of countries and towns are difficult to find in the language spoken by the ancient Tibetans, but if we base ourselves on the original name of each country, or on its ancient name, and succeed

in transcribing it into Tibetan characters according to the traditional Sanskrit system, I wonder whether this will not let the Tibetan language keep its original nature and remain in accordance with that ancient system. For example the original name of modern Switzerland was *Helvetia* (*hel be thya*), and the real name of Finland, that means what it is called in that country, is *Suomi* (*Su' omi*). On this basis, for many years I have been collecting many names of this kind and writing them down in lists, considering that maybe one day they would be useful.

Until now Tibetans have met little difficulty in learning foreign terms and expressions, but they have not developed sufficient capacity in transcribing them into Tibetan characters, because the majority of western terms have not yet spread among all Tibetans. As we all aim towards a widely employed terminology which can maintain intact all the characteristics of Tibetan language for the Tibetans of the future, I think that the scholars here present should take up the responsibility of publishing dictionaries containing lists of foreign terms transcribed in the appropriate manner, and establish the rules of transcription and use only that system. In this way, in a few years all the difficulties of transcription will be overcome and the Tibetan language will have developed in a very positive way.

its old style, it would prove extremely difficult as it is changing day by day. For this reason, a new standard language, a combination of dialects very close to and compatible with the fundamental rules of Tibetan grammar, is coming into use today and many books have been written using this system.

I think it is very important to improve this language in order to develop and extend it. All scholars should, in the future, try to devise easy reading material for all Tibetans, particularly students. In this regard it is also extremely important that the translation of modern scientific texts is not neglected. If this is realized, it will mean a great step forward for the culture and history of Tibet, together with the emergence of a true common Tibetan language.

LANGUAGE STUDY

The study of the Tibetan language by Tibetans themselves is a very important responsibility, necessary for a stable foundation of the Tibetan culture and its preservation. For this reason all young Tibetans should have the opportunity of receiving a good education both in the language and in the history and culture of Tibet.

Apart from the Tibetans, there are also a number of western scholars who are interested in Tibetan culture and in Buddhist dharma and I think that all those who study Tibetan language are certainly making a great

The question of maintaining, protecting and developing Tibetan culture during this era is very relevant to western scholars.

A COMMON LANGUAGE

The tradition of the Tibetan language together with its script has shown its great power as a basic factor uniting all Tibetans. However the most important factor in this preservation has been the link with the Buddhist dharma, and most probably without this relation the Tibetan language would not have retained this power (of preservation).

In this age of great and rapid social transformation, travel and every form of communication between two countries is much simpler. As a consequence, on one hand there are beneficial factors contributing to the development of a common language for all Tibetans while on the other it may happen that, just as there are changes in modern society to which language is linked, numerous elements of language may undergo serious transformation. Therefore, it is not possible for the Tibetan language of today to remain as before. Even if we tried to preserve

contribution to the spreading and development of Tibetan culture.

The question of maintaining, protecting and developing Tibetan culture during this era is very relevant to the western scholars who are interested and who have some understanding of it.

With their help and advice based on direct experience, Tibetan scholars should discuss the modifications suggested by the passage of time, and it is in this direction that the development of Tibetan culture should proceed. Therefore the newly founded centres of Tibetan studies and the Tibetan Buddhist centres in the west should not be neglected or underestimated and any activity aiming at the preservation or development of Tibetan culture should be undertaken through the unification and collaboration of western and Tibetan scholars.

I think this is of vital importance to the survival of the Tibetan language.

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Repairing the Bridge

Mr. Rakra Tethong

Some excerpts from the paper, *Repairing the Bridge between the Old and New Tibetan Language*.

First of all, I would like to briefly introduce myself. After studying in Tibet, I went into exile in India. Before then I had studied Tibetan culture and literature, Dharma and some Sanskrit with Gendun Choephel Rinpoche. I therefore adopted Tibetan linguistics and cultural studies as my profession. After coming to India, I studied Sanskrit with George Roerich and Hindi along with Sanskrit at Shantiniketan University in India.

In 1959, due to the changing situation in Tibet, many old and young Tibetans including children went into exile in India. Many children were sent to foreign countries, and I went together with some of them to Pestalozzi children's village in Switzerland to act as a teacher-cum-foster parent. At that time, I was also undertaking intensive research on Tibetan Studies. In 1962-63, Professor Heinrich Harrer asked me to help him organise an exhibition on Tibet in Austria. Amongst the exhibits, I found some manuscripts from the collected works of the Sakya tradition, written in gold. When I came to study them, I found many treatises on grammar in amongst them. After the exhibition, I sat down for three or four days to copy some of these texts, such as the *sgra la 'jug pa*. Then I took them to the village with me and did research on them, whilst working there.

When I started teaching children, no Tibetan text books had yet been created, and so I made blueprints of each day's lesson. When I received the text books, initially I was very



happy, because at that time the Tibetan people and government in exile were really working very hard on resettlement, and I understood the problems. So I started using the text books in my teaching work. But when I compared my teaching aids with those available to children of other nationalities, such as Swiss, I felt very sad. However, I knew that they already had all the advantages of a long established educational system, whereas, as refugees, we were only just beginning work on building up such a system.

When the regional educational authorities asked me about the syllabus, I found that the textbooks I had were insufficient, and so I divided the texts into different topics such as Tibetan language, religion, history, geography, grammar, *sum-rtags (lung ston po)*, while subjects such as maths were taught Swiss style. However, the Swiss textbooks proved too difficult for the children.

This was how I came to discover how very important it is to teach our

language and culture through the medium of the colloquial language we speak. So I started teaching in a simplified form of the language.

At the same time I was continuing my research work on those Sakya grammar texts. From my research I discovered that some of the grammatical principles expounded in the ancient Tibetan texts had not been fully studied before, with the result that there seems to be no connection between the old and new Tibetan language. The connection had somehow been broken, and there was no bridge. Likewise, the gap between the old and the new culture seems to be growing more and more. Therefore in the 1987 Seminar I said that if we omit to pay special attention to our culture in general and especially to the needs of Tibetan children and the general public, helping them to cope with the Tibetan language, we will be making a big mistake. I stressed the importance of this kind of education taking the example of the Potala which is so strong because of the

strength of its foundations. That was why I said we should be working towards building a very strong foundation, that is to say educating the Tibetan children and public first.

All our culture seems to be very strongly rooted in Dharma, Tantra and philosophy. I feel that it is important to introduce these things in a simplified manner to the children and the general public, so that they will be able to understand them easily. In my experience, for many years now we have not been altogether succeeding in educating the children and ordinary people, especially as regards introducing them to our own culture and language. This is one reason why the gap between the ancient and modern culture has been widening. Therefore, we need to identify and standardise what I call the native language of Tibet through which we can teach our ancient culture to the masses and children. Many people have criticised this idea, saying that the new system would corrupt our ancient culture and would be very detrimental to its survival and preservation. However, this is actually a misunderstanding, because my point was that, if we follow this new path, we will not only preserve our ancient culture and traditional religion and so on, but we will also be able to make it available to the children and the public at large. By native language, I mean the common language that is spoken and understood by all Tibetans.

If we are able to teach our old culture and traditional religion through the vehicle of the native Tibetan language, this is what I feel will become a firm and ever-lasting bridge.



Mr. Tsewang N. Shelkar Linpa



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Standardizing the Tibetan Language

Dr. Thuptan Chogdup



Mr. Elio Guarisco, translator



Mr. Tsepak Rigzin, translator



Dr. Laura Berle Albini



Prof. Elemire Zolla

Among the visitors to the conference were Dr. Laura Albini, who has played such a big part in the life of the Community, and Professor Elemire Zolla, author of many important works on subjects such as alchemy, shamanism and comparative traditions.

Unfortunately, we have no photos of some participants (Dr. Kristina Lange, Mr. Sangye Tanden Naga, Prof. Zhang Jichuan, Dr. Hubert Decler). Our apologies - the editors.

Some excerpts from the paper given during the Seminar.

Our Tibetan language is one of the most ancient languages and much literature on various subjects has been written on it. The richness of Tibetan literature has made Tibet a land renowned spiritually and temporally. In the past numerous works were translated from Sanskrit and Persian into Tibetan and many books were composed by Tibetan scholars. Amendments to the language were made with intensive research and examination from time to time so that the language would maintain its original quality. Tibetan language was used not only throughout Tibet but also in the extensive northern border areas of India.

The basic characteristics of the Tibetan language differ from those of its neighbouring countries in that it has a unique way of word formation, pronunciation, sentence order, etc. Although some Chinese and Indian terms have been adopted, the nature of the language is pure and while there are many dialects in different regions of the country, there is a standard form of Tibetan which is understood everywhere.

Throughout history the Tibetan language has been undergoing gradual changes. We often see a number of new terms (*dasar*) and old terms (*nying*) in dictionaries and text books. During the reign of the King Thi-ralpa-chen, most of the Tibetan literature was revised and the language was modified. Yet in spite of the changes and modifications the language has undergone, a standard Tibetan language still remains until the present.

Since language is a living organism it cannot remain static and is likely to undergo many changes in the future. In regard to this I emphasize the need to maintain a standard Tibetan language on the national level that can endure the passage of time.

However, today Tibetan is at a critical junction. On the positive side, many learned people, both inside and outside Tibet, are striving to develop the language by writing and composing. But on the other hand, certain words or terms which are popular at the national level are being neglected while their colloquial equivalents are given preference. Moreover a number of old and new words are wrongly spelt and the use of disordered sentences is increasing day by day.

Not all the subjects in a curriculum are available in the

Tibetan language for schools and colleges and so the students have to study these subjects in other languages. Moreover the younger generation is showing less enthusiasm for their language.

If a colloquial tongue of a particular region is used, it cannot be understood by people of other regions and if this process continues, a stage may soon come when there will be no single standard language used by all Tibetans.

Due to the advancement of science these days, the facilities available for the research and development of language are infinite, thus there is a golden opportunity for the advancement of the language.

Our aims and objectives in standardizing the Tibetan language are:

- perfect understanding of the numerous scriptures which exist in Tibetan
- constant maintenance of the distinct character of Tibet by national integration
- teaching old and new subjects such as science and technology in the Tibetan language.

However this does not mean that a standard Tibetan language has to be newly created as it has already existed for centuries. My only humble submission is that it is to be investigated, identified and used exhaustively.

I propose the following means for standardizing the Tibetan language:

- a perfect knowledge of the rules of grammar both in spoken and written Tibetan
- any changes and reforms of the language can only be incorporated after thorough research
- the establishment of an organized body responsible for creating new terms related to science, geography, politics, economy, etc.
- this body should be responsible or delegate responsibility for books and text books on the new subjects in Tibetan
- translation into Tibetan of all types of new subjects taught in schools and higher educational institutions
- novels, magazines and newspapers in Tibetan
- audio-visual aids in Tibetan with a wide circulation
- maintaining the distinct character of Tibetan rather than forcing its grammar along the lines of Sanskrit
- incorporating the suggestions and assistance of non-Tibetan scholars into the originality of the language.

However, the mere developing



of such a standard language will not achieve its aim if it is not effectively implemented. For effective implementation I suggest the following:

- the establishment of a central body based in Dharamsala to monitor the proper usage of the language
- editors of all kinds of Tibetan publications and heads of educational institutions must attend seminars and conferences under the aegis of the central body at frequent intervals
- meetings, conferences, courses,

seminars, etc., should be attended by journalists, teachers, media-men and volunteers under the guidance of the central body

- TV and radio networks should be made use of for monitoring and publicizing the standard language
- volunteer organizations should be encouraged to undertake publicity work in remote areas and settlements where TV and radio networks are not active.

The Tibetan language, ancient yet rich in its pure form is the foundation of the Tibetan civilization. We must modernize and develop it without harming its distinct character.

In Tibet myriads of dialects are spoken in different regions. Yet in spite of this a common standard language has existed since ancient times. It is now our moral responsibility to investigate, identify, use and maintain this standard language.

An organized educational body must be established for the formation of new technical terms and modify or complete the grammar if necessary, so that the Tibetan language can be developed maintaining its original identity.

Acknowledgements

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BOOK REVIEWS



THE SONG OF THE VAJRA An Oral Commentary by Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche

Edited by Gina Perini
Published by the Dzogchen Community of America at Tsegylgar

"Unborn,
Yet continuing without
interruption,
Neither coming nor going,
omnipresent,
Supreme Dharma,
Immutable space, beyond
definition,
Spontaneously, self liberating..."

Every Dzogchen practitioner knows the Song of the Vajra. For many it was the first long mantra learned by heart. It is enough to listen to it once to be charmed by the irreal dimension that unfolds from its sounds and words. To say that it is a marvelous mystic song is too little. For can the totality of its sound be considered merely a song? And can the dimension beyond time and space that unfolds from its sounds be considered only mystic?

Master Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche explains that the Song of the Vajra contains the essence of the Dzogchen teachings, that it is "the key to all methods". Nevertheless, he has never spoken extensively about these poetic verses, written in the mythical language of the dakinis, the language of the legendary kingdom of Oddiyana, birthplace of principal Dzogchen masters from Garab Dorje to Padmasambhava, a land probably situated at the border between northern India and present-day Pakistan.

Why has Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche explained the Song of the Vajra relatively few times? He once answered this question during a teaching given at Merigar: "because the Song of the Vajra goes beyond the intellectual dimension, so the practitioner risks concentrating on the explanation and the meaning of the words, thus losing sight of integrating with sound and energy".

But at Christmas 1990, on the new Community land in Argentina, at Tashigar near Cordoba, he decided to transmit the whole commentary to the Song. It was not only a homage paid to this important

new gar in the southern hemisphere of the world. Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche decided to enrich the knowledge of his students (a knowledge already deepened with thousands of teachings transmitted by him throughout the world for over sixteen years) with what is perhaps the most precious pearl of all, the essence of the Six Syllables.

For every sensitive practitioner this most important sign marks a significant moment in our individual and communal spiritual history. In fact, the Dzogchen Community has grown to a degree that nobody could have once imagined thanks to the clarity of the Master, who is its inspirer, and with thanks also to the commitment of thousands of disciples from all over the world to protect and develop the teaching by practising and working according to the principles of Dzogchen.

And, whereas we, owing to our limits, try and arrange all teachings within a certain time and space, and so dedicate only some sections of our life to practice, here is a precise signal coming from Rinpoche: that life itself is one great, unique and uninterrupted song which contains the origin and the end, the immutable space beyond definition, spontaneous and self-liberated, "perfect from the beginning."

The word "Song" also has a very precise worldly meaning. Here, we know that the "Song of the Vajra" aims at bringing the practitioner into the state of contemplation, beyond concepts. But song in itself is a liberation of energy and a manifestation of joy. To those who are critical of this interpretation, citing the songs of grief for the dead or for oppressed peoples, one can answer that even in these cases sound expresses the will for liberation, the search for catharsis, the desire to empty the ocean of suffering that is welling up within.

This book by Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche, which has been edited and printed by Gina Perini on behalf of the Dzogchen Community of Tsegylgar in Massachusetts is therefore of great interest. It is the first book to contain an entire explanation of the verses, which "are like the *tesserae* of a mosaic that seem gradually to unfold with each explanation", as Gina Perini says in the preface.

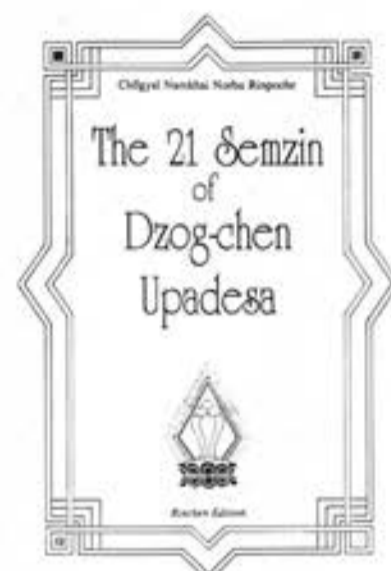
We hope that this text will soon be translated into all languages and known wherever there are Dzogchen practitioners. There is an absolute need for reflection on and practice of the real meaning of the teaching now that in every corner of the earth such disturbing signs of the kaliyuga are manifesting.

It is no coincidence that in the Dzogchen teaching, as Rinpoche says in the book, the Song of the Vajra and the Six Syllables are both called *grol ba drug ldan*. *Grol ba* means 'liberation', and *drug* means 'six': thus, 'the six liberations'. *Idan* means 'to possess such a quality'.

Using the Song of the Vajra and

the Six Syllables, we have a supreme opportunity to create a cause for the benefit of sentient beings. Reading the text of this teaching we can better understand why.

Raimondo Bultrini



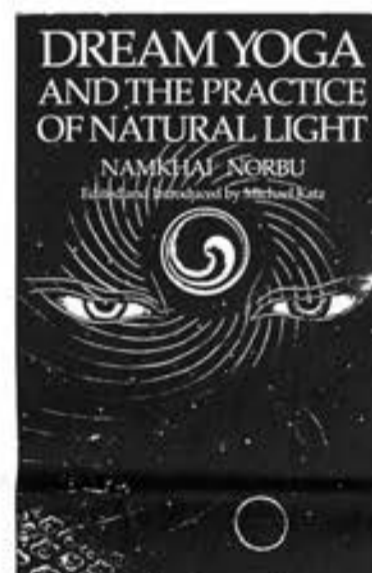
THE 21 SEMZIN OF DZOG- CHEN UPADESA by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

Edited by Rita Bizzotto and
Adriano Clemente.
English translation by Andrew
Lukianowicz
Rinchen Edition, Singapore

This book is an important contribution to the knowledge of how meditation techniques are implemented in the Dzogchen system. In the introduction the author gives indispensable explanations to set the context for 21 techniques of meditation. The spiritual paths of renunciation, transformation and natural liberation are differentiated in terms of personal approaches to one's existential problem. Having made the necessary clarifications, Rinpoche presents the 21 ways of catching the mind's intrinsic character in the form of a commentary to the terse words of Longchengpa, the great and eclectic systematizer of the Dzogchen teaching in Tibet. These are not preliminary practices as usually understood in the schools of Tibetan Buddhism, but rather a means to discover within ourselves a state of pure presence which is not a mental mechanism. Due to the distance felt between the observer and observed, our life unfolds among problems. The distance leads the observer to create judgments of good or bad from sensations derived from perceptions. Our judgments, in turn, start the conditioning process of accepting and rejecting with the ensuing life struggle. Catching the natural force of the mind means to overcome the dualistic experience from its inception. To do that one must discover a child-like state of open presence within both the thought flow and the calm state. Such open presence is sought in the semzin through the medium of conducive experiences linked to the

mind mechanism: the experience of emptiness of thoughts, clarity of energy/speech and pleasure within the body. These three experiences are induced by the 21 ways of catching the mind's face, revealing thus the underlying unchanging state of awareness. Remaining in that state is contemplation. Once the nature of contemplation has been identified as the real condition of the mind free from the distance between observer and observed, our entire life can become the great meditation session that enhances our knowledge. These 21 ways of seeing the natural face of the mind kindly presented in this book are thus a means to find one's way into the state of contemplation.

Elio Guarisco



DREAM YOGA AND THE PRACTICE OF NATURAL LIGHT by Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche

Edited by Michael Katz
Snow Lion

In "Dream Yoga and the Practice of Natural Light", Norbu Rinpoche gives instructions for developing the capacity for clarity within the sleep and dream states. Going beyond the practices of lucid dreaming that have been popularized in the West, this book presents methods for manipulating dream states that are part of a system for enhancing self-awareness called Dzogchen. In this tradition, the development of lucidity in the dream state is understood in the context of attaining greater awareness in the after-death states for the ultimate purpose of attaining liberation. Much of the material is presented in a lively question and answer format.

Also included in this book is a text written by Mipham, the nineteenth-century master of Dzogchen, which offers additional insights into this extraordinary form of meditation and awareness.

Excerpt from chapter 1.

"What is best known, or usually thought of, when someone says 'practice of the night' is the practice of lucid dreaming. There are many

explanations of lucid dreaming. But in the Dzogchen teaching, the practice of dream work, and development of lucidity, is not fundamental. It is a secondary practice. In the case of dream practice, secondary means that this practice can arise spontaneously or automatically from doing the principal practice, which is called the "practice of natural light".

This practice, the practice of the natural light, actually has to do with the state prior to dream. For example, a person falls asleep; *falls asleep* means that all of his senses vanish into him, and thus he is sleeping. From that point on there is a passage, a period of transition, until dreams begin. That period may be long or it may be short. For some people, the state of dreams begins almost immediately after falling asleep. But what does it mean, that the state of dream begins? It means that the mind begins to function again.

For example, the mind must begin working in order for reasoning to occur. First we must have an awareness of the senses. The mind begins to receive these perceptions, but there are no reasoning and thinking yet. Slowly, step by step, thinking actually arises.

There is the presence of the state of awareness, and yet mind has not begun to enter into operations such as thinking. This is the passage through which one moves in that state which is called the state of natural light. It has always been considered that it is during this period that the practitioner of Tantra realizes himself. In Tantrism this period is also described as the moment in which one meets the mother light. It is exactly this moment after the faint in which awareness develops again, or reawakens.

In the practice we do, there has to be an awareness of, or mastery of, this state of natural light. When one has an awareness of the presence of this state of natural light, then even if afterwards the state of dreams arises, one spontaneously becomes lucidly aware that one is dreaming while dreaming, and automatically achieves mastery of one's dreams. This means that the dream does not condition the person, but the person governs his or her dream".

TIBETAN MEDICAL PAINTINGS

Wisdom Books of London have informed us of the forthcoming publication of a two volume set presenting previously unknown paintings found in Buriatia that illustrate the famous commentary to the Four Medical Tantras, written by Sangye Gyamtso (1653-1705), the regent of the Fifth Dalai Lama. For the rest of 1992 it will be available at a special reduced price of £95 (sterling).

SHAMANISM IN KAZAKISTAN

Part 2

Rinpoche: In many places in Central Asia there are ancient Shamanistic systems. For many years I have been doing research to understand the characteristics of the ancient pre-Buddhist Bon system in Tibet. Of course modern Bon has been heavily influenced by Buddhism and is very similar to it and there are many rituals in the Buddhist tradition that come from Bon and that still exist in the present Bon tradition.

The principle consideration in shamanism is the individual, the individual's energy and condition, and the relationship of the individual to external objects. What kind of consideration is there in Kazak Shamanism in regard to gods, spirits or beings who have power? How can people see the potentiality or negativity of everything? When you are curing, for example, how can you create peaceful or calm circumstances?

Botagoz: I cannot consider myself to be a real Shaman and I have not yet understood what I am. However I know that Shamans work primarily with various kinds of local spirits and with the spirits of their ancestors. In traditional Kazak Shamanism, these spirit relationships are transferred through family lineage from mother to daughter. There are various rituals and some Moslem ritual practices may be used.

I have had another type of relationship. I have never prayed and I have no link with spirits. About two and a half years ago I had some visions without performing any of the religious rituals. Gradually my knowledge has increased and now I hear and see more.

The graves of some of my mother's family are a place of pilgrimage and I myself have also done a pilgrimage to the holy places

to cure myself. I had a whole series of illnesses and the doctors even wanted to give me a certificate of invalidity because of my heart disorder. Then I managed to eliminate all my illnesses.

After I performed the pilgrimage I was able to help people and the people whom I am curing are somehow clear and understand themselves better and their family conflicts began to diminish.

It seems that when a person understands the cause of his illness then he begins to collaborate with me and our working together in some way changes not only the physical body but also the soul.

Rinpoche: Is there some kind of god or particular beings in the tradition of Kazak Shamanism?

Botagoz: Yes, there are. There are local guardians called spirits. Some of these are ugly and frightening to see. On some lower levels of energy I have seen very frightful spirits. I can see my teachers in their human form. They belong to various times, various countries, some lived several centuries ago and in particular one of them lived in Scandinavia in the 16th century. I have also seen my former incarnation. However I feel that I may not have experiences beyond a particular level at the moment.

Various secret flows, milk-white in colour, come to me from my teachers and they give me different kinds of skills. At the beginning the flow was a trickle but gradually it became wider. When I tried to see the origin of that flow I understood there was no sense to look for it yet. Maybe it will come later.

Kazak Shamans make sacrifices to various kinds of spirits and ask them for help. Each of the spirits has its own sphere of influence and the more powerful the Shaman the more spirits he may relate to and

During his teaching trip through distant parts of Russia, Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche met a number of people who have close links with the various forms of shamanism that exist in their areas. In this issue of The Mirror he interviews a Kazak healer. This is the second interview in a series on shamanism. The first was published in the last issue of The Mirror, no. 16. Translation by Tatyana Naumenko.



Shaman create a relationship with a spirit? Is there some kind of particular ceremony like an initiation?

Botagoz: There is perhaps some special secret ritual but they don't spread knowledge about these things.

Rinpoche: But in general do they do a ceremony that is a sort of sacrifice of animals?

Botagoz: Yes. They sacrifice sheep, horses and cows. When the rituals are performed then special parts of the animal's body are used and the remains are given to everybody except the family who perform the ritual. They also use sacrifice to eliminate negative energy that's causing illness or to attract somebody through a ritual.

Rinpoche: When someone is dying what do they do?

Botagoz: First of all they make prayers according to Moslem ritual. Then the person is buried after about five days. Nothing special.

Rinpoche: Do these Shamans believe there is some kind of continuation of the soul or consciousness after death?

Botagoz: Yes, they believe the consciousness stays alive and that the soul remains for forty days near the place where the person died.

flying up it becomes even more purified and when it arrives at the upper layers of energy it is very bright and luminous. But some souls that can go neither to paradise nor hell remain trapped in the middle layers, where they endure suffering.

Fabio Andrico: Do the Shamans use any kind of divination such as with the bones of animals?

Botagoz: Yes, with some kinds of bones. There is a long ritual through which you can find out about many things including your fate. For instance if a person has some kind of trouble, a sacrifice of a male goat or even a kid is made. The bones should be very thin. The person who asks the question eats the meat and then cleans the bone himself. Depending on how the bone was cleaned and what kind of threads are left there, the bone is examined to see the particular pattern of the threads that are left there. Then cuts are made into the bone to see how it reacts and divination is given according to that. There is also a form of divination using beans.

Rinpoche: Is there any consideration about the soul of a person escaping or leaving the body and is there a way to recall it?

Botagoz: There are cases when a person has been ill or is sleeping and, due to his past behaviour, the devil comes and occupies his soul. Then very long and painful rituals are made to draw away the devil and the soul is invited to return. This may take place during sleep and there are special prayers to ask the guardian spirits to protect the soul while the person is sleeping.

Rinpoche: I would like to ask a very personal question. When you are doing therapy and using the candles what is the meaning and function of them?

Botagoz: The candle is fire and the church candle is a candle blessed with prayer. Every kind of fire is used for struggling with inner forces. In January this year I purposely visited a church in Moscow. I didn't

Most of the information shamans acquire is during sleep through dreams

and particularly to the place where my mother's ancestors are buried. While I was there I felt and even saw the spirit of a woman and man and felt a very strong, energetic influence but I couldn't recognise clearly what kind it was. When I returned home I was woken up in the night by a light in the room. When I opened my eyes I saw white luminous spheres around both of my arms which were radiating light.

Sometimes I have had visions of some past realms and I have learnt to ask some conscious questions if I want to know something about the past.

I have been able to cure other people because I have managed somehow

influence. Sometimes they perform rites and prayers to the spirits for the whole night and then make pilgrimages to the places where the Shamans are buried.

It seems to me that Shamans work with lower levels of energy and that good or bad is probably all the same to them.

They can do both things. But I consider that when one works with the upper levels of energy, one cannot do evil things. When you work with energy you govern it with your mind. I think the work which Shamans perform is related to darker and lower things.

Rinpoche: In what way does a

The Shaman is considered to be a warrior who struggles with evil forces, illnesses and so on

Thereafter they do rituals on the seventh, ninth and fortieth days, as in the Christian religion, and also one year after the death.

The soul is considered to go either to heaven or hell. The soul may be pure and light or black or a dull grey colour; it depends on their sins. If a person has purified his soul during his lifetime, it becomes very light and very quickly it goes up through layers of energy. While the soul is

use candles but only energy flows and I burned with divine fire. I could take it into my hand and put it where I wanted. Using such divine fire I can purify the soul or energy surrounding the person. The fire pervades the person and purifies his channels of energy. I am a fire sign and when I am curing, I am the central fire so it is quite easy for me to work with it.

continued on page 15

Children

continued from page 2

like doing it, this is a sign that this particular capacity is missing. If one doesn't feel like doing something, there are certainly other secondary causes manifesting. And in this case, if one tries to force oneself one definitely won't succeed and, even if one succeeds, one won't get very good results.

It isn't actually very important whether or not a physician's child becomes a physician himself. Whatever activity one engages in, if one is good at it and qualified there is always a sense to it. If it was senseless, why would it exist in society? Anything that exists can be important. So, first one should hear from the children what they want to do and then respect their dimension, feelings, principles, ideas, collaborating and helping them to realize all this and do his best. If one does this, then children succeed very well in what they do, and realize what they wanted. In this case, the parents too will be satisfied and a good relationship will arise between the parents and their children.

In our modern society, there are many children who have little respect for their parents. Some even hate them because this kind of conflict has arisen. When I was in China, one day during exams at Peking University, I saw a girl who had failed her exam. She was desperate, she couldn't go back home thinking that her parents then would fight with her, and so she threw herself under a train and died. Then her picture appeared in the newspapers, saying that it didn't happen only to her, but that in China, in many places, children feel an obligation towards their family to succeed in their examinations, and that if they don't manage they are even capable of dying.

What does it mean when one feels such strong desperation? It can't arise only after a few sorrows, it must be something very heavy. This happens when parents condition their children: even if the children become very diligent, it doesn't produce a good result. If one does things like this, it means that one doesn't respect the individual's

dimension. If we consider that children are the future - what we have generated - then this generation must be based on a principle of evolution of our knowledge of our own condition, respecting our human dimension. If today's children learn something about this, this experience will certainly also arise in their children, for future generations. In this way society improves.

So I think that it is very important that at least people who are involved with the Teachings and know something about the human situation should be aware of this condition and find themselves in this dimension in a relaxed way. This involves not only ourselves but also the future society towards which we are responsible and to which we are linked through our children. It involves parents and all of those who are committed to educating children - they should all apply these principles. Like this, a way of educating children can come about that corresponds not only to the principle of the Teachings but also to the needs of our society and to the human condition as a whole.

Therefore, I think that this is a very important matter. This is my opinion about children's education: that children should be educated to be responsible and that their dimension should be respected.

(NOTE: On the original tape which Rinpoche so kindly prepared for the Mirror, his talk is introduced and rounded off by some beautiful playing on the Tibetan flute.)

Shamanism

continued from page 14

If I am not very attentive during these ceremonies, some dark entities can attack me and so I must be very careful.

I once visited a church where I met a woman who was under the influence of some dark forces. I wanted to help this person but when I closed my eyes I saw myself holding candles in both hands. Then I sent this woman to the church and asked her to buy the candles there and since then I have worked with

candles.

When I switch into this process I do it quite unconsciously and I don't know what is going on. Something is working through me but my mind doesn't take part in this. I am guided by some force.

Rinpoche: In the Shamanistic system of your country are there some symbols or figures of, for example, the elements?

Botagoz: Yes, for instance there is some kind of horse whip and knives. The Shaman is considered to be a warrior and using these and other objects he struggles with evil forces, with illnesses and so on.

I don't know about special symbols that represent the elements.

Shamans use special costumes for ceremonies such as initiation and driving away evil spirits.

Rinpoche: Do Shamans use mushrooms or some other substances to alter their state of consciousness?

Botagoz: No they don't use those kinds of things and smoking is strictly forbidden for them. They have a very strict moral code. For example a man may have one wife or three but they must be legally married according to the Moslem system.

Fabio Andrico: What substances are used for purification? For example Tibetans very often use Sang, burning perfume or wood or they purify with water.

Botagoz: Some kinds of herbs are dried and incense is made from them for purification. Sometimes water is empowered by prayer and then sprinkled for purification.

Rinpoche: Are there problems between Shamans and Islamic believers?

Botagoz: No, because Shamans have integrated some aspects of Islam into their life and practice. Shamans know and perform some Moslem rituals and they are practitioners of the Moslem teaching. But Shamans and Moslem priests have some sort of rivalry because the Shamans are afraid the Moslem priests may take their ability to communicate with spirits away from them. And there is also some

kind of rivalry between various Shamans because they are afraid that some other Shaman will steal their knowledge and their spirits. It is quite a surprise for me because I think that if someone is proficient nobody can take away his ability.

Rinpoche: Do Shamans have a particular temple or church where they perform their rituals?

Botagoz: No, they have none. As a rule they perform rituals in their houses but if the Shaman is very professional and wealthy, he may build a special house for performing rituals which is called a small mosque.

Rinpoche: Is there any written literature about the particular methods of Kazak Shamanism?

Botagoz: They have some written instructions on how to perform rituals which are kept in the family and handed down from one generation to another but only initiated people can see these books.

Fabio Andrico: When there is a problem in a house or with a person, do they consider it necessary to cure the environment, too?

Botagoz: Yes, they consider it

necessary to cure the whole family and all the surroundings. If a Shaman is powerful he intuitively knows the cause of various illnesses and negative situations.

Fabio Andrico: Do they sometimes have this kind of information through animals or birds?

Botagoz: It is said that in the past some Shamans communicated with the souls of animals and birds but I don't know if this exists today.

Rinpoche: Is there a system for learning or discovering the situation such as looking in a crystal ball or a mirror or seeing reflections appearing through spirits?

Botagoz: No, they have no special objects for that purpose. Most of the information they acquire is during sleep through dreams.

The Shaman who wanted me to become his disciple told me that the spirits of his teachers came to him at night and he could see them quite clearly. They would communicate with him at night and through such dreams he received a lot of information. But I have my own way of seeing which is not through dreams and so I don't call myself a real Shaman.

SOUTH AMERICAN GAKYILS

The new Venezuela Gakyil is:

BLUE - Brian Perry, Dilcia Moreno, Yone Catalàn
RED - Blanca Nieves Chique, Dr Adolfo Laroche, Oscar Gutierrez
YELLOW - Dr Pablo Lau (Director), Alberto Montealegre, Eglee Barros

The new Buenos Aires Gakyil is:

BLUE - Lia Bronori, Monika Varela, Stella Maris Rodriguez
RED - Martin Bortagaray, Carlos Giglio, Ramiro Fernandez
YELLOW - Ricardo Fabricant, Cristina Merlotti, Alejandro Chaoul

¡Buen trabajo a todos!

"The Whole World is Fluxus"

by Karin Koppensteiner

Fluxus is a Latin term meaning 'flowing', 'being in movement'. It is also a view of life which started in the '60s when it brought together many international artists from different fields.

The first 1962 Fluxus festival was organised in Wiesbaden, Germany by George Maciunas when artists, musicians and poets met and took on the name 'Fluxus' as a trademark of an artistic movement noted for its extraordinary performances.

30 years later, the Fluxus artists met again in Wiesbaden. At the Fluxus Museum on the outskirts of Wiesbaden we viewed a column made of slides of portraits of H. H. the Dalai Lama, enlightened from within, a Buddha statue sitting in front of a television viewing its own image on the screen and a display of the poetic works of our own Louise Landes-Levi (the woman with the saranghi).

Other happenings included John Cages's "Works on Paper", Babeth Film Art's film "Compassion" on the reincarnation ceremony of Dudjom Rinpoche in 1987 and a number of video projections by such artists as Yoko Ono, Joe Jones and Nam June Paik.

Prison Temple Consecrated

On October 10th, the Russian newspaper, "Izvestia", published the following article:

"At Goose Lake 'Strict Regime Penal Camp', Buryatia, the first ever Buddhist temple in a Russian prison was recently consecrated. Built by the convicts themselves in their free time, the ritual of consecration was conducted by Gelugpa Lamas of the Ivolga monastery. The Deputy Chairman of the Central Directorate of Buddhists of Russia was present at the invitation of the prisoners."



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Yantra Yoga in Augsburg

by Helmut Reile

Fabio Andrico was in Germany in October to give a one week Yantra Yoga course in Augsburg. Initially held in a beautiful octagonal room, reminiscent of the Merigar Gonpa, with a beautiful view into a garden, a dozen or so people studied the various movements, positions and breathings with Fabio. Later in the week, in Gerd and Verusha's flat, Fabio went on to explain the benefits of each exercise, their healing capacities and how they correct and stabilise the flow of prana. He also spoke about Kumar-Kumari Yantra Yoga for children: how without holding the breath - which is not good for children - they can have some experience of different kinds of breathing (smooth, soft, fierce, quick, slow etc.) to the accompaniment of special sacred sounds.

New York Gakyil Formed

On Sunday August 16, following the retreat at Tsegylgar near Shelburne Falls, Massachusetts where Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche transmitted the Santi Maha Sangha teachings for the first time in America, New York sangha met with him for a ganapuja on Dakini Day at Jennifer Fox's home. Afterwards Rinpoche spoke of the necessity for cooperation among sangha members and the importance of not creating disturbances between individuals. Rinpoche then, at the request of his students, helped form a gakyil of the New York Dzog-chen Community consisting of six individuals: yellow - Georgette Kelly and Rosemary Rawcliffe; red - Johanna Bennett and Sharon Weiner; and blue - Tsultrim Allione and Jacqueline Gens. The officers of the gakyil are the president: Tsultrim Allione (361 Old Mill Rd., Valley Cottage, NY 10989, tel. 914 268 3050, fax 914 268 4280); secretary: Johanna Bennett (220 Central Park South, NY, NY 10019, tel. 212 262 1570); and treasurer: Rosemary Rawcliffe, (201 E. 21st St. Apt. 2J, NY, NY 10010, tel. & fax 212 505 6454).

The first New York gakyil meeting was held on August 28. At that time, several agenda items were discussed including the special practice schedule and community mailing, mandala construction in the NYC vicinity, practice-packets (with practice transcripts, tapes and photo), fund-raising ideas, meeting format and networking with Tsegylgar.

Discussions focused on the current practice schedule designated worldwide by Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche and the logistics of coordinating the various mailing lists of new and old Dzog-chen Community members to receive this schedule through a newsletter as soon as possible. The need to fund-raise for a mandala for use in New York to coincide with Prima Mai's scheduled spring visit was determined a priority. This first meeting was a particularly auspicious occasion as it was followed by a talk by Khamtrul Rinpoche, an esteemed Dzog-chen master whose lineage is connected to Ghogyal Namkhai Norbu's previous incarnation, Adzam Drugpa and Changchub Dorje, Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche's root master. Khamtrul Rinpoche was accompanied by his wife, Tsewang Drolkar and David Christensen, translator for the visit. Rinpoche is known for receiving many visions and dreams pertaining to Shambhala on which he gave a talk at the request of H. H. the Dalai Lama during the Kalachakra Initiation in New York last fall. He spent the night at Tara Foundation where the following day he gave another teaching and was interviewed for The Mirror. At that time he promised to return to New York and perhaps give a longer teaching. At present, the New York sangha is looking forward to the opportunity to practice in a larger group, a monthly Santi Maha Sangha study group, a weekly chod session, and upcoming visits of Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche and Prima Mai in the spring.

PRACTICES FOR SPECIAL DAYS

FULL MOON

Tibetan date: Western date:
9th Month, 15th day Tuesday 10th November 1992
This is a good day to do the Long-life practice of Amitayus, "Union of Primordial Essences", either collectively or personally according to your possibilities, early in the morning or in the evening.

Tibetan date: Western date:
9th Month, 22nd day Monday 16th November 1992
This day is the great celebration of Buddha Shakyamuni's descent to earth from the realms of the Divinities. It is called "Lha bab dus chen", the Great Time of the Descent of the Divinities. It is an ideal day to do a Ganapuja with your Vajra brothers and sisters. If there are none nearby, you can do a short or medium Tun on your own.

Tibetan date: Western date:
9th Month, 25th day Thursday 19th November 1992
This is a Dakini day and the anniversary of the very important Dzogchen master Adzom Drugpa (1842-1924). He was a disciple of Jamyang Kyentse Wangpo and a master of some of Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche's masters, including Changchub Dorje and Ayu Kadro. He was also a previous incarnation of Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche. It is therefore a very important day to practise "A Kar Lamai Nalgyor", the Guruyoga with the White A, according to your possibilities.

NEW MOON
Tibetan date: Western date:
9th Month, 30th day Tuesday 24th November 1992
This is a good day to do "Namchos Shitroi Nalgyor", the Yoga of the Peaceful and Wrathful Manifestations, in the morning. It is also an important day for the practice of Ekajati, so try to do a long or medium Tun in the usual way, reciting the heart mantra of Ekajati as many times as possible.
The best time for this practice is around eight o'clock in the evening.

Tibetan date: Western date:
10th Month, 10th day Friday 4th December 1992
This is an important day of Guru Padmasambhava, so try to do the Long-life practice associated with the Universal Wisdom Union (U.W.U.) which is included in the medium or long Tun, or if you have the possibility it is beneficial to perform a Ganapuja.

Tibetan date: Western date:
10th Month, 11th & 14th day
Western date:
Saturday 5th and Tuesday 8 December 1992
These are very special days for doing practice of Ekajati. If you know how to perform the rite of Ekajati, then do it in the usual way, otherwise you can do it in a very simple way as the "Medium Tun", using the heart mantra as many times as possible.

FULL MOON
Tibetan date: Western date:
10th Month, 15th day Wed. 9th December 1992
This day is considered to be the day to honour the Lord Buddha in general, and it is one of the best days to do the

Long-life Practice with the Dhakini Mandarava particularly. Therefore try to do the Long-life Practice, Cycle of Life's Vajra. Generally the best moment to do this kind of practice is at 7-8 o'clock in the morning. But if you don't have this possibility, then do it in the afternoon or later in the evening when you are free.

NEW MOON
Tibetan date: Western date:
10th Month, 25th day Saturday 19th December 1992
This is a Dakini Day, and the anniversary of Tsongkhapa (1357-1491), who made a synthesis of the previous schools and founded the Gelugpa school. Try to perform a Ganapuja with your Vajra brothers and sisters or the Medium Tun personally. In either case recite the heart mantra of the Dakini Simhamuka as many times as possible.

Tibetan date: Western date:
11th Month, 8th day Friday 1st January 1993
This is a particular day for the practice of Ekajati so try to do a long or medium Tun with intensive practice of the mantra of Ekajati.

Tibetan date: Western date:
11th Month, 10th day Sunday 3rd January 1993
This is a special day of Guru Padmasambhava. If you have the time and possibility it is good to do a Ganapuja collectively with your Vajra brothers and sisters, otherwise you can do the Long-life practice of Union of Primordial Essences "U.P.E."

FULL MOON
Tibetan date: Western date:
11th Month, 15th day Friday 8th January 1993
This is an important day to do the Long-life practice of Amitayus, U.P.E.

Tibetan date: Western date:
11th Month, 25th day Sunday 17th January 1993
This is a day of the Dakinis in general, so if you have the opportunity perform a collective Ganapuja, with the transformation of the Dakini Simhamukha, and recite her heart mantra as many times as possible. Otherwise you can do a medium Tun either collectively or personally.

NEW MOON
Tibetan date: Western date:
11th Month, 30th day Friday 22nd January 1993
This is a special day for purification practices so try to do Purification of the Six Lokas.

Tibetan date: Western date:
12th Month, 10th day Tuesday 2nd February 1993
This day is the anniversary of Guru Padmasambhava's coronation as Prince of Orgyen at the invitation of King Idrakoli. We can perform a ganapuja collectively or do the Long - life practice, U.W.U. either collectively or personally, according to circumstances.

Tibetan date: Western date:
12th Month, 11th day Wed. 3rd February 1993
Today it is good to do a medium or long Tun with intensive practice of the mantra of Ekajati.

SHANG-SHUNG EDIZIONI

VIDEO LENDING SERVICE

Shang-Shung Edizioni has built up a collection of over 600 carefully selected videos on Tibet (roughly half of which are documentaries), representing one of the most important video archives of its kind in the world. The publishing house would like to make it available to organizations and individual scholars for use during conferences, retreats, meetings etc.

So Shang-Shung Edizioni is now organizing a reasonably priced lending service and, with the advice of the Shang-Shung Institute, will provide informational services (with reference to subject matter, titles, places, personages etc.). Packages for displays and other occasions will also be available, including 'ad hoc' ones on request.

Two such packages (for three/six evenings) are already available for movie clubs, institutes, schools etc.

Anyone wishing further information can contact:

Shang-Shung Edizioni - Video Archive - Merigar, 58031 Arcidosso (GR), Italy.
Tel. Italy (0)564-966039; Fax: Italy (0)564-966608

VIDEO ARCHIVE

The Video Archive, at the moment in the care of Shang-Shung Edizioni, contains many precious and rare films of teachings and events. In the course of only a few years, even with the best of care, these videos will start to deteriorate.

For this reason, the Video Archive is making an urgent appeal to anyone who has the necessary technical knowledge to send information about preserving the films on laser discs. If it is possible, how should we go about it and what would be the approximate costs?

If you know about laser discs or can put the Archive in touch with someone who does, please contact urgently:

THE MIRROR

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