

# THE MIRROR

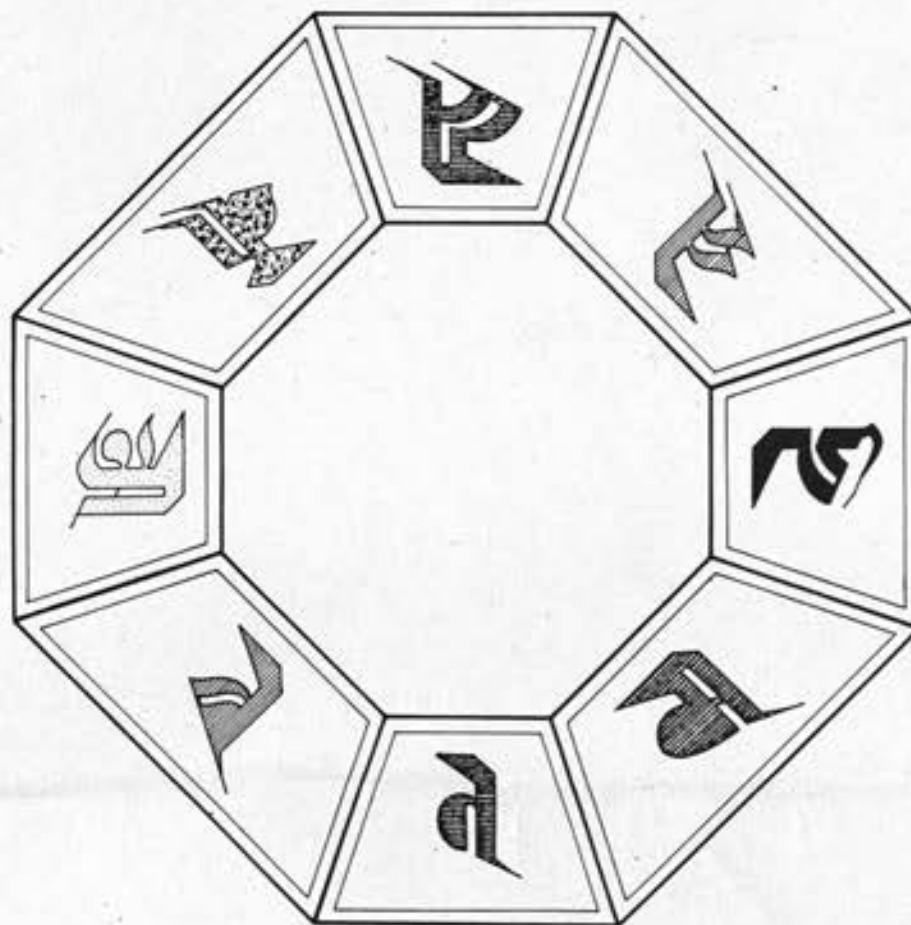
The International Newspaper of the Dzog-chen Community

Issue 21

## Decorating the Merigar Gonpa

by John Shane

Friday the 23rd of April was one of those beautiful spring days in Tuscany when the landscape around Merigar seemed lit with a magical light, and the fields of the surrounding countryside were alive with birdsong in the fresh morning air as members of the Community gathered in the Gonpa to perform a practice for the Inauguration of the work of decorating the structure. Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche was in fine form, and there were present a fair number of people who had remained after the end of the Easter retreat to participate. With Rinpoche leading us we practised a medium *tun* followed by a *sang* ritual, the cypress smoke billowing up from the *sankhang* outside the Gonpa towards the clear sky, offering to the Guardians and asking them to help the work to go well. We followed this with a rite of *lungta* to re-authenticate the prayer flags, and a rite to authenticate *namka*, as well as many repetitions of the *Naggon*, the heart mantras of the Guardians. Afterwards Rinpoche spoke with us informally, and explained his vision of what he wishes to have painted inside and outside the Gonpa, and how it should be done. He told us that inside the dome of the roof, on a pale blue background that will allow the grain of the wood



An example of mantra to ornament the Gonpa

underneath to show through, will be written the Song of the Vajra in *phagpa* script (the name of a Sakyapa master who became the master of an Emperor from the Yuan dynasty), and some root tantras of the Dzogchen Semde, Longde and Upadesa in the *Nyan-gyud* (*sNyan-rgyud*) script. In addition the different manifestations of the Anuyoga system will be painted

there. Around the large beam that runs right round the inside of the structure to support the dome there will be the forms of the Masters of the Lineage of the Three Series. Outside, each of the sides facing in the eight directions will have the syllables of the Eight Classes painted on the beams above the windows, while there will be mantras above the doors to place a cause of

liberation in the minds of those who pass under them. Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche himself will be the Director of the project while Chögyal Rinpoche, a master of the Drugpa Kagyupa school and *thangka* painter has just arrived at Merigar to carry out the work of painting the figures of the lineage of the Dzogchen Masters during the time he has kindly agreed to stay at Merigar.

Batodalay Dugarov, a *thangka* painter from Buryatia will also soon arrive with his son, another painter, and will add his expert knowledge and skill.

Nickolai Dudka, a young *thangka* painter from Kiev who was trained and lives in Buryatia has already arrived at Merigar, after unfortunately being held up by a two week delay in Moscow due to visa difficulties that caused him to miss the Easter retreat. His

skilled collaboration will be very valuable. An international group of painters and artists including Wilvin Pederson from Norway and Felix Dawe of the UK is already busily at work finalising drawings which will be transferred onto the Gonpa shortly.

A team of four people was formed to coordinate the work: Isabel Wagner, Andreas Hannig, Claudio Maritano and Franco Branca (who is the caretaker of the Gonpa). Isabel, who is a picture restorer by profession is studying the technical aspects of how best to bind the pigments in the paint so that the work will be durable and not fade.

A team of practitioners, wearing heavy gloves and with masks covering their noses and mouths, has been busy in the warm sun since the Inauguration sanding off the varnish from various surfaces of the Gonpa to prepare them for repainting.

The balustrade around the deck that surrounds the building has been given a coat of paint and is now red and yellow instead of the colour of natural wood. The rest of the structure will be transformed in the same way until the whole Gonpa is resplendent with colours, forms and writing, all manifesting various aspects of the teaching.

### Dugu Chögyal Rinpoche at Merigar



Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche and Chögyal Rinpoche conferring over some designs for the Gonpa (photo Mario Maglietti)

On leaving Tibet in 1959, the 8th. Ven. Dugu Chögyal Rinpoche eventually settled at Tashi Jong in Himchal Pradesh, India, where a community of practitioners formed around his root guru, the 8th. Khamtrul Rinpoche. Like most of his previous incarnations, Chögyal Rinpoche is a highly gifted artist, and he very kindly accepted Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche's invitation to participate in the painting of the Merigar Gonpa. He will spend two weeks at Merigar this June, and has promised to return again in September.

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# Helping the dead and dying

by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

This article is part of a transcription of a teaching given by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu on the morning of April 15th, 1993, during the Easter retreat at Merigar.

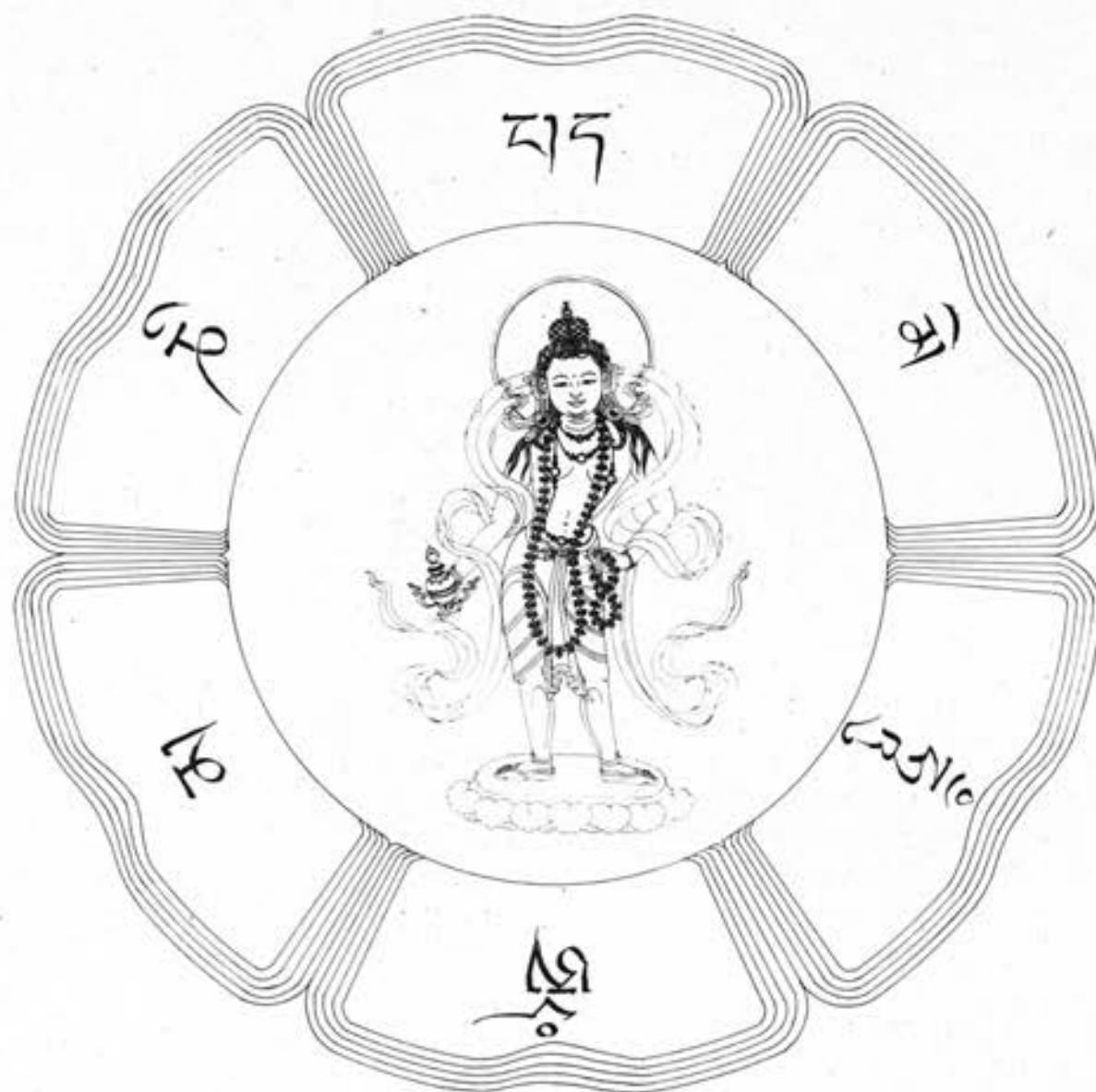
*Shitro* is an important practice for helping those who have died; it involves helping others through the practice of Vajrasattva. Even if no one in particular has died we can wish to help all sentient beings through our practice of Vajrasattva, and through our good intention towards all beings we can accumulate good actions. But even if we have such good intentions, it's difficult for all the other beings to receive the benefit in this way, because in order to receive it there must be a concrete relationship between us and them. If there isn't such relationship it's very difficult for the other beings to receive the benefit. But at least we can dedicate our practice to the many people both living and dead with whom we've had a relationship during our many lives, and thus it can be beneficial. That's one way of doing it.

It is generally very important for practitioners to know how to help those who have died when they are doing the *Shitro* practice; and certainly the *Shitro* and Vajrasattva practice is one of the main practices for helping them, but there are also many other things that one can do.

When you are working with a person who is in the process of dying, you have to understand what kind of a person they are. They may be someone that we know and like, and whom we want to help, but if that person has never been interested in the teaching, and has never believed in anything like the path, when the moment of their death comes, they are going to die in that same way as they lived, without having any interest in it. It is said that even if the Buddha has infinite wisdom and capacity, if a person does not have the karma of being interested, then it's not possible for him to do anything. So it isn't possible to give this type of person any great help. The most we can do for them is to give them something like a *tagdrol*, to wear on the body which will place a positive cause for going onto the path in their future life.

A *tagdrol* is prepared with a mandala on it, and you must put it into contact with the person's body. Alternatively you can write the Song of the Vajra or the Six Syllables "A A HA SHA SA MA" on a piece of paper and put it in touch with them. This will help the person in the future by creating a cause for them.

If you have the possibility you should recite or whisper the Hundred Syllable Mantra, or the Six Syllables, or the Song of the Vajra into their ear so that dying or dead person can hear it. Otherwise there is *mindrup*, the use of an empowered medicine called *nyongdrol* which means liberation through tasting. It contains



Avalokiteshvara Khorva Dongtruk

(calligraphy Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche, drawing Felix Dawe)

108 medicines mixed with important relics authenticated by long practice of mantras etc. You can give it to the dying person to taste. This can sincerely help, not directly, but it will put a certain cause so that in a future life they may have the capacity to go onto the path. It is very important to do this.

If the person had at least some kind of relationship with or interest in the teaching but they didn't manage to do a lot of practice then in that case the first thing one can do is to practise *phowa*. *Phowa* works for those who have trained in it; if I perform the practice of *phowa* for a person and they already have a certain knowledge and experience of it, then it can help them.

One should do the *phowa* at the moment of death. It is said that the perfect moment to do it is when the outer breathing is interrupted but the inner breathing is not yet interrupted. This is the perfect moment because even if the deceased person does not have great knowledge it is the moment when their consciousness must leave the body. Through the practice of *phowa* one can direct the way their consciousness emerges. If one is interested in doing this, then one must learn how to do the *phowa*.

Then there's not much one can do for a while: for three days after death it is as if the person has fainted. All of the senses dissolve within them and disappear and for three days it seems like there is no presence

at all. If the person is a good practitioner and they have maintained their *samaya* and are good at meditation, then they may remain in their meditation for three days after death, or sometimes even more. What this means is that at the moment of death a good practitioner of tantrism transfers into his or her transformation. A transformation in the tantric system is always an inner transformation, one cannot transform externally in the outer world. And in that aspect one remains in that presence for many days. So, if, practising like this, one dies in the meditation position, one remains in it for many days. When the body shows signs that the position is loosening up, that means that the consciousness has emerged. Until then, remaining in that (position), it's almost as if the person is alive. If the person who has died is that type of practitioner, the best thing to do is not to disturb the body. But in the Western world I think it's almost impossible to proceed in this way. When one dies here, one has to declare the death and the body is removed immediately, one can't even keep it in one's home. Thus I really don't know how a practitioner can remain and continue in the *thugdam*.

If the person who is dying is a practitioner of Dzogchen and wants to realize the Body of Light then it's something he should understand before dying. He should ask to be left alone for about a week before he

dies and one should leave him alone in order to give him space to realize himself. That's another thing I don't know how we can do in the Western world.

If one is not a particularly good practitioner, then after three days one's consciousness reawakens. It's not that it reawakens in the corpse of the person because the consciousness is already outside. The body they awaken into is composed of the senses and is called the mental body. This reawakening of the mind is a very important moment, so on the third day it's important to do practice for the dead person. What is the main practice one must do on this third day? If one is doing practice for another practitioner, one should read the Tibetan Book of the Dead, the *Bardo Thodrol*, to them.

There are many levels of introduction in this book. By introduction we mean various ways of trying to remind the person who has died of the teaching and the practice. Even if the person was a bit stupid and didn't understand much when they received teachings during their life, at this moment of reawakening it is said that they have seven times more clarity than normal, because they no longer have the obstacle of the physical body. The mind and the consciousness of all the senses are naked. In that moment, if an introduction is given, then they will understand well. It will also remind them of the

transmission which they received during their lifetime. So it can be very important to make them understand the condition and the nature of the *bardo*.

If the person was a good practitioner and knew how to do something more, then one should prepare a piece of paper on which the letter NRI is written. Remember that among the Six Lokas, NRI is the symbol of the human realm. So if it is a human being that has died, you must write NRI on the paper, but if, for example, it is your dog that has died and you want to do a purification for him or her, then you should write TRI on the paper because that is the symbol of the animal realm.

Below this syllable you should write the name of the person for whom you want to carry out the purification. And after that you write all the obstacles and negative karma and then SHINTAM KURU YE SVAHA which means "may it be purified", and you put this piece of paper in front of yourself.

If you are doing this as part of a *Shitro* ritual, then you put it in front of the mandala. If that is too complicated for you then you can do a simple *Shitro* practice in the way that we usually do, writing on the paper as described earlier, and fixing the paper to a stick to keep it still. The paper and the writing are like a support for the consciousness of the dead person, because that consciousness no longer has a body. Without this, we don't know where the consciousness is, and so we don't know how to communicate with it. If we have made the support then we know that it represents the dead person and we can talk and converse with it.

Then we can, for example, give them the introduction to the *bardo*. And if one is a good practitioner, one can also give the empowerment of the teaching.

Or we can purify the person through the support of the purification mantra. And through the mantra and the practice of *Shitro*, remembering that we ourselves are manifesting as Vajrasattva with the mandala of the Peaceful Deities, we send out rays of light from all the mandalas and the OM A HUM and purify the support.

We can also purify it through the mantra of Vajrasattva and the Hundred Syllable mantra. In the *Shitro* practice there is a specific mantra which should be recited many times, which is also for purification.

When we have finished doing all the purification, we burn the support. This may be on the third day or the anniversary of the specific day of the week on which death occurred, but generally speaking if we are doing the practice for many days, we burn the support whenever we have finished doing the purification.

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## Meeting of European Gakyils



(photo Liane Graf)

During the Easter retreat held at Merigar, members of the Gakyils of the European Communities met to discuss various points that needed clarifying related to membership in the Dzog-chen Community. Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche was present during the meeting and Merigar's Director, Mario Maglietti was able to answer many of the questions posed.

Mario explained that the present form of the three principal Gars of the Community, Tsegylgar, Tashigar and Merigar, had developed out of a long process started years ago by Rinpoche, who concluded, last spring, that since many Communities had doubts about his proposals for an International Community and expressed criticism, that it would be better to organise three main Gars where Community people can take out membership.

His first letter about this to Tsegylgar explained that this organisation of the three Gars does not mean that they have power or control over other Gakyils but have been created for organisational reasons. In the case of people living in Europe, if they wish to become members of the Dzog-chen Community, they can either subscribe directly to Merigar, as the

main Gar in Europe, or they can subscribe through their local Gakyil in which case half of their subscription fee goes to the local Gakyil and half to Merigar. The amount destined for Merigar helps to maintain Merigar's centralised structures and services such as the Gonpa, the central office, the Community library and The Mirror, all of which are services to the International Community.

Several of the European Gakyils said that the system of subscription worked very well even though they had had their doubts about it initially. They also found it an excellent way to help them launch their own projects such as buying Community property.

Some of the problems raised centred round the financial side of membership. In some countries such as Greece and Yugoslavia where financial conditions are not par with most of West Europe, it is very difficult for members to pay the normal membership fee. For Community people in the many countries making up Eastern Europe, this difficulty becomes an impossibility because of the extremely low living costs. Another point raised was how to deal with people in Western European countries who wish to become

members but say that they can't afford to pay full subscription because their incomes are too low.

Mario Maglietti, on behalf of the Merigar Gakyil, clarified the problem of membership fees in lower income countries by explaining that the Merigar Gakyil would be establishing a system of memberships costs related to the circumstances of each individual country. In these countries, 100% of the membership fees would be kept by the local Gakyil of that country in order to create a fund there which could be used for the running costs of the local Community or for particular projects such as buying land, houses, etc.

During the meeting, Rinpoche spoke about membership to the Community in general saying that perhaps some people didn't understand it very well. From the beginning the idea of membership was to maintain the Community and create something concrete for the future. He stressed the importance of membership as a way to guarantee the continuation of the Dzog-chen Community and maintain the transmission. At the beginning he had considered membership for all Gakyils in an International Community but after people had criticised his idea saying that a social organisation was not part of the teaching, he decided to apply the membership system to three Gars where he could take responsibility. He said that nobody was obliged to become a member.

He added that those who wished to participate in the Santi Maha Sangha training must be members of the Community because their membership shows their interest. He realised that many people had no job and very little income and said the main point was their interest and participation in the Community. "In Dzog-chen, we work with circumstances", he said, "and if one really wants to do something, there is always a possibility".

still feel that they are a human; they still have clarity and see everything. When they finally understand that they are dead, they suffer even more and for sometime they still have that experience and sensation of being human. This is because the traces of our attachment are very strong. After the first week this starts to diminish because there is another process of death. This is why in that moment one has to do an introduction such as reading the *Bardo Thodrol* or one can do the *phowa*, etc., and if possible burn the support every week.

In Tibet we do this kind of practice for the dead up to the 49th day following death. When someone dies in a family that is not completely penniless there will certainly be some monks or practitioners there for 49 days doing the purification puja. Every week they invite some important master to do the *changchog* for the purification and

the transference.

The last of the 49 days is called *lamten*, which means showing or demonstrating the path. 49 days is considered to be more or less the normal length of the state of the *bardo* of existence, and so on the 49th day they do as much practice as possible inviting masters and practitioners to participate. In general this is what is done for the dead.

It may be quite useful to understand these things.

In the *Dzogchen Upadesa* there is a tantra particularly concerning death, and this tantra explains week by week what introduction, what practice and what purification must be done. And certainly one day we will learn that tantra. That could be quite useful, because after birth, for everybody there will eventually be death, and when one is alive it is always very important to understand these things.

## NAMKHAIR NORBU RINPOCHE

### Teaching Programme

#### Israel

June 23 - 26, Jerusalem

at "Mishkenot Shananin", "Place of the very quiet people" Fisher Hall.

June 27, University of Tel Aviv:

Tibet Day lecture on the Culture and History of Tibet featuring Prof. Namkhair Norbu Rinpoche

For further information on the retreat and the conference and hotel bookings contact: Noa Blass, Biltmore Street 15, 62194 Tel Aviv. Tel. 97 2 3457543.

#### Thailand

July 1, Bangkok, Chulalongkorn University

"An Introduction to Dzogchen"

July 2 - 6, Hua Hin, Sailom Hotel

Dzogchen Seminar

For information contact Pierre Wittmann, P. O. Box 37, Hua Hin, 77110, Thailand. Tel. 1 212 3941

See page 4 for fuller details.

#### Japan

August 20 - 30, 1993

The retreat will take place at the ancient temple of Kouyasan, the main seat of the Japanese mantrayana or "Shingon"

For information contact Tsugiko Kiyohashi, 4-11-21-30 Shimomeguro, Meguro-ku, Tokyo, Japan. Tel. 03 371 67248

## Tibetan Medicine Courses



The first weeklong course will be held at Merigar, Arcidosso (GR), in Italy from Saturday June 26th to Sunday July 4th.

The course is part of a five-year study programme with an introductory year. The programme which is structured in recurring seminars, will deal with all the principal material of the Tibetan medical system taught by qualified teachers.

During the course some hours will be dedicated to studying the fundamentals of the Tibetan language and general culture. The maximum number of participants accepted for the course will be 20.

The registration fee is Lit. 600.000 which does not include accommodation and food. The Shang-Shung Institute has made an agreement with the Hotel Capenti which offers a daily rate per person of Lit. 60.000 for full board and Lit. 25.000 for accommodation and breakfast.

Registration should be made to the Shang-Shung Institute, Via degli Olmi 1, 58031 Arcidosso (GR) Italy, before June 10th, 1993, indicating the type of accommodation required. A receipt of payment of the Lit. 150.000 deposit should be sent with the request for registration. Payment may be effected by either postal order to the Institute or by bank draft to account no. 4122.96 at the Arcidosso branch of the Monte dei Paschi di Siena.

Please bear in mind that since the number of participants is limited, only the first requests for registration received will be taken into consideration; the others will have their deposit returned to them.

For all further information, please contact the secretary of the Shang-Shung Institute from Monday to Saturday between the hours of 10.00 and 13.00 at 0564 966940, or fax 0564 966846.

## Helping the dead...

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Burning the support certainly doesn't mean burning the consciousness of the dead person. One can't burn the consciousness and the mind. The support represents their existence related to all their attachments and concepts and we burn it reciting a mantra such as that of Vajrasattva. After we've done this we do the transference visualizing that their consciousness transfers (to a pure dimension). We can do that on the third day.

Then, after the first week, on the seventh day after death, we burn a support and do the transference again, because on this day the consciousness of the dead person undergoes another process of death which diminishes his or her attachment and concept of where he or she came from. Because when a human being dies, for example, they

## Australian Community launches land project

Based on information published in the April 1993 issue of the *Dzogchen Community of Australia Newsletter*

During the 1992 December retreat with Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche, the energy was set in motion for the creation of a Gar in Australia. It was said that the Australian Community had come of age and the time was right for the establishment of an independent place for retreat. Rinpoche himself stressed the need for land and many Australian Community members felt that Rinpoche would be able to spend more time there if the Community had land. They agreed that a place near the coast would be the best.

During a short retreat on the south coast of New South Wales at Easter, members of the Land Committee inspected a piece of land that they considered truly remarkable and inspirational. They all agreed that this particular land, which is located near Central Tilba, is a very special piece of land and that it is a suitable

site for the continuation of the Dzogchen teachings in Australia.

The parcel of land consists of a little over 150 acres situated on the south side of Mt. Dromedary, or Gulaga, a place of great spiritual significance to the Aboriginal people. It is very close to the villages of Central Tilba and Tilba Tilba and about five hours drive from Sydney, three from Canberra and eight from Melbourne. The land is five minutes from the beach.

The land has various topographical features including eucalypt forests, large grassy fields, a mountain area, large rocks, a permanent creek of very pure water, tree ferns and other rain forest trees. At the highest point on the land there is a magnificent view out to sea and as far as the blue mountains of the Bega-Eden area to the south.

The land adjoins the Mt. Dromedary flora reserve which is a completely protected area. There is plenty of flat land on which to build and there is electricity at the farm

next door although there is plenty of government assistance for installing and using solar power.

The land will cost upward of \$250,000, a considerable sum, but all those who have seen the land feel that the special nature of it will inspire people to overcome the financial hurdle. People are being encouraged to go in groups to inspect the land and plans are being made for the July practice retreat to be held near Tilba Tilba to facilitate land viewing.

One way to cover the cost is that the land should be paid through donations and loans from individual practitioners. In addition large fund raising activities will be undertaken in the future. At present the Australian Community urgently needs to know who can give or lend money to the project, how much and under what conditions. Anyone who can give financial help should contact: Patricia Chandler, 471 Canning St., North Carlton 30054. Tel. 03 3880380.

## Dzogchen and Yantra Yoga in Germany



by Gerd Manusch

For the third time, Augsburg and the German Dzogchen Community welcomed Fabio Andrico for a three day Yantra Yoga course. After his two visits in spring and autumn of last year, this was finally the most comprehensive set of explanations, exercises and concrete practices of Yantra.

After having introduced the complete preliminaries of *Tsigjong*, *Lungsang* and *Tsadul* in the first weekend of 1992, Fabio went on to explain these again in the autumn of the same year along with working on the first and second group of Yantras.

During this recent long weekend, the emphasis was placed on the introduction to Yantra for beginners with some hints on Hatha Yoga practices. This culminated in the explanation and practice of the 8 *Lungsang* on Saturday and went on for the slightly more experienced practitioners with the first and

second group of *asanas* on Sunday.

Everybody was very content with these precious teachings, and felt that they were flowing through Fabio Andrico directly from Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche himself. This heart-connection to Rinpoche was further deepened by practising together the short *Tun* in remembrance of the Easter Retreat practice sessions, and by watching the videos of the journey to Kailash and "A Lama Around the World".

These rounded up a very complete and intense practice-retreat-course-meeting, which was also relaxing and joyful. The sparkling humour of Fabio Andrico, his wonderful clear and direct guidance and the joyful participation of about 15 practitioners made this weekend very special. This was specially underlined and supported by the wonderful sunny weather which after a heavy thunderstorm on the arrival of Fabio, lighted up everybody's mind and heart.

The place was the same as for the last course, an octagonal spacious room, half open with glass and offering a view of a wonderful garden with trees and flowers, in the middle of the city of Augsburg, which amazed some of the new guests. We also had time to exchange news of the Easter retreat and experiences of practice as well as just hanging out together at a pizzeria on Saturday evening.

The meeting together also included the monthly German Gakyil meeting on Thursday along with some practice in the evening. The next open Gakyil meeting with group practice will probably take place at the end of June in the Nürnberg area and everybody is invited.

As coming together very much helps people in their practice, practice groups in Frankfurt, Stuttgart and Augsburg will meet weekly after Rinpoche's trip to Austria. A study group is being considered which will try to establish some knowledge of the basic programme of the Santi Maha Sangha. The book is currently being translated into German and we also have a set of tapes of the Easter retreat of 1992 and of Christmas 1992/93. What we lack and hope for in terms of Yantra Yoga is the new book which, according to Fabio Andrico, has nearly been translated and checked with Rinpoche. We also discussed the matter of making photos and drawings for the book and we will look for a way to publish it in Germany. One idea was that of subscribing to the book. The other major hope is, of course, that Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche is going to come to Germany soon, maybe in 1994 as he mentioned as a possibility at Easter, and maybe even for a retreat.

## Dzogchen in Thailand with Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche

### "An Introduction to Dzogchen"

Public Talk in Bangkok  
at the Chulalongkorn University Dharma Centre  
Phyathai Road (West Side)  
Thursday, July 1st, 1993

### Dzogchen Seminar in Hua Hin

at the Sailom Hotel  
29 Petchkasem Highway (2.5 km South of Hua Hin)  
July 2nd - 6th, 1993  
Tel. (66-32) 51 18 90/1. Fax (66-32) 51 20 47

### Dzogchen Seminar in Hua Hin

Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche will give Dzogchen teachings every morning and afternoon and the seminar program will include practice of Yantra Yoga and the Dance of the Vajra. Registration will start at noon on July 2nd at the Sailom Hotel and the teachings will begin at 4pm. Teachings and practice will be held in the carpeted conference room of the Sailom Hotel which is situated on the beach.

The fee to cover the expenses involved is 1500 baht (\$60 US) for the whole seminar (or 300 baht per day) including lunch and afternoon coffee break. Both vegetarian and non-vegetarian food will be served. Lodgings, breakfast and evening meals will be at the expense of those who attend the seminar. Monks and nuns are welcome to attend the seminar free of charge. Lodging and food will be arranged to meet their needs.

The Sailom Hotel is a first class hotel situated 2.5km south of Hua Hin in a quiet area on the 6km long white sand beach. The hotel also has a swimming pool and a tennis court. The management of the hotel will give a 60% discount on the rooms of the Sailom Hotel and of the Sirin Hotel to seminar participants. Price with discount per double room is 900 baht per night at the Sailom Hotel and 600 baht at the Sirin Hotel. Cheaper accommodation is available in town in the guest houses.

Children are welcome and child care may be provided during teaching sessions if requested.

Full payment of 1500 baht or deposit of 500 baht is requested on registration. Please make payable to Pierre Wittman.

Information and registration to: Pierre Wittmann, PO box 37, Hua Hin 77110, Thailand. Tel. 0066 1 212 3941. Fax 0066 32 51 35 71.

## New Gakyils

**Greece:** Blue: Sandra Svoronou, Liakos Evangelopoulos; Red: Katia Lytridou, Panayiotis Stambolis; Yellow: Nikos Toumbanos, Dimitris Daskarolis

Contact Address: Greek Dzogchen Community, P. O. Box 3240  
10210 Athens. Tel. 01 2779112 (Panayiotis Stambolis)

**Finland:** Blue: Janne Vainio, Ilkka Tanner; Red: Marko Lehti, Antti Tihveräinen; Yellow: Kirsi Honkonen, Virpi Kananoja  
Secretary and "contact" address: Kaisa-Liisa Puonti, Visantie 19, 05400 Jokela. Tel. 358 14 472 818. Fax 358 0 147 286 (from September to May).

**Beograd (ex Yugoslavia):** Director: Veona Tomic  
Blue: Zoran Zargoric; Red: Jelena Zargoric; Yellow: Milica Stojanovic

## Ermitage HOTEL TEAROOM RESTAURANT

Run by two students of Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche  
in the beautiful Belgium Ardennes



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- comfortable rooms
- lounge/bar, satellite TV
- varied gastronomy
- terrace overlooking river
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Students of Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche 10% reduction

Hotel Ermitage 32, Rue de la Roche, B-6660 Houffalize, Belgium  
Tel. and fax 32 61 288 140

## New York Community creates practice packets

The New York Dzog Chen Community is in the process of creating a series of "Practice Packets". The idea is that many people receive transmissions from Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche at a retreat and then they get home and can't remember the tune or don't really know how to proceed with actually doing the practices. So the practice packets contain the materials to help with that transition from the transmission to actually doing the practice and understanding what you are doing.

The attractive colored folders marked with a seed syllable contain: a laminated page size photograph of the principal deity, a tape of the practice led by Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche, the text of the practice in Tibetan, phonetics, word by word translation, also a translation of the phrases, plus a written commentary on how to do the practice.



Simhamukha

(drawing by Felix Dawe)

We have completed the "Guru Yoga of the White AH", (A dKar Lamai' rNal 'bhyor), the invocation of Garab Dorje which we chose as an auspicious practice to begin with since Guru Yoga is at the base of all transmissions.

The "Chöd" packet is also ready and contains laminated photographs of both Simhamukha and Machig Lapdron, a tape of the Chöd practice led by Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche, the Tibetan text, translation both word by word under the Tibetan and phrases, phonetics, a one page phonetic version and two commentaries.

We plan to follow with "Xitro", "Mandarava", "Purification of the Six Lokas" and all the Special Days Practices as funds become available.

The packets are available at wholesale prices for orders of ten or more, and retail for individuals; shipping costs will depend on the country they go to.

The "Guru Yoga of the White AH" packet costs \$20 retail and \$13 wholesale, and the "Chöd" packet costs \$25 retail and \$18 wholesale. 15% should be added for shipping in the USA and Canada. Anyone interested in receiving them can order them from:

New York Dzog Chen Community,  
111 East 11th Street, Box 287  
New York, NY 10003.

Checks should be made payable to the New York Dzog Chen Community. Payment should be made at the time of ordering.

## Town Accepts Tsegylgar Offer



The Conway Grammar School

(photo John-Shane)

by the Tsegylgar Gakyil

We have some very good news. At the March retreat, we took Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche to see the old Conway Grammar School building, which has been empty and on the market for two years. Rinpoche was very enthusiastic about the possible uses for the building. It would be ideal for holding winter retreats, for example, when the weather doesn't permit us to use the land in Buckland. It can house offices for the Dzog-chen Community. It can serve as a center for the development of the Shang-Shung Institute for Tibetan Studies, so we can organize conferences and courses on Tibetan Language and Medicine, here in the USA. It can house an office for the Tibetan Village Fund and A.S.I.A. project. It can provide dormitory space for people who visit Tsegylgar for courses or practice together. It can house a Mandala for the Vajra Dance.

Rinpoche urged many of our

practitioners to view the building during the retreat, and such was the enthusiasm of the response, that many people pledged money to help to buy the property.

The money pledged was not enough to buy the building outright, and not enough to renovate the building completely, but was significant enough of a total to be able to make an offer that was realistic, and would enable us to

### A New Office

The Tsegylgar Community has opened a new office in Shelburne Falls, upstairs at McCusker's Market - a small room with a view of the river and lots of sky. With the new office there is also a new phone with an answering machine 413 625 6378. Any offers of fax machines or modems will be very welcome.

have some money to begin repairs.

Our offer was to pay \$80,000 in total with \$40,000 as a down payment, \$20,000 in a year and a half and the balance one year after

that. After some four weeks of deliberating, the select board of the Town of Conway accepted our offer to buy the School, and has agreed to work with us to resolve the contingencies which were part of our offer.

The Town Board was concerned that whoever bought the school should contribute to the town finances. Given that we are tax exempt, we offered to make payments in lieu of taxes based on the sale price, with increases not to exceed the consumer price index, and that to be capped at a negotiated amount. All non profit organizations in the Town of Conway make similar payments.

At the moment, we have a period of three months in which to review all contingencies which we need to resolve, such as parking regulations, the presence of an oil tank, regulations governing how many people can be accommodated in a dormitory, and the capability of the floor and roof structure of the annex building in meeting the requirements for a clear span meeting-space. The Town is being very cooperative in trying to meet these contingencies.

Now that the commitment has been made, financial considerations have immediately entered into play. For example, the oil tank needs to be removed in order to see if any leakage has contaminated the ground. We have to bear the cost of this, whereas the Town will be responsible for cleaning up should any contamination have occurred. A land survey will also have to be carried

out at our expense, because this is in our interests, rather than the Town's.

At this point, we are confident that all contingencies will be resolved to our satisfaction. We have three months to come to resolution over them, but should we find agreement sooner, we will be able to close the transaction immediately.

This means that we have to come up with \$40,000 on the day of closing. So far, we have collected only \$18,000. Certainly, many people have been waiting to find out if anything concrete was going to happen before writing a check. Pledges are still coming in. We need to get the money not only to cover the down payment of \$40,000, but also to cover the cost of renovating the building to the level where we can move in an office, and basic living space for a building worker; all to the end of getting the place ready for teaching and practice, in order to benefit the whole Community, as soon as possible.

If you feel that you can and wish to contribute in any way to this project in terms of money, energy or ideas, your participation will be more than welcome.

Tsegylgar Dzog-chen Community, P. O. Box 277, Conway, MASS 01341, USA. Tel. 413 625 9821. Fax 413 665 1142.

## COMMUNITY WEEKEND

Tsegylgar, June 19 - 20

### Accommodations

Of course, many of the "locals" are more than happy to be your hosts for the weekend, but if you'd rather, we will be reserving rooms at Stump Sprouts for Friday and Saturday evening. If you can contribute to help defray these costs, great - if not, be our guest!

### Activities and Schedule

Karma Yoga - Our Buckland retreat site and the Dark Retreat Cabin are in need of some T.L.C., maintenance and other projects which remain unfinished. Also we would love to start to clear out the Juniper Grove for the retreat cabins which Rinpoche has requested us to build there. We'll start early on Saturday (9 am) so we can get lots done and still have time for other things. Please bring whatever tools you can - carpentry tools, shovels, rakes, pruning shears, etc.

### Collective practice

Friday evening we'll do a collective practice: Guruyoga of White AH at 7.30 pm at Rinpoche's cabin on the land. Saturday we can Dance on the Mandala in the late afternoon. On Sunday afternoon we will finish with a Ganapuja.

### Costs and Arrangements

There won't be any charge for the weekend, but everyone will be expected to contribute for the cost of meals, Ganapuja, etc. Please let us know as soon as possible when you will be coming especially if you need a room.

## THE MERIGAR LIBRARY

As you already know, at Merigar there is a library mainly containing books on oriental studies, including a great many original Tibetan texts and also a smaller number of books in western languages regarding Tibet and its neighbouring countries, altogether about 4500 volumes. The library is becoming an important reference point for many Tibetologists because of the quantity and quality of the Tibetan texts that are stored there, as well as becoming a place where one can deepen one's knowledge of all aspects of oriental cultures. It is therefore necessary to constantly increase the number of books of this library, in order to be able to satisfy as much as possible the needs of scholars and those interested in studying these cultures. It is above all important to increase the number of the texts that can be accessible also to the non-Tibetologist, i.e. of the books in western languages, that are still too scarce for a library of such range and prestige.

To increase the number of books of the library we mainly rely upon three kinds of assistance:

- 1) Financial contributions from the Dzog-chen Community and its associated bodies (Shang-Shung Institute, Shang-Shung Editions, ASIA, Coabit);
- 2) Book exchanges with other libraries (whenever there are many copies of the same book or books that are not required by the library);
- 3) Individual gifts (in books or money), that are, at the moment, the main source of increase.

Most of the books in the library have been donated by Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche himself, and some by other practitioners from all over the world. Therefore we hope that such a generous influx of new books to Merigar's library will continue so that the library will grow more and more for the benefit of those who want to use it.

Any kind of donation (even of just one book) will be very welcome, and above all donations of



Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche working on the plan for decorating the Gonpa in the Merigar Library (photo Alex Siedlecki)

publications regarding Asia in general and particularly Tibet, Nepal, Buthan, India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iran, central Asia (Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, etc.), China, Japan and the south-eastern Asian countries (Burma, Indonesia, etc.).

The publications can be periodicals or monographs (also in native languages) on various aspects of oriental cultures (art, architecture, medicine, astrology, philosophy, religion, yoga, etc.). The books can be brought or sent to the following address (specifying the name of the donor):

BIBLIOTECA DI MERIGAR,  
58031 ARCIDOSO (GR) - ITALY.

Besides the works on more general subjects, the library of Merigar needs some specialised publications that are fundamental for studies on Tibet. A partial list of these works has been published in *The Mirror*, issue 18, and we have already received many donations.

We would like to warmly thank here those who donated to the library some of the books requested, that are so important for studying and deepening one's knowledge of Tibetan culture.

For those who are interested in donating some of these specialised

books, here is the list of the ones that are still missing:

Melvyn Goldstein - Tibetan - English Dictionary of Modern Tibetan; - Essentials of Modern Literary Tibetan  
Aurel Stein - On Ancient Central Asian Tracks  
Hitchcock and Jones - Spirit Possession in the Nepal Himalayas  
Theodore Stcherbatsky - Buddhist Logic (2 vol)  
H. W. Bailey - Khotanese Buddhist Texts  
Daisetz Teitaro Suzuki - The Lankavatara Sutra  
Edward Conze - The Large Sutra on Perfect Wisdom  
Shashibhusan Dasgupta - Obscure Religious Cults  
Garma C. Chang - A Treasury of Mahayana Sutras  
Stephen Beyer - The Cult of Tara  
Hugh Richardson - Adventures of a Tibetan Fighting Monk  
R. A. Stein - Tibetan Civilization  
Sarat Chandra Das - Lhasa and Central Tibet  
Jay Goldberg - Mo: the Tibetan Divination System  
G. Tucci - Rinchen Bzangpo and the Renaissance of Buddhism in Tibet  
G. Tucci - The Religions of Tibet  
B. Aziz and M. Kapstein - Soundings in Tibetan Civilization

## Rinpoche's new manuscript

by Gaetani-Siedlecki

Since the end of the Easter Retreat at Merigar, Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche has been working on the design and accompanying commentary for the realization of the painting of 'Du khang mThong grol Chen mo: The Temple of the Great Liberation Through Seeing. What was anticipated as a few notes to be left for the Gonpa painters to execute, has become an extraordinary illuminated manuscript, full of beautiful calligraphy and photocopied reproductions of the Dzog-chen lineage Masters and Masters of the main Tibetan Buddhist schools, accompanied by brief biographies for each. These reproductions will serve as a basis for the portraits to be painted in the Gonpa, in a style not too overburdened but respecting the iconographical characters of the Masters, according to tradition. Some of the beautiful full color designs are already being enlarged and transferred onto the Gonpa at Merigar.

One of the principles underlying the painting of the Gonpa is the Liberation through Seeing (mthong grol). For that purpose, Rinpoche has written liberation mantras from one of Master Byang Cub Dorje's terms in the *pagpa* script.

Now, for those local people and tourists who have come to include a trip to Merigar as a part of their Sunday "gita" or outing, Rinpoche has planted a positive cause into what otherwise would have remained for them, perhaps, merely a curiosity.

## Coabit's recent plans

During the Easter retreat at Merigar, the Coabit building cooperative met to discuss a number of issues.

One of them concerned the cooperative's plan of about a year ago to organise an architectural competition for a "biohouse" to be built at Merigar. During the year, Coabit searched for a sponsor to cover organisational costs of the project but without success. Instead the project will probably be launched in collaboration with the Istituto Nazionale di Bioarchitettura among the Italian and possibly the European schools of architecture.

A new development will be the cooperative's proposal to offer its services as a housing agency for members of Coabit. This means that members will be able to use this service for buying and selling houses in the Arcidosso area, in Italy and also abroad.

Another service which the cooperative intends to offer to members is consultancy in the fields of construction, restructuring, contracts, technical-economic analysis etc.

Until now, members of Coabit had given an annual fee to the cooperative for organisational costs, an amount which gave no financial benefits to members. The cooperative now suggests that members can invest money in the cooperative as a "prestito sociale", a type of loan, which apart from having an interest rate about 1% higher than that of a bank, offers a tax deduction of only 12.5% on the interest, as opposed to 30% for a bank. With a 7 day notice, funds can also be withdrawn. Moreover, on the basis of these "prestiti sociali", Coabit can ask for a bank loan for the social activities which are planned.

## Coabit Real Estate Service

At the Members General Meeting in April it was decided to set up a real estate service for members of Coabit as announced in Leopoldo Sentinelli's report.

The main aim of the service is to promote, organise and articulate the commercialisation of real estate, house, land and apartments belonging to members of the cooperative and to help other interested members buy property.

The initiative is particularly interesting because it can make use of the organisational structure of Coabit, the means of communication of the International Dzog-chen Community and its widespread presence in many countries of the world.

The Service is already active and its organisation is extending from the areas close to Merigar, the seat of the Cooperative, to cities both in Italy and abroad and to other localities in the world where there are members of the Community who want to collaborate.

The first list of available properties is being prepared. This list will be continuously revised and increased by your proposals and information and will be published in every issue of the Merigar Letter and *The Mirror*.

Proposals to sell and buy will include detailed information and be classified in different groups: up to Lit. 50 million, from Lit. 50 million to 100 million, from 100 million to 150 million, and above 150 million.

Whoever would like to make use of this service but is not yet a member of Coabit can become one by asking for membership and paying the annual quota (Lit. 150.000).

The cost of the Service will, for the moment, be established individually until it is defined generally.

Requests and information from:

Mario Maglietti, Coabit, Merigar, 58031 Arcidosso GR, Italy. Tel. 0564 966322, fax 0564 968110.

## Welcoming Merigar's new Gekö

by Rosa Maria Lo Schiavo

Clara Juliano is Merigar's new Gekö. All best wishes to her!

At Merigar's Easter retreat, Clara asked Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche about her responsibilities. Rinpoche replied that eleven years after the inauguration of Merigar, this is the first time that the running of the "yellow house" and the buildings and activities connected with it are being put into the hands of a practitioner from Italy. The fact that all the gekös up to now have hailed from outside Italy was no accident. It reflected Rinpoche's wish that each Gar should have an international touch and be a point of reference for everyone. A foreigner who has already had the experience of coming to Merigar from abroad

would be the best guarantee of impartiality, and of attention to the needs and problems of those arriving from around the world. This would mean that people wouldn't have to feel they were "guests" in a place which is a home for every member of the Community, and where everyone's active participation is the life blood of the Community.

Rinpoche also spoke of the personal qualities a gekö should have, the importance of being kind, patient and welcoming, especially with those coming to Merigar for the first time. It is important for the gekö to be able to come to terms with the many situations that crop up, being kind but firm and not seeing the questions only in terms of oneself. It is especially important to avoid the

formation of cliques. Rinpoche also asked for the collaboration of all Gakyil members on this point, inviting them to collaborate both amongst themselves and with other practitioners. In Rinpoche's view, Clara has the advantage of being familiar with the Italian law and the running of Merigar, having served on the Gakyil for two years.

For Clara this post offers "a great opportunity for practice, experience and integration with difficulties". She hopes that she will be able to repay the trust Rinpoche has shown in her, is committed to developing the personal qualities required of her and hopes that everyone will be patient with her. She feels happy although she knows it won't be an easy job.

## Easter retreat at Merigar



(photo Uane Graf)

by Adriano Clemente

During the Easter retreat Master Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche gave teachings and transmissions principally related to the Dzogchen Longde and a method of practice for a Vajrasattva terma of Adzam Drugpa.

Before explaining the actual practice Rinpoche gave the empowerment called Rigpai Tsal Wang, linked to the direct introduction to the state of rigpa or instantaneous presence. At the same time he gave also the essential body, voice and mind initiations of Nondzog Gyelpo, Simhamukha and Guru Dragpo. During the following days he explained the method of the Four Da of the Dzogchen Longde Series, together with some specific practices to balance the condition of one's elements and progress in practice.

He then transmitted a practice of Vajrasattva very similar to the *Shitro* of Mingyur Dorje, explaining in particular some methods to help a dead person. He also gave the *lung* of the practices of Mandarava, of the *Chöd*, of a Simhamukha practice that is a *gonter* of Ayu Khandro and particularly of a method of Transference, or *Phowa*, whose origin is a *terma* of Changchub Dorje linked to the practice of *Shitro*, and explained all of them.

During the teachings he stressed many times the importance of the state of *rigpa* as a fundamental point to continue and of the night practice as a means to maintain one's presence, without falling into a condition of apathy or confusion regarding the multitude of Tantric and Dzogchen methods that are used within the Community.

## Santi Maha Sangha Study Group at Merigar

The Gakyil of Merigar is organizing a Santi Maha Sangha study group that will meet on alternate weekends at Merigar beginning in July 1993, to study and practise on the basis of Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche's book, "The Wish Fulfilling Vase" which explains the foundation level of Santi Maha Sangha. The book has eleven chapters and the course will involve the study of one chapter every other weekend.

There will be an afternoon session on the relevant Saturdays at 5 p.m. and a morning session on the Sundays at 10 a.m.

The course, which will involve practice (including some Yantra Yoga) as well as study, will enable those that follow it to prepare themselves for the examination that will determine whether they will be eligible to enter the first level of Santi Maha Sangha training which Rinpoche has promised to teach next year.

For further information, please contact Cicci D'Arista at Merigar at 0564 966837 or 966322.

## An international project for publications

by G Arca, J. Shane

With infinite compassion Chögyal Namkhai Norbu has for years travelled around the world transmitting and explaining the precious Dzogchen teachings. He has always asked his students to be active in collaborating in the task of preserving the teachings for the future, and many individuals and groups have dedicated themselves joyfully to fulfilling his vision, recording talks and transcribing the resulting tapes.

We cannot predict what conditions will prevail in the future, but time does not stand still, and we can only be certain that we should take the necessary steps to ensure that Rinpoche's efforts and what has been done by his students so far are safeguarded for the future.

To bring this about it is now necessary that the various Gars and Gakyils of the Dzogchen Community make a coordinated effort between them to establish a coherent program, which requires the forming of a committee to implement it.

We have named this committee the International Publishing Committee.

The committee will be made up of representatives from all the Gakyils of the Dzogchen Community worldwide, and the three principal Gars will serve as focal points for its activities. During the course of a meeting at Merigar, presided over by Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche, the responsibility of drawing up a basic project for all the

various aspects related to the management of the material regarding the teachings of Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche was given to John Shane of the Blue Gakyil, Giovanni Arca of Shang-Shung Edizioni and Adriano Clemente, Tibetologist.

This article is intended to give the readers of *The Mirror* a little information on the project while a detailed letter will soon be sent to the various Gars and Gakyils.

The principle underlying this undertaking is our responsibility, as the Dzogchen Community, to preserve, archive and check all material regarding the teaching of Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche.

The project covers a large number of fields such as audio material, transcriptions, archiving, translation and all types of publications including translations from Tibetan, transcriptions of the teachings, practice books and publications intended for wider circulation.

The Gars and Gakyils around the world should coordinate their activities and delegate one person (or two or, at the outside, three) with the necessary requirements to take responsibility to work out the task of checking publications. In particular, these people should have a good knowledge of the Tibetan language, experience in the Dzogchen teaching and a good knowledge of the national language.

The names of the people who are able to satisfy these three requirements must be communicated to Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche for his approval through

any one of the three main Gars.

In particular regarding new publications based on transcriptions of the teachings of Rinpoche, above all those not destined for publishing houses of the Dzogchen Community and thus subject to less checking, a specific authorisation will be asked for from the local Gar which will consult with Rinpoche himself.

In this way, the checking of texts and other material related to the Teaching can be decentralised, without the risk of blocking work and without the difficulties in checking different foreign languages, problems which effected the previous International Publications Committee, which was a phantom from the beginning. Thus there will need to be regular contact between the Gars and the Gakyils in order to insure a continuity and an updating of information.

Once a person has been confirmed in his or her post on the International Publications Committee in any country, they should be in contact with the Committee people in other countries so that they can exchange their opinions, ideas, etc., In this way a "real" International Publications Committee will be formed which, in close collaboration with the local Blue Gakyils will also establish and implement guidelines governing the future transcription, publication and preservation of new material, with particular reference to ensuring the quality and accuracy of publications, monitoring copyrights, etc.

## Meeting of Yantra Yoga Teachers



Yantra Yoga course at Merigar

(photo Prima Mai)

by Laura Evangelisti

During the Easter retreat at Merigar there was a meeting of Yantra Yoga teachers. Some points arose that required clarification.

When we asked Rinpoche his opinion after the meeting, he said he was in agreement on the following points:

1. only the Master can authorize

someone to teach, and anyone wanting to teach should first have his permission;

2. the Blue Gakyil must be informed about any Yantra Yoga course that is going to be held, and will co-ordinate the financial side on the basis of the circumstances;

3. teachers are expected to participate in the Yantra Yoga

practice retreats that will be held in all Gars annually so as to deepen their knowledge of this teaching.

Another point that was discussed regarded a possible "teachers' association".

Rinpoche, however, said that at the moment there weren't enough qualified teachers to make it worthwhile.

It is important though that those who know more about Yantra Yoga and have been teaching for a long time keep in touch

with anyone who has just started teaching so as to clear up doubts and help deepen their knowledge.

Yantra Yoga activities at Merigar are being coordinated by Laura Evangelisti and any enquiries can be sent to her at Merigar.

The dates of the Yantra Yoga retreats will be announced as soon as they have been fixed.

## New Merigar Gakyil 1993-94

On April 17th, during the Easter retreat at Merigar, the following people were elected for the new Gakyil and other duties:

**Director:** Mario Maglietti

**Vice-Director:** Silvana Pisani

**Blue Gakyil:** Mario Maglietti, Carlos Ramos, John Shane

**Red Gakyil:** Paolo Pagni, Giorgio Minuzzo, Giancarlo Aleotti (Frank)

**Yellow Gakyil:** Enrico dell'Angelo, Gualtiero Bosio, Silvana Pisani

**Gekö:** Clara Juliano

**Secretaries:** Nina Robinson, Lucia Sblendorio, Cicci D'Arista

**Commission for the work of decorating the Gonpa:** Isabel Wagner, Franco Branca, Andreas Hanning, Claudio Maritano

**In charge of the Capannone:** Bruno Celli

**In charge of the Gonpa:** Franco Branca

# Tashigar in Argentina opens membership



The main house in Tashigar

(photo Prima Mai)

Tashigar is one of three international Gars, including Tsegylgar in the USA and Merigar in Italy, where one can take out official membership to the International Dzogchen Community. This current re-organisation of the Community has been undertaken with the scope of creating a solid foundation for the future.

Tashigar in Argentina is situated at the foot of a mountain chain called "The Gigantics", 60 km from Cordoba and 6 km from Tanti, a small town where one is able to buy necessities, make phone calls, send a letter, stay in a hotel, or go dancing. When you arrive at Tashigar you

will find a big white house surrounded by a park of eucaliptus, pine and fruit trees, among which five-color prayer flags move with the wind.

The upper part of the house is Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche's residence; the middle floor stands as a restaurant; in summer we also use the terrace over the park. The lower floor is the guests' house, in front of the mandala. When it is not rainy or too cold we dance there, otherwise we use the mandala under the "quincho" where the teachings were held during the last retreat.

In front of the main house is the geko's house and the nursery, where the children play and keep their toys, books, etc. There is a swimming

pool, but some people prefer the natural pools or waterfalls near the Gar.

A little further away are the public bathrooms with cold and hot water and lavatories. The camping ground has grills, light and one can set a tent under the shade of fruit trees. Across the little bridges that span two creeks (when it rains) we have a "quincho", a hall that can fit perhaps 200 people and where Rinpoche teaches.

During Rinpoche's last visit we had the great fortune to have Jim, Ernie, Joe and Verne from Tsegylgar to repair part of the roof of the main house, and concretize the immensely meritorious work of building a dark retreat house. It is ready to be used now, and it is meant

to serve for personal retreats as well.

The Gakyil of Tashigar is composed of people from all over the country: Tandil, Buenos Aires, La Rioja and Cordoba. The Argentine Dzogchen Community is very new, but as it grows, slowly but steadily, we are open to people from all over the world to share this wonderful land that Rinpoche has generously given to the Dzogchen Community with us.

The Gar has everything you need to practice, and the people here have their own style to welcome you as their best friend. There aren't too many fules here.

You can come any time and use the facilities; during the weekends the Community from Cordoba come for dancing, working, reading and, once a month, we have a national gakyil weekend meeting.

Come and enjoy and practise with us. We always find a reason to have fun.

If you are thinking about becoming a member of the

Dzogchen Community, you can send your application form to Tashigar. So far the Gar has been sustained by donations from benefactors including Rinpoche himself and by the monthly contributions of the members.

Your membership at Tashigar will be a great help as it will support not only the maintenance of the many facilities there, but will also allow the Gar to develop more and more for the future: we want to publish books in Spanish, connect a pipeline for drinkable water, fix the main kitchen for cooking during retreats, measure the land and improve the boundaries map. We are also thinking about some long term projects such as public dorms, personal retreat cabins and even a gonpa.

We are opening membership for subscriptions and we'll be glad to receive yours.

May this auspicious land bear many fruits, and allow the teachings to prosper for the benefit of all.



The "quincho"

(courtesy of Marisa Alonso)

## TASHIGAR COMUNIDAD DZOGCHEN

Asociacion Civil sin fines de lucro

### APPLICATION FORM

Name .....  
Address .....  
City .....  
Country .....  
Telephone ..... Fax .....  
Date of birth .....  
Passport number .....



Please send two passport photos

Payment      Monthly ☐      Bimonthly ☐      Semiannual ☐      Annual ☐

You can send an International Money Order to the name of Comunidad Dzogchen, c/o Marisa Alonso, Rioja 131, 5000 Cordoba, Argentina

or a bank draft to Caja de Ahorros, acct. no. 5690356-025 Citibank, c/o Ruben Garcia.

When making tranference, please inform Tashigar with a photocopy of the receipt.

Date .....

Signature .....

### Conditions to become a member of Tashigar

These are basically the same as in Merigar and Tsegylgar. Those who wish to become members can request either a "preliminary" or a "full" membership card. Those who have been involved with the Dzogchen Community for at least three years and have attended at least three retreats would request "full" membership while those who have not yet been involved for that period of time would request a "preliminary" membership. Both "preliminary" and "full" members can choose to become either "basic" or "sustaining" members. The cost of annual membership is:

Full Sustaining	\$450	Full Basic	\$200
Preliminary Sustaining	\$450	Preliminary Basic	\$200

#### Benefits

##### For the sustaining member:

Cost of retreats will be free if the entire membership fees are paid for the current year

30% discount on any activity organised by Tashigar

20% discount on books

Free lodging at Tashigar except during retreats

Free subscription to The Mirror

##### For the basic member:

30% discount on cost of retreats

20% discount on any activities organised by Tashigar

10% discount on books

Free lodging at Tashigar except during retreats

# The Temple of the Great Liberation Through Seeing



*Giovanni Arca asked Chögyal Namkhai Norbu a few questions about his ongoing project to decorate the Gonpa at Merigar.*

**Giovanni Arca:** Speaking about the Gonpa ...

**Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche:** What is a Gonpa? (Giovanni laughs) Is that what you were going to ask (laughing)?

In Tibetan, "gonpa" means "silent place" or "place of silence" where one can stay in tranquility and where one can do the practice. This is the real original meaning of the word "gonpa".

But then lately "gonpa" has transformed a little into the place where people meet, where we apply the practice and where common activities take place.

Sometimes "gonpa" is also called "dukhong". This is its real name. "Du" means a "place to meet" and "khong" means a "room", so a "room for spiritual meeting". This is a "gonpa".

**Giovanni:** But considering that we are the Dzog-chen Community, what do you yourself consider that the Gonpa at Merigar represents?

**Rinpoche:** In my vision, from the very beginning, I have always seen the Gonpa as a place where we meet, where people and practitioners of the Community practise and undertake spiritual activities together. Whether it is practice or teachings, this is the place where all that is necessary to undertake spiritual activities can be done. This is the function of the Gonpa.

**Giovanni:** What is the meaning of decorating the Gonpa?

**Rinpoche:** There are many different meanings. First of all when a place has been decorated and it becomes beautiful, it influences the people who are inside it; in general their mood becomes more cheerful and they feel better. If a person stays in a grey, sad place, that person may feel a little sad. So this is a relative thing.

Furthermore, when we consider the practice, everything including the colour and form are represented as a symbol of energy, so if one has to integrate (with this) and there is a place where one can see all these

manifestations, it can be an advantage.

Another reason is that the decorations are not just any decorations but are (spiritually



related) designs and mantras. Mantras are said to place a cause for liberation through the six functions of the senses. Therefore, we will put all the principal mantras, all those that come from the original tantras, on the ceiling. In addition, in the practice there are various types of transformations that we use in the Anuyoga system. These manifestations will also be painted there and this can be useful for those who are doing the practice in order to have a precise idea of the form of the transformation.

In addition all around above the windows we will try to represent all the figures of the Masters principally of the Dzogchen Semde, Longde and Upadesa, from the beginning of the lineage with Samantabhadra right up to our own times. This means that all these considerations and the fact that the teaching is related to a transmission which has been handed down from ancient times to today will be represented in the designs that we choose for the structure. The artistic character of the drawings will not only be Oriental, Tibetan and Mongolian, but, since we are in the West, it will integrate everything.

**Giovanni:** I didn't understand that last point very well. Integrated into the Western world?

**Rinpoche:** Not only Western designs but, but to a certain extent, all the various types of designs will be integrated. Principally there will be traditional designs related to the teachings, tantrism, and so on.

**Giovanni:** Will there be designs that are western?

**Rinpoche:** There won't be any specifically Western designs but many of the people who are doing the painting are Westerners. It's not only Tibetan painters who are doing the work, and so the way it is done will be integrated, rather than just being a copy of traditional Tibetan designs. The Gonpa itself is like that.

**Giovanni:** So this means that even if the end result will be very Tibetan, it won't be like something that you could find in Tibet.

**Rinpoche:** No, it won't. That's how it is.

**Giovanni:** Have you always had this idea of decorating the Gonpa or is it an idea that has gradually developed?

**Rinpoche:** Even before it was built I had an idea of what the form and colour of the Gonpa should be like.

**Giovanni:** I remember a conversation many years ago in which you said that you didn't want the Gonpa to be overburdened with different things. That you didn't want to do what other Tibetans sometimes do and put too many things in there. Your idea was to have a space with an image of Padmasambhava suspended in the middle.

**Rinpoche:** We wanted to have a statue in the centre but since the Gonpa was built as a much larger structure than previously envisaged, that wasn't possible.

At first I thought that it would be a bit smaller. But it's still true that we have not filled the Gonpa up with an altar and statues all over the place. That's not at all our intention.

**Giovanni:** So you don't think we will do that?

**Rinpoche:** No, we will only paint the structure as I have indicated.

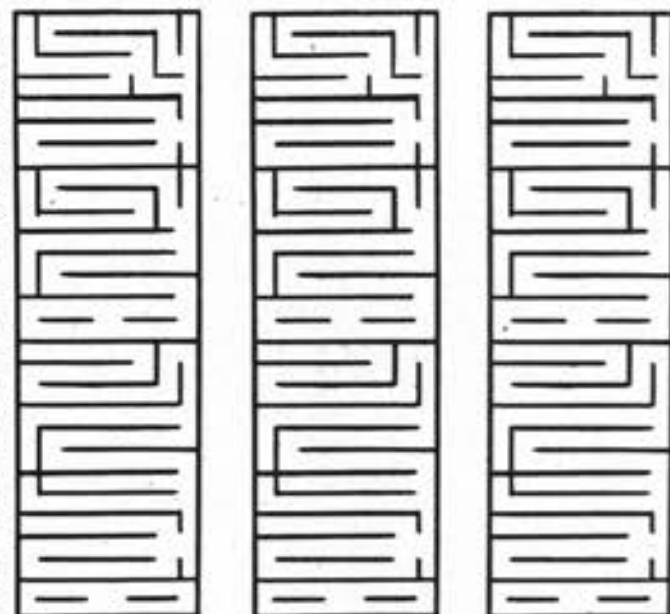
**Rinpoche:** Haven't you got any

more questions?

**Giovanni:** Yes, yes. The decoration is in fact related to the cardinal points - north, south, east, west in some aspects. What importance do these points have?

**Rinpoche:** In general there are eight cardinal points which are governed by eight types of beings related to the Eight Classes. So the Eight Classes can represent the directions of any thing in which we find ourselves. In any place we are surrounded by a dimension and that dimension is always related to the eight directions. Sometimes we say ten directions which includes above and below. But when we consider the form of a mandala there are eight directions, and for this reason I've tried to design the decoration of the Gonpa so that everything corresponds very precisely to this, using things like the syllables of the Eight Classes which we find in each of these directions.

Then outside the mandala, outside the Gonpa, all around there will be many designs, above all mantras called "Thong-drol" so that those who see them will be liberated. Certainly when the Gonpa is painted



it will become beautiful and many people will come to visit it as tourists. They will come to enjoy themselves but at the same time it may have some benefit and put a good cause. We will also put certain types of mantras that if someone passes under them, they will be purified and a good cause will be created for them. These mantras will be put over every

door of the Gonpa.

**Giovanni:** Is there a precise relationship between colour and form and the cardinal points?

**Rinpoche:** Yes, there is. In general, in something such as a mandala there are directions which are related to particular colours but we can't work at that level with colours in the Gonpa otherwise it will become a little unbalanced. The colours have to go a little everywhere but the principle is more related to mantra and the colour of the mantra which is specifically related to the directions and that is not so for all decorations.

**Giovanni:** There are two different scripts that will be used for the decoration.

**Rinpoche:** Yes. One of them is an ancient Sanskrit script which was used in Tibet in the ancient past and which the Tibetans still use. And the other is a Tibetan script though not an ordinary one. It's called "square script". It was created by a Sakya master, called Sakya Phagspa who became the master of the Emperor. He invented this script originally for the Mongolians who used it officially for a hundred years during the time of Emperors of the Yuan dynasty. In general it's not very convenient to use and they returned to using the Yuguri script. This was the origin of this script. It is easy to use for decoration.

**Giovanni:** What about the figures?

**Rinpoche:** There will be various kinds of figures, including the manifestations of the various yidams and for the reason that it will be easier to visualize them. Then the lineage of the masters. There will also be some astrological

designs outside the Gonpa in particular directions in order to harmonize with the force of nature and the force of the dominators of nature. These will be symbols and in a certain sense mantra and mudra.

**Giovanni:** Thank you, Rinpoche.

*Merigar, May 11th, 1993*

# Theravada and Dzog-chen

by Laurence Mills

In this short article I want to touch upon some similarities and contrasts between the Theravada found in South and South-East Asia and Dzog-chen as preserved in Tibet. Although these two manifestations of the Dharma outwardly appear different in many ways, a close examination reveals many aspects which are similar.

I write of Theravada having spent more than thirty years as a monk in that tradition, with fifteen years of experience of its monasteries in Asia. My Dzog-chen knowledge by contrast is limited to the last three years, and three retreats with Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche. Here I shall confine myself to a few topics where it appears that useful and valid comparisons may be made, beginning with the subject of transmission.

Dzog-chen practitioners know how important this is in their own tradition as well as in the Tantric path generally. If we compare this with Theravada a surprising fact emerges: there is no word in Pali to express the concept of transmission. There are words like *vamsa* meaning a "lineage" of teachers and pupils for instance, but this word is not used in the sense of transmission. Yet plainly, if we are familiar with the accounts of the Buddha Shakyamuni's first teaching, the Turning of the Wheel of Dharma, addressed to the five ascetics who would become the first Buddhist monks, something happened, was transmitted, for the Buddha exclaimed "Kondanna has known, Kondanna has truly known". What did he know? "Whatever has the nature to arise, all that has the nature to cease", in other words a penetrating insight into the impermanence of all conditioned things. Obviously the mere enumerations of the Four Noble Truths found in this discourse could not be responsible for this profound experience, for if it were so then all Buddhists by now would have experienced this insight, sermons on the Four Noble Truths being common enough! The Buddha though possessed the maximum impact on his listeners. Kondanna, his first disciple, was thus cooperating with his teacher's mind and so came to have that insight. So while there is no precise term for transmission in Theravada, it certainly existed and may still do so. There are many stories told of disciples, both monastic and lay, who experienced breakthrough insights while listening intently to all-night teachings in the forest monasteries of Northeast Thailand.

Of course Theravada places more emphasis on accepting the monk's life in order to experience insight, while lay life is viewed as a distracting obstruction. This is in contrast to Dzog-chen for the practice of which no particular lifestyle is recommended. While

western practitioners could be monks (as I was for a while), in fact hardly any of them are, due to the teaching that special modes of life with the rules that govern them often become a spiritual obstruction instead of a support for practice.

with difficulty organised by rules may be recognized from the conditions found in lay Buddhist society in all Theravada countries. Maybe people need to be inspired by more than rules in order to lead a spiritual life.



Mudra of Teaching

(drawing by Felix Dawe)

Monks and nuns always have teachers from the time of their ordination, until they themselves, due to learning practice and perhaps realisation, also become teachers. That time when they are pupils is not just a time of learning intellectually about what the scriptures say, but a period when they practice with and serve their teachers in many ways. By doing so they come to know their teachers very well, developing a strong connection through them to the living dharma. Serving one's teacher with mind, speech and body as well as living harmoniously with fellow-monks obviously bears comparison with the vajra-kinship among Dzog-chen practitioners. Though the former is monastic while the latter is not necessarily so, in both cases one has strong connections with teachers and fellow-practitioners.

In Theravada practice generally much emphasis is placed upon keeping certain categories of moral rules. Thus lay people are encouraged to undertake and keep to the Five Precepts, or Eight Precepts on special days. Novice monks (*samanera*) abide by Ten Precepts while fully ordained Bhikkhus keep 227 precepts (250 or more in Tibetan tradition), and Bhikkhunis, now absent from Theravada lands, have a grand total of 311 Precepts. Many of these precepts are obsolete as the conditions which gave rise to their formulation are no longer found, or occur very rarely. That morality is

Dzog-chen teaching offers a great contrast: there are no rules to be adhered to, no moral commandments or even recommendations. However serious practitioners would soon discover that there are some natural limits to their activities, apart from those imposed by the laws of the land.

With the latter limitations one must work as a citizen of a particular country at a particular time, our experience of samsara, but with the former one must use instant presence - awareness - mindfulness, as a natural restraining agent. There is no need to think a mass of conflicting thoughts about 'I want to...' but 'I shouldn't because of this or that precept...' or 'I must not because it's bad or evil'. If one has presence then one does not fall into or create situations involving conflict. The stronger this natural presence becomes the more harmonious is one's life and environment.

There is also the consideration of *samaya*, one's commitment to a certain tradition of teaching, the teachers in it, and one's fellow practitioners. Tantric literature generally, and our Master particularly, often stress the dire results which will occur from breaking one's *samaya*. With all

our egotistical complications somehow practitioners have to live with others' similar troubles. In the Dzog-chen Community to help us on our way through these samsaric tangles we have these two considerations: our all-the-time practice of instant presence and remembrance of our *samaya*.

All kinds of Buddhists seem to be prone to interpret 'practice' (*patipatti/pratipatti*) as activities like sitting in meditation or specific kinds of mindful activity performed during specified periods of time - morning meditation, going on retreat, etc. Dzog-chen practitioners have a word for such activities limited by time and place: *Tun*, a Tibetan word meaning a limited period. Our limited ideas that only this kind of activity constitutes 'practice' are countered both in Theravada and Dzog-chen by the exhortations of living teachers who encourage us to extend our mindfulness or instant presence into every activity. Theravadins may remember that the ancient "Satipatthana Sutta" (the Sutra on the Establishment of Mindfulness) says:

*"A monk going forward and back is fully aware; looking forward and back is fully aware; bending and stretching, carrying robes and bowl, he is fully aware; eating, drinking, chewing and savouring, passing excrement and urine, he is fully aware; walking, standing, sitting, falling asleep and waking up, he is fully*

Theravada stages of insight and Path and Fruit moments mark this way as gradual, first this is experienced and then that. Eventually in this life if one is diligent, or in some distant life in the future if one is a real sluggard in *samsara*, one will attain the goal. Dzog-chen by contrast is non-gradual and does not depict realisation as occurring stage by stage.

*aware; speaking and remaining silent, he is fully aware".*

As this discourse was addressed to monks a long time ago it does omit quite a number of activities which occur in everyday life, and in our own times, for instance, presence while driving on a freeway, awareness when dancing, or mindfulness during sexual contact.

Still the general idea of the whole teaching is to extend mindfulness into all activities and not just to be aware while 'meditating'. This is sure to remind Dzog-chen practitioners of the many times they have heard our Master suggesting ways of integrating our experience with instant presence.

Perhaps it is worth remarking that within the Theravada way of practice - precepts, mindfulness, meditation and loving-kindness, all leading to insight (*vipassana*) - there is a tendency for people to develop a kind of 'seriousness' or even 'quasi-holiness' which would certainly be disavowed in Dzog-chen where a sense of humour and a lack of heavy controlling tendencies is highly valued. Maybe the contrast can be accounted for by the predominance of monastic practice in Theravada while very few Dzog-chen Community members find themselves in monasteries, but maybe the difference should be sought in the Dzog-chen emphasis on spontaneity rather than control by rules.

The last matter to be considered here is realisation, the final goal in Theravada being the *arahat* (worthy one) who, with the extinguishing of all greed, hatred and delusion experiences the full flavour of freedom and finally at death the ineffable *Nibbana* or *Nirvana*. *Arahats* are described as those who have attained the highest of several stages on the Path and almost without exception they are monks or nuns. They may, or may not, possess various powers or *siddhi*, and while they continue to live they "abide for the good and happiness of the multitude". Theravada conceptions of *Nirvana* avoid the two extremes of existence after death (=eternalism) and non-existence (=annihilationism) so that one cannot properly speak of an *Arahat* returning. Indeed, they are said to be at the end of the round of rebirth.

Of course, they have not undertaken any Bodhisattva Vows and so do not have *Bodhicitta* motivation to return to any world and there save sentient beings.

This is all rather different from realisation in a Dzog-chen sense in which nothing has

to be extinguished or got rid of - no defilements have to be subdued because each thought may be liberated as it arises through presence. Greedy, hateful and deluded thoughts need not be renounced but rather require comprehension of their void nature. Of course, anyone who has entered the *samaya* by obtaining the

continued on page 15

# One-pointedness of practice and painting

*Nickolai Dudka, a young thanka painter living in Buryatia, has recently arrived at Merigar to participate in Chögyal Namkhai Norbu's project of decorating the Gonpa. He spoke to The Mirror about his work and life in the ex-USSR.*

**The Mirror:** How did you become interested in painting thankas?

**Nickolai:** When I first arrived in Buryatia from the Ukraine in 1986, I was looking for the Buddhist path because Buryatia is considered to be the main place in Russia where Buddhism is still alive. I received initiation from the local lamas there and one of them in particular, Dharma Dodi Lama. I also saw many beautiful Buddhist decorations in the temple and I thought that I might be able to do something like that. I had already studied Western style painting and I had a good background in painting, colours, and preparing for painting but I didn't know anything about thanka painting.

My teachers in Buryatia gave me a lot of theoretical knowledge about thanka painting. For example, Dharma Dodi Lama taught me how to prepare the background, which kind of glue to use and so on.

**The Mirror:** What do you mean - kind of glue? How is glue involved in painting thankas?

**Nickolai:** That's my secret! I don't know about Italy but in Russia it's not very easy to find different kinds of glue. The most common type of glue used for Buryatian and Mongolian thankas is made from animal skins or fish. Glue is required for preparing the background of a thanka and a painter mixes glue and chalk and perhaps a drop of honey for this preparation. Glue is also used to mix with the colours to make them stronger.

**The Mirror:** You studied with one lama in particular?

**Nickolai:** Yes. Dharma Dodi Lama. He is very old, he was born in 1899 and studied thanka painting in his youth. He gave me theoretical teaching about how to paint thankas but he never actually showed me how to do it and this is why after this theoretical knowledge I tried to do research to find out how to actually paint a thanka. I tried to see as many thankas as possible and last year I worked restoring thankas at the museum in Ulan-Ude. The museum contains many fine old thankas from all of Buryatia and this was useful for my study.

Last year while I was in Mongolia I took a course with Mongolian artists and it was really great. The Mongolian painters have studied painting in the West and on their return put their knowledge into traditional Mongolian painting.

**The Mirror:** Are your thankas painted in traditional Tibetan style



Nickolai at work at the Merigar Gonpa

(photo Alex Siedlecki)

or are they more in Buryatian style?

**Nickolai:** They are more in traditional Tibetan style. I like to use bright colours and from the very beginning I've tried to learn Tibetan style such as that used at Labran, the great monastery in central Tibet, and the style of eastern Tibet. Sometimes, some of the lamas in Buryatia have criticised my thankas because they are not pure Buryatian.

**The Mirror:** Is there still a tradition in Buryatia today of making colours from stones or minerals?

**Nickolai:** It's very expensive and heavy work to produce mineral colours and today in Mongolia in particular, painters use modern colours including chemical ones. For example, they use gouache from Holland and Russian watercolours, but in the past these were not available and so people made colours from minerals. I have heard researchers say that at the beginning of this century, some Buryatian and Mongolian thanka painters used mineral colours and even Chinese makeup for painting! The main idea of thanka painting is to use what materials are available.

**The Mirror:** Do you think there is any value in restoring old thankas?

**Nickolai:** For me it is very interesting and helpful. First of all to see what was depicted in the old thanka. I feel many things when I work on restoring an old thanka. For me the main idea is that a painter creates a thanka while in a kind of meditation because the lines, the form and the colours are so beautiful. This is what I feel when I touch an old thanka and this is the way I try to continue my painting process

connecting Dzog-chen teachings and thanka painting - to do it as one. These old thankas are, for me, examples of how to do this.

**The Mirror:** In India, I've been told that they also do this special practice called "the opening of the eyes". When the thanka is almost completed, they add the eyes and then they authenticate it, which means that from that moment the deity resides in the thanka.

**Nickolai:** You remember Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche explained that there are a few days in a year, perhaps only one, when an artist should prepare a thanka and he should "open the eyes" of this deity on the same day. This is according to Kriya tantra.

**The Mirror:** Do you combine practice with the thanka that you are working on?

**Nickolai:** I try to do this all the time when I'm working, to combine myself and my practice, visualisation, concentration and maybe I recite mantras, in this way my practice and painting are both combined in one point.

**The Mirror:** Here in the West, some people have the idea of putting personal things into the thankas,

thinking that an arm or leg is painted strangely and that in the West we paint it differently. Do you consider that it's important to keep the lineage of traditional thanka painting and not to start putting in different types of things.

**Nickolai:** I think it's extremely important to continue with the lineage which has been received from masters. It's extremely important not to change anything in thankas because they are a form which, in the past, was seen in this way, in a particular colour, with a particular dress, and so on. I think it's a real mistake, in the 20th century, to make something different. Of course now we can do modern thankas according to, for example, the vision of Rinpoche.

**The Mirror:** How did you have your first contact with Dzogchen teaching and Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche?

**Nickolai:** About 3 or 4 years ago we received one of Rinpoche's books called "Talks in Cornway". It was like the world opened through this book. Before I had practised tantric Buddhism in Buryatian style and I did not find it so complete. The masters would explain part of a practice but not give a complete explanation as Rinpoche does. That is why all of us in Buryatia have found Dzogchen to be a complete teaching for the whole state of a person and like a gateway to go

seeing and hearing him on his first visit to Buryatia to give a retreat last summer. How did the Buryatian community go ahead in this interim period?

**Nickolai:** Before Rinpoche's visit we received various practice books and one on yantra yoga and we practised without empowerment or permission. But it really worked and the practices united us and later we founded our community. We loved to practise.

In 1991 Fabio Andrico visited St. Petersburg and a few people from Buryatia met him. He gave a few talks about Dzogchen and it was very essential for us to understand more precisely. And all this time we tried to be in contact with Westerners to ask for books and materials on the teaching. The great event for us was Rinpoche's visit to Buryatia last summer. Many people already knew a little about the teachings and so it was not like meeting him for the first time because people already knew about teaching and so they understood him from the beginning, immediately.

**The Mirror:** Now that the political situation has changed in Buryatia, are there any obstacles to religious practice or is there complete freedom?

**Nickolai:** Now there are no problems. You can do what you want. But it's not like freedom, it's like a fountain. In business, in

politics, and religion everything is free and perhaps people are losing control. They think they can do what they want. Of course it's much easier to develop ourselves now. A few years ago when I arrived in a Buddhist *datsan* (monastery), the local people regarded me either as a madman or a KGB agent. Nobody wanted to believe that I went there to find Buddha. Now everything has changed and at the local *datsan* there are many students both Buryatian and Russian who are studying Tibetan language, sutras, tantras and many rituals and so on.

**The Mirror:** Is there any message that you would like to communicate through The Mirror?

**Nickolai:** I would like to say what a great help The Mirror is. Buryatia is so far away from Rinpoche and other practitioners and this is our only means of communication with you, the only way we can receive some information about what is happening in the Dzogchen world.

*Merigar, May 4th, 1993*



Detail from one of Nickolai's thankas (Datsambala)

from samsara. Rinpoche has explained everything and now it's extremely easy to understand what he wants to teach us and give us and how we can move on this path.

**The Mirror:** There was a period of three or four years between reading Rinpoche's teachings and actually

# A Bodhisattva in border lands

by Elio Guarisco

Mount Kanchenjunga, the third highest peak in the world, is believed to be the main seat of the god Vaisravana, the guardian of the northern direction and the lord of wealth. The name Kanchenjunga (*gangs chen mdzod lnga*) means 'The Five Snow Mountain Treasures' because it is said that here Vaisravana has stored five kinds of treasures: gold, silver, gems, grain, and holy scriptures. According to legend, this mountain played a significant role in the introduction of Buddhism to Sikkim. When the *siddha Lha btsun nam 'kha 'jig med* (born in 1597 A.D.) left Samye in Tibet for Sikkim accompanied by fifteen disciples, a goose came flying from the direction of Sikkim and landed at his feet. It is believed that the goose was an emanation of the mountain god of Kanchenjunga who described to him the way to the land he was aiming for. *Lha btsun nam 'kha 'jig med* (along with Kathok Rigzin Chenpo and Ngadag Sempa Chenpo) opened the power place of Sikkim, which is considered to be one of the eight hidden valleys where Padmasambhava concealed sacred teachings for future generations. *Rig 'dzin rgod ldam*, the famous tertön, is said to have discovered an image of Padmasambhava's wrathful form (*Guru Dragpo*) from the peak of this mountain.

The southern gate to the Sikkim valley, constituted by the Darjeeling area, is said to be guarded by a *btsan* named *dge bsnen bTsan rgod rdor rje*, riding a blue "wind-horse" and holding a lance and a snare. An entrance to the valley situated outside the present border of Sikkim and close to the Indian town of Siliguri (near the ruins of the ancient Buddhist monastery of Jagaddala found in Bangladesh) is guarded by yet another gate-keeper: he is believed to be an emanation of Mahakala, dressed in flaming black silk; in his right hand, he holds a sandalwood club, and with the left, he lifts to his mouth a skull-cup filled with blood. His domain is the gate to the direct route to the valley that follows the Teesta River, winding between mountains.

Modern Gangtok, Sikkim's capital, offers the pilgrim a place quite different from the enchanting image of a sacred valley of Guru Rinpoche. The so-called cement city is filled with Japanese cars and affluent tourists. At one time a well-travelled business route to the Roof of the World, Sikkim has suffered isolation after the northern border was closed following the Chinese invasion of Tibet. Once a Buddhist monarchy, Sikkim was "annexed" to India by skilful Indian politicians and the army about thirty years ago in order to secure an important segment of the border facing China. To placate the resentment of the local population over losing their independence, Sikkim was granted a privileged status: the Indian government directed funds to



His Holiness the XIV Dalai Lama

develop the area, resulting in a sort of small Switzerland of the Himalayas. Nowadays, people are better off materially, but are not necessarily more content.

Buddhism was introduced to Sikkim in 1975. Many monasteries of the Nyingma school were built and for a time the doctrine flourished. Today, one has the impression that the monasteries are, for the most part, empty and are maintained only as tourist attractions. The few poorly educated monks who gather there once or twice a year for special celebrations actually live in the villages below and are happily married and performing their services for the living and the dead. Fortunately, there are exceptions: Rumtek monastery, the seat of the Karmapa, and Dzog-chenpa Do Drup Chen's Nyingma monastery, both of which accommodate large monastic communities. Both, however, are founded and administrated by Tibetans.

Of the many places throughout Sikkim made sacred by the presence of Guru Rinpoche, Tashi Ding is considered to be especially blessed. It was at this mountain grove that His Holiness the Dalai Lama stayed for the first days of his visit to Sikkim. Arriving on the 24th of March, His Holiness remained here in retreat, performing 100,000 *ganachakra* (ritual feast offerings). This was the quiet prelude to a programme of teachings and empowerments graciously given by His Holiness over the course of a week in a valley still brilliant with an ancient glory. His Holiness had been invited by the state minister, Shri Bandhary, and various Buddhist associations to give the empowerment of Kalachakra introduced by three days of teachings on Santideva's *Bodhisattva's Way of Life*.

For this grand occasion, the Paljor Stadium, situated right in the heart of Gangtok, was transformed into an open-air auditorium to accommodate about seventy thousand devotees and curious passers-by. The event was well-organized, considering that it took place in India. The stadium was divided into smaller sections to avoid

crowding. The Government of Sikkim also provided several camps for pilgrims coming from other regions of India and from Tibet. The security checks at the Sikkim border were tight and people without valid papers were turned back. This was probably to avoid problems related to the recent dispute over the recognition of the seventeenth Karmapa, Dro Dul Trinle Dorje: the Dalai Lama had approved this recognition, as had the oracle of Nechung who was consulted at the request of the Sikkimese Government who sought certainty on the matter. There are still a few Tibetans in Sikkim who do not acknowledge the authenticity of Dro Dul Trinle Dorje, the son of a family of nomads of Eastern Tibet, as the true incarnation of the sixteenth Karmapa.

Within the stadium, a glass palace was erected to house the coloured sand mandala of Kalachakra. On a terrace outside, seated smiling on a throne, the Dalai Lama delivered his teaching; he usually started the teaching session well before the scheduled time. The explanation of Santideva's *The Bodhisattva's Way of Life* was a "bzhad lung" type, that is to say, the reading of the text with an explanation of the points the teacher considers appropriate for the circumstances. In effect, the Dalai Lama both elucidated those points he considered understandable by the majority, and also summarized with his usual clarity the contents of the various chapters, satisfying both the well and the less educated. His words were uplifting, stressing simple but most beneficial truths: the need to develop the basic goodness hidden in all of us, to co-operate with other human beings, and to show kindness to all creatures. His own compassion was obvious in his willingness to sit and teach for hours in order to inspire the minds of the listeners to engender love and altruism. For the entire

duration of His Holiness' visit, the Sikkimese Government prohibited the butchering of animals and selling of meat throughout the state as a sign of respect for him and for the teaching being given.

The Dalai Lama gave the transmission for Guru Rinpoche's mantra and reminded people of the important role that outstanding master played in the propagation of the Buddhas' doctrine in Tibet. "Especially in these circumstances in which we have lost the independence of our country, it is important to recite his mantra" he said. He stressed emphatically the need for mutual understanding between the various schools of Tibetan Buddhism in order to transcend the fetters of attachment to one's own view and rejection of others' view. He spoke at length of the need to study the teachings of other Tibetan schools, for a Gelugpa to learn the Nyingma teachings and vice versa, as this will open the mind to wider perspectives.

When giving the actual empowerment of Kalachakra, the Dalai Lama spent considerable time explaining the contemplations necessary for receiving the empowerment and then performed the various phases of the

subject to speculation. It is asserted to contain all teachings found in other tantras and to present within its outer, inner, and alternative levels, a system of spiritual development based on the parallels and relations between the outer world, the inner human body, and the secret tantric practices. The Dalai Lama pointed out that the presentation on primordial awareness found in the seventh chapter of "The Condensed Tantra of Kalachakra" resembles the presentation found in the Dzog-chen system. The Kalachakra tantra also presents a unique tantric path in which one actualizes the union of empty form and bliss. This is accomplished through gradually stacking, one on top of the other, the "drops" of vital essence within the central energy and mind-pathway, simultaneously exhausting the particles of matter within the body. For this reason, this tantra rejects consort practice as a final means to attain the goal of Mahamudra. This tantra speaks of unmovable or immutable bliss as a bliss that is superior to the unborn bliss taught in the other tantras. Thus, a strong emphasis is made on the retention of the vital essence, and on other types of puritanical behaviour, such as not drinking alcohol and so forth, which

gives the impression that the Kalachakra tantra has borrowed not only some terminology from the Hindu philosophies, but also their puritanical attitude. Just because of the specificity of its presentation, it is therefore difficult to understand why the Kalachakra gained so much popularity, primarily in the second phase of the propagation of Buddhism in Tibet.

The Kalachakra is also connected with the mystic country of Shambhala and its kings. In the cosmology presented in this tantra, time in our world system is distinguished into four eras (of completeness, three-quarters, two-quarters, and conflict). The era of completeness is re-established in a cyclic pattern by the kings of Shambhala or their descendants on the twelve land masses of our world system by defeating the irreligious barbarians. Only twenty-five kings of Shambhala are mentioned with specific names in the Kalachakra literature; the names of the other descendants are unspecified. The twenty-fifth king of Shambhala will ascend the throne in 2327 A.D., and in the ninetieth year of his reign, he will wage a war from Shambhala, defeat the barbarians, re-establish the era of completeness, and spread the teachings of Buddhism and the Kalachakra tantra.

Some people see in this re-establishment of the supremacy of spirituality over materialistic



empowerment itself without allowing much time for translations into English and Nepali.

The Kalachakra Tantra (Wheel of Time Tantra) is one of the latest tantras to appear in India. It was taught by the Buddha at the stupa of Danyakataka in south India at the request of Suchandra, the king of Shambhala. After returning to his country, Suchandra made the Kalachakra teachings the official religion. It is said that the tantra of Kalachakra has been practised and preserved in that country ever since. Various Indian mahasiddhas travelled to Shambhala and brought the tantra of Kalachakra to India where it spread widely. It was finally introduced to Tibet in 1027, gaining much popularity.

Why the Kalachakra tantra became so popular is a question

continued on page 15

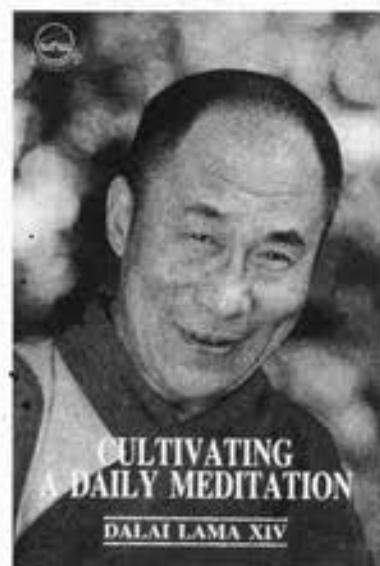
# BOOKS IN BRIEF

## Cultivating a Daily Meditation

by Dalai Lama XIV

Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, 1991.

150 pages, \$4.95 (paperback)



This book is a selection of talks on Buddhist view, meditation and action given by the Dalai Lama during April 1985 and October 1986 to an audience of Indians.

His Holiness speaks in a terminology moulded by his thorough training in Buddhist philosophy and yet is clear and nonconventional on various subjects related to the totality of the Buddhist teaching. Starting with defining the general viewpoints that differentiate the Doctrine of the Enlightened One from others, he then presents the phenomenological and psychological concept of mind and the spiritual path in terms of the conventional and ultimate reality. Plunging into the heart of the meditation of the Universal Way as traditionally cultivated in Tibet, His Holiness briefly explains the "Eight Verses for training the mind" composed by the Kadampa master Langri Thangpo and a tantric meditation centred around Buddha Sakyamuni, Avalokitesvara, Vajrapani, Manjushri and Tara.

To indicate the importance he attributes to the training of the mind in altruism and compassion, the Dalai Lama says that after receiving the teaching on the "Eight Verses", he has recited and contemplated their meaning daily for more than thirty-five years.

He deepens his presentation by explaining in detail the four truths of suffering etc. and the twelve links of dependent arising of cyclic existence and the application of the principles in actual meditation on taking refuge and developing the spirit of Enlightenment etc.

Each section of the book ends with questions and answers, where the questions are much like those an educated Indian would make to a guru.

The book has all the limitations of transcribed lectures with

repetitions of subjects and an overly general exposition. This, however, may be due to the audience that centuries ago renounced Buddhism in favour of a religion more rooted in traditions and customs and highly based on belief.

The booklet however allows the usual clarity and compassion of the author to transpire unshaded.

Elio Guarisco

## Where is Tibet?

A Story in Tibetan and English

Written and illustrated by Gina Halpern

Snow Lion Publications,

New York, 1991.

\$ 12.95 (paperback)



Illustrated with bright paintings in lively colours, "Where is Tibet?" is a children's tale told in two languages, Tibetan and English, whose intention is both to remind Tibetan children in exile of their homeland and its culture, and to introduce that same culture and homeland to young western readers. The book introduces us to Tashi and Pema, two Tibetan children living in India, who ask their parents where Tibet is, but who are not satisfied that they have received a real answer when they are just shown a location on a map. They want to know why Tibet is a special place.

Their father in the story then leads them into the realm of their imaginations, showing them the magical beings that dwell in the land of the snows, and explaining that Tibet is a land of peace.

This spurs the children to search for Tibet themselves, and they look everywhere, under the yak, under the horse and so on, without finding what they are looking for, until they find a man seated under a tree, a Buddhist monk in maroon robes, whom we recognise as His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

Smiling broadly, he holds the moon and stars in his hand, and the moon suggests they ask him where Tibet is.

When the children do so he advises them to look in their own

minds and in their own hearts, where Tibet can be found shining like the sun as a place of compassion and wisdom.

Tibetan children who are in schools that provide an education that includes both the Tibetan language and English will no doubt be able to enjoy and benefit from reading this story in the two languages in which it is told, and the book will encourage them in their studies.

Most western children, on the other hand, will probably be somewhat bemused by the Tibetan script and the transliteration accompanying it, perhaps enjoying them as an exotic addition to an interesting story that will certainly stimulate further questions and answers in the reading.

Should the reader really be interested in learning Tibetan, however, the text of the book will be found to be made up of simple but useful phrases and vocabulary that will be most helpful.

Children's books like this have an important secondary function in the possibilities they offer of gently raising the general level of awareness of the existence of Tibet and the value contained in its culture, creating positive causes for the future.

John Shane

## Dedicato allo Scuro To the Dark-One

Mira-Bai

Translated from the Middle-Hindi by Louise Landes-Levi

Translated from the English by Rita Degli Esposti

Super-Nova Editions, Venice, Italy, 1993.

91 pages, Lire 10.000 (paperback)



This volume is translated from the original English into Italian with a ten page introduction, five page glossary, one page bibliography and 24 poems printed in facing English and Italian texts. Samples of Devanagari (the script in which Braja-Bhasa or Middle-Hindi is written) originals and diacritic notation are included.

An unusual tri-lingual edition of

the great Hindu devotional poet, Mira-Bai. Written in the 15th century, these poems and this poet are legendary even today. Mira worshipped Krishna (The Dark-One) as her *Ishta-Devata* (personal deity or *Yidam* in Tibetan) and through her one-pointed devotion achieved realization.

Her poems are records of this realization and the path of love, in the Hindu Tantra, which led to it.

This volume includes 24 poems or *padas*, from 100 poems positively attributed to the poet, and 400 poems possibly attributed to her. The original manuscript, recorded by her scribe and companion, Lalita, was lost in a Moslem invasion of north India in the 17th century.

*My breath, my breath,  
Hari,  
my shelter, Hari*

*I saw the illusion,  
I saw the  
Three-worlds,*

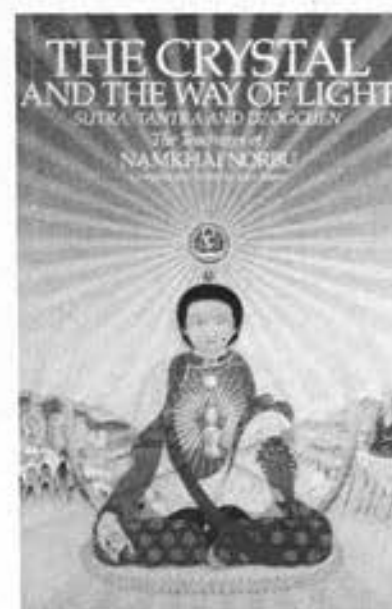
*You alone can please,*

*Mira says,  
I'm yours,  
don't forget.*

## THE CRYSTAL AND THE WAY OF LIGHT

### NEW EDITION

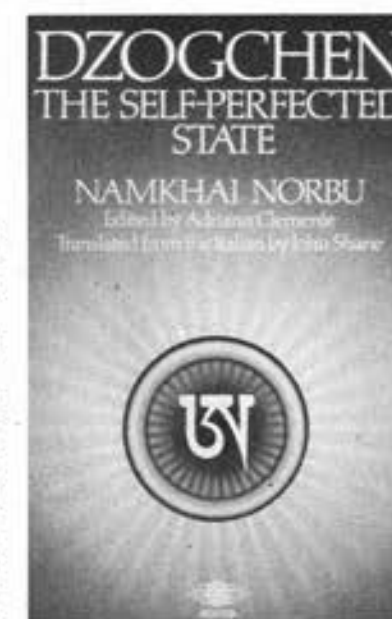
For over a year now we have been receiving reports that Rinpoche's book 'THE CRYSTAL AND THE WAY OF LIGHT, Sutra, Tantra and Dzogchen, The Teachings of Namkhai Norbu', edited by John Shane, was unavailable in bookshops. It had in fact proved to be a very popular book, and had sold out its second edition. We are very happy to be able to inform all those who have been looking for a copy of the book



that it is now available again, reprinted in paperback by Arkana, an imprint of Penguin Books at £7.99 (pounds sterling). Penguin has world-wide distribution, so you can order it from your local bookseller.

The book has also been published in German by Diederichs Verlag, in Japanese published by Hozokan, in Italian published by Ubaldini Editore, in four Russian Samizdat versions, and is shortly to be published in French.

Rinpoche's other book 'DZOGCHEN: THE SELF-PERFECTED STATE', edited by Adriano Clemente, is also published by Penguin Arkana, and is currently available.



## Santi Maha Sangha

The first volume of the series 'Santi Maha Sangha', written by Chogyal Namkhai Norbu has been published in Italian by Shang-Shung Edizioni. John Shane has just finished the English translation and the French, German and Spanish versions are in preparation.

This first volume regards the base of Santi Maha Sangha and is a very interesting book for anybody who is interested in spirituality and Buddhist culture.

The Italian version plus postage and packing is available by sending \$28 US to Shang-Shung Edizioni, Merigar, 58031 Arcidosso GR, Italy.

# Reflections Reflections Reflections

## Tantric practice Impact on a psychology practice

I have had the extraordinary experience of observing how the study and practice of Tantra and Vajrayana has impacted my clinical psychology practice. The teachings and the experiences related to daily practice have affected my ability to guide a person to see and experience for themselves the neurotic and wisdom aspects found in the five Buddha Families. I have worked with people as they transformed neurotic behaviours and depressive symptoms into an active and engaged relationship to the world around them. At first this did not occur with a conscious effort. In subtle ways I began to notice that my relationship with my clients had changed. They were expressing an increased satisfaction and ease with living. Individuals that I have been working with for some time made major leaps forward in their ability to cope with current life stressors. It wasn't until I was in conversation with another psychologist, who was not a practitioner, that I became aware of how my actions in the therapeutic relationship had changed. I realized that I was no longer approaching the therapeutic relationship in the same way as my colleague.

Through western psychology an individual seeks a cure for emotional "illness". Psychotherapy tends to be viewed with the belief that psychological distress and emotional pain can be ended by removing unwanted aspects of the self. Initial visits often begin with an opening statement expressing a desire to be rid of some unwanted aspects of the self or a desire to forget some painful experience. "If only I stopped being angry", or "If I could stop being dependent on others", or "If I could forget the abuse, then I could be a

happy person". The idea is that if whatever aspect of themselves is generating pain and suffering could be removed, then pain and suffering would be gone forever. They do not see that there is much to learn by accepting their pain (neurosis) as human and that the experience can be transformed into wisdom energy.

The trap is in the view, "I am suffering, therefore some part of me is bad", "If I can remove the bad part then I will be good".

Through not reconciling experiences of jealousy, anger, greed, seduction and lethargy with the wisdom aspects, they are unaware of how to know their nature as humans. They are blind to their own nature and style of being in the world.

What I found myself doing in the therapeutic relationship was to teach in very simple ways what I had discovered regarding transformation aspects of the five Buddha Families.

About four years ago I came to learn of Tantra, Dzogchen and the teachings of Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche through a two week intensive retreat on Bali with Tsaltrim Allione. Prior to this I had attempted to learn about Tantra but it never "clicked". During this retreat Tsaltrim had us utilize western psychology techniques to come face to face with the neurotic aspects of the five passions. She then led us through experiencing those neurotic aspects transform. The impact was stunning. When I became aware of what I was doing in my psychology practice, I began to use consciously some of the techniques I learned at the retreat. I have come to develop some of my own based on my experience as a psychologist, on additional readings, retreats with Rinpoche, and as a fruit of my own practice. The results are very dramatic. What I have come to understand is that without awareness the unconscious contents are expressed as projections. Those projections tend to slant and obscure

our relationships with others. When we can see ourselves within the context of personalities developed around the five passions related to the Buddha Families, we can understand how we make choices based on those passions. We can come to understand and accept the neurotic and the wisdom aspects of each passion and from that awareness make clearer choices about how to interact with the world around us. As humans we swim around in samsara, often times blind to the darker more shadowy aspects of our humanness (neurosis). The concept of good/bad and the desire to only see ourselves in the most positive of lights keeps us ignorant of the full range of an emotion. Love turns to power and then to violence in its more neurotic and possessive form. Tantra provides a means to transform possessiveness and the attachment to desire that results in confusion and suffering.

When an individual in therapy learns that they do not have to deny parts of themselves, but can learn to accept those parts and use them to benefit themselves and their relationships with others, a true brightness appears, as if a ton of weight has lifted off their shoulders. An excitement that they can be themselves and the authority of their lives result in marked reduction in depressive symptoms. I work with couples focusing on each of the partners' Buddha family "affiliation". The blocked or neurotic aspect is addressed. The other partner of course is very able to help uncover these aspects. The wisdom aspects are presented and then the partner and the individual can really appreciate the strengths of each of their personalities. It has been particularly helpful for partners to learn to see and love their partner for who they are.

It also helps to understand what happens for their partner under stress when energy gets blocked and neurotic. The responsibility clearly

rests on the individual to work on unblocking their own energy. This of course has a very positive impact on the relationship. Through projection each individual wants to change aspects of their partners that they are convinced are the roots of suffering in the relationship, but within the framework of working with the Buddha Families this is no longer a viable view.

In my therapeutic work I do not see myself as a teacher of Tantra or of Dzogchen. The experience is much more of the light of the practice shining through me and into the therapeutic relationship.

I make every effort to retain the therapeutic relationship. I do make attempts to amplify an individual's spiritual needs so that they can see them and make choices to pursue them, whatever they may be. Now that I am more aware of the practice and how it impacts my work as a psychologist I would very much like to be in contact with other therapists who found that the Tantra and Dzogchen teachings have appeared in their work with individuals.

Please write to me: Susan LaGrande, 2550 Denali Street, Suite 1306, Anchorage, Alaska 99503 USA

## Travelling today in Lhasa

Now it is possible to reach Lhasa - from Nepal with organized groups, from Chengdu by China Air, from Golmud by public bus (after a visit to CITS for permission).

No matter which way you choose to go, the high plateau's special atmosphere makes everyone's head dizzy, breathing becomes difficult and for some time after arrival, big eyed travellers find it hard to walk straight. A long night's sleep is necessary before realizing this is

really Lhasa.

Waking up is a pleasant surprise. Pilgrims and street sweepers begin very early in the morning and smoke columns of perfumed herbs rise high in the night sky; the herbs are burned in the main square and on the rooves of the old town houses.

The whispering sound of prayers can be heard from all the hotel rooms.

Since 1985, the Yak Hotel, the Snowland, the Kirey and the Balanksho Hotels have been welcoming travellers with their beautiful terraces and gardens. The rooms are decorated with colourful paintings, decorated columns and wooden furniture with its traditional Tibetan designs.

There are many places to visit. A few temples inside the old town, and Drepung and Sera monasteries can be reached by bicycle; Garden and the site of H. H. Karmapa can be reached by car. They all leave the visitor full of surprised enthusiasm.

All the Tibetan monks and nuns are very open towards their guests and besides all the centuries of works and prayers, they always offer a warm cup of butter tea and blessed strings of silk.

The market around the main temple is visited at least once a day meeting new friends and buying presents for old ones. It is easy to make friends with Tibetans and this means entering their family life for an unforgettable meal and exchange of small meaningful gifts.

The Tibetan Hospital is worth visiting. The thanka room can be opened for the interested visitor and they will offer you the new edition of the book with all the pictures and explanations.

When you are in Lhasa, try to "smell" like a Tibetan, study their way of walking and tune up with their whispering shouting rhythm; it's the only way to avoid the anger of their dogs and become good friends with the neighbourhood guardians.

Paola Davico

Published bi-monthly, The Mirror brings you the teachings of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, news, views and information from Dzog-chen Communities around the world, interviews, reviews, Tibet-related topics, retreat programmes and the calendar of practices for the international Dzog-chen Community.

## THE MIRROR

The newspaper of the international Dzog-chen Community

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## "Monasteries in Tibet" Fund

We have received a letter from Rena Kuhn telling us about the commitment she has undertaken to help Tibetan people in Tibet after her recent trip there. In particular she feels that much assistance is needed to improve the general condition of the monks and for the safe reconstruction of the monasteries in Tibet. Funds would also go to the projects of reconstruction in Tibet that have been organized by Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche.

To help raise these funds which will be distributed among all schools of Tibetan Buddhism, Rena Kuhn has set up a charity raffle with many beautiful prizes some of which have been donated by important Tibetan spiritual masters. The tickets will be sold at \$50 US each and will be mailed as soon as payment is received. Tickets can also be bought on an installment plan basis or by a group. Donations from outside the US should be sent in the form of dollar travellers cheques sent by registered mail. Payment can be sent to:

Rena Kuhn (M.I.T. Fund), 256 S. Robertson Blvd., Suite 9379, Beverly Hills, CA 90211, U.S.A.

"We must all help to preserve the original power places of Tibet. Your donation will accumulate much merit for yourself."

## A Bodhisattva in...

*continued from page 12*

barbarianism by the hands of the kings of Shambhala, the reason for the popularity of the Kalachakra tantra. It is, however, hard to accept such an interpretation because of the mythical nature of Shambhala and its kings. The presentation of the twelve land masses that constitute our world, where in cycles the kings of Shambhala reprimand the golden ages, obviously contradicts the way our world is perceived and ascertained by modern science. Without such a basis, the whole legend of Shambhala and its kings does not withstand close examination in terms of its validity; however, we cannot negate that the legend may have spiritual and mystical implications.

If one cannot prove the superiority of this tantra over others or show its special purpose, it may be asked why the Dalai Lama confers this particular empowerment so often, in a setting where most people attending will not be able to practise such a highly sophisticated tantric system. For an outsider, it would seem that the Kalachakra empowerments serve as occasions to bring together Tibetans and various Himalayan ethnic groups of Buddhist faith, to revive their interest in their own religion, and to put into practice its highly valuable principles. In this perspective, the Dalai Lama's activities are exemplary, caring for not only the Tibetan people but also for all the Himalayan populations. The Dalai Lama concluded the event with a longevity empowerment from the Secret Visions of the Fifth Dalai Lama related to the three deities of long life. After that, a ceremony to request his Holiness to live a long life was performed following a ritual rich in Dzog-chen language. The next morning, the Dalai Lama left Sikkim; the visit of such a bodhisattva will certainly leave a trace on the land and the people for years to come.

The next stop in the area was Sonada. There to receive him was the three-year-old reincarnation of Kalu Rinpoche. Entering the main temple of the monastery, His Holiness first consecrated the gilded stupa containing the mummified body of the previous Kalu Rinpoche. Then from his throne, he performed the ceremony of cutting a tuft of the young Rinpoche's hair and giving him a name, Tenzin Karma Kunkhyab. His Holiness then delivered a short address, praising in a low and touching tone the spiritual accomplishments of Kalu Rinpoche. While this speech was being given, the young Rinpoche began to stretch his legs as if to get down from his small throne. Attendants carefully tried to settle him down several times without avail. He wanted to get down and when he was down stood right in front of the Dalai Lama. To everyone's surprise, just as His Holiness was speaking of the importance of not spoiling the young tulku and the need for the reincarnate

Kalu Rinpoche to match and even surpass his predecessor's activity, the young Rinpoche made three full prostrations to him and then tried to reach up to His Holiness with open arms. His attendant lifted him up to the height of the Dalai Lama to receive his hand blessing. The Dalai Lama expressed words of amazement, saying: "Look! How auspicious is what he has just done". Addressing his translator, he instructed: "Make sure you translate what I have just said. This is indeed auspicious".

While having lunch at Kalu Rinpoche's house, the Dalai Lama advised Bokar Rinpoche (Kalu Rinpoche's successor in the Shangpa Kagyu lineage) on the education of the young tulku. "He must receive the teachings and empowerments that the previous one received and should study within all the Tibetan schools. Then in the course of time, he will decide what he wants to do. When he is a little older, I will take care of him. But you should not think I will make him a Gelugpa!" As a conclusion to his visit to the monastery of Kalu Rinpoche, His Holiness delivered a concise discourse to the assembled group and then departed for Darjeeling.

At the Dali Monastery of Drukchen Rinpoche, His Holiness performed the consecration ceremony of the new temple and for three days taught the "Manjusri-nama-sangiti-Tantra" (Chanting the names of Manjusri). The "Manjusri-nama-sangiti" is one of the earliest tantras to come to light in India. It is cryptic and difficult to understand; it is, however, the source of many tantric teachings and can be commented on from the point of view of different tantras, Hevajra, Kalachakra, etc. The Dalai Lama taught a commentary to the "Sangiti" written by Gendun Gyatso, the second Dalai Lama, mentioning that he had received the transmission of this text from the late Dilgo Khyentse. On the first day, he gave the actual teachings; on the second and third days, the Dalai Lama gave the reading transmission of the commentary, stopping at a few points to make some personal remarks on it.

The teaching His Holiness gave on the "Sangiti" was highly enlightening; drawing from different texts, traditions, and philosophies, he gave a remarkable picture of the essence and scope of the tantras and in particular of the Kalachakra. He covered many topics, from particular interpretations of emptiness to the primordial mind as revealed in the tantras; from the illusory body and clear light to the distinctions within male, female, and non-dual tantra; from the Gelug approach to Longchenpa and Jigme Lingpa's perspective of the spiritual practice, praising Dzog-chen as the peak of all spiritual paths, but also expressing his own difficulty in applying the Dzog-chen approach. In this way, he unravelled a majestic web of meaningful interrelationships between different Buddhist schools, philosophies, and practices, investigating the reasons for each of

them, demonstrating in the process a formidable power of the intellect, an all-embracing openness of mind, and an untiring enthusiasm.

A day later, the Dalai Lama visited the Tibetan community in Darjeeling and gave a short public address using simple words and clear exposition to make the principles of the teaching understandable to everyone. Smiling and looking at everyone in the audience as he spoke, he explained the faults of materialistic orientation in life, how this did not lead to happiness. This is because suffering and dissatisfaction are intimately linked to aspects of the mind. The mind is not a compact whole, but is composed of many aspects. To reorient the mind means to overcome those aspects of the mind that lead to dissatisfaction and develop those that lead to well-being and happiness. That this can be done is proved by the education we undergo in society: when beginning school, one is ignorant of many things. This un-knowing is an aspect of the mind that will decrease during the learning process. At the end of the educational process, the un-knowing is reduced and knowledge developed. In the same way, unwholesome factors of the mind can be reduced simply by developing the wholesome ones until the former are totally absent. In this way, His Holiness, without mentioning the actual words, actually explained the four truths.

On the morning of April 12th, the Dalai Lama began his return journey to Delhi. Proceeding in a car escorted by police, local authorities, and entourage, he reached Sonada. The young tulku of Kalu Rinpoche was waiting on the road with many others to bid farewell to His Holiness. When the Dalai Lama saw the small tulku, he had the car stop. With a smile of warmth and affection, he squeezed the young boy's face between his hands and then moved on.

## Theravada and ...

*continued from page 10*  
transmission may find the way to do this - the rare spiritual genius would not need to do even this much, but as most of us do not fall into this category the transmission is important. By anyone, limiting ourselves to human considerations, is meant any person leading any kind of lifestyle which will not increase negative secondary causes and so cause obstructions - they need not be leading specially 'religious' lives as monks or nuns.

We live in times when the isolation of the various oriental Buddhist traditions is breaking down. As practitioners we are sure to meet those who follow other paths, other schools. At least it will be positive to be able to relate to them with knowledge and understanding, rather than being dismissive of their traditions or believing that we alone as Dzog-chen practitioners (fatal human failing!) have the true path. I hope these few words will contribute towards such an understanding.

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## Global Survival Conference

from Tibet house, New Delhi

The Global Forum of Spiritual and Parliamentary Leaders held their Second General Assembly in Kyoto, Japan, from April 18th to 23rd, 1993. More than 300 spiritual leaders, parliamentarians, scientists, journalists, artists and business people from 50 countries attended the session. On a note of frustration and despair, the session concluded that counter-measures intended to halt the headlong course of planetary destruction have, so far, proved inadequate and indecisive. In an apt diagnosis of the root cause of the current crisis, the session rightly observed that a radical change in human values was imperative. Unless human beings give up greed, intolerance and insensitivity to nature, our living planet will continue to be depleted of the vital resources that sustain all kinds of life - human, animal, vegetable and the life of the essential elements such as air, water, land and mineral wealth. The focal prescription endorsed at the session said that we must develop our "inner environment" or environment which is concerned with our relationship to ourselves, our communities, our natural ambient and the cosmos.

There were four principal sectors under which the session had organised its deliberations - the media, science, the arts, and indigenous values. The media experts from 20 countries considered how to explore ways to improve services to the public in communicating threats and solutions to human global survival. Similarly, scientists from 20 countries pledged to use their tools to save the environment and not pollute or poison it. The artists, whether musicians, painters, dancers or TV and film producers, resolved to mobilise their expertise to communicate the spirit, concept and urgency of global survival issues. The indigenous leaders were, in particular, concerned with the restoration and purification of the life-giving environment and a better understanding among all people.

The Board of Trustees of the International Green Cross had met a few days earlier for the first time. The President, Mikhail Gorbachev, gave the address in the plenary session on 20th April, 1993. A significant remark of President Gorbachev was that: "At a time of ecological crisis, humankind increasingly becomes a single species". He further emphasised that the coming 21st century was critical to life on Earth - "The 21st century will be either the century of total crisis, or the century of human recovery, the century of human survival". The International Green Cross came into being in Rio de Janeiro on June 6th, 1992 at the Parliamentary Earth Summit Conference. The charter of the International Green Cross has three main objectives: firstly, to facilitate vigorous, timely and effective response to present or future environmental disasters; secondly, to advocate international ecological law, and thirdly, to promote value change through education and communication. The third objective is of course the most urgent and decisive. It fits in with the Buddhist teaching which emphasises the development of the inner attitude of mind to view all life as a unity and to treat every being with compassion.

There is a sizeable component of representation of world Buddhists at the Global Forum among whom Lama Daboom Tulku has been elected General Council Member. He attended the first meeting of a group of spiritual and political leaders in October 1985, near New York to develop a dialogue on critical survival issues. His Holiness the Dalai Lama nominated Lama Daboom Tulku as his representative to the meeting where it was decided to form a Global Forum of Spiritual and Parliamentary Leaders on Human Survival. The first Global Survival Conference, attended by H.H. the Dalai Lama and Lama Daboom Tulku was held in Oxford, UK, in April 1988. The next major event of the Global Forum was a programme held in Moscow in January 1990 followed by the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in June 1992 where the International Green Cross took birth.

## PRACTICES FOR SPECIAL DAYS

5th Month, 10th day Tue. 29th June 1993  
According to the Master Jigmed Lingpa this is the anniversary of the birth of Padmasambhava. To celebrate this important anniversary we Dzog-chen practitioners all over the world communicate in the state of contemplation, practising Guruyoga with the Tundrin, Tungyas or Ganapuja according to our possibilities. We do this practice when it is 8.00 in the morning in Oddiyana.

SEE THE UNIVERSAL TIMETABLE (see issue 19)

5th Month, 15th day Sun. 4th July 1993  
**FULL MOON.** This is a special day for the Long-life practice of Amitayus, so you can do the Long-life practice "Union of Primordial Essences" early in the morning. If you cannot do it at that time, it is still good to do it later in the day.

5th Month, 25th day Wed. 14th July 1993  
This is a **Dakini day** and an important day for the practice of Ekajati. Therefore, according to your circumstances, try to do the long Tun collectively with your Vajra brothers and sisters, or the medium Tun if you are practising on your own. In either case, repeat the heart mantra of Ekajati as many times as you can.

5th Month, 30th day Mon. 19th July 1993  
**NEW MOON.** This is a day for purification practices. It is best to do the Purification of the Six Lokas either collectively or alone, preferably in the early morning. Otherwise you can do a medium or short Tun.

6th Month, 4th day Fri. 23rd July 1993  
This is the anniversary of the Dharmachakra (the first turning of the Wheel of the Dharma): the first time that Buddha Shakyamuni gave the teaching of the Four Noble Truths to his disciples at Samath, after his illumination. To honour the Lord Buddha on this special day you can do a Ganapuja with your Vajra brothers and sisters.

6th Month, 10th day Wed. 28th July 1993  
This is a special day of Padmasambhava so if you have the possibility, it is beneficial to do a Ganapuja together with your Vajra Brothers and Sisters, if not you can practise Guruyoga with Padmasambhava and the Long-life practice "Universal Wisdom Union".

6th Month, 14th day Sun. 1st August 1993  
This is the anniversary of the third Karmapa, Rangjung Dorje. On this day it is good to do "A Kar Lamai Naljor", Guruyoga with the White A.

6th Month, 15th day Mon. 2nd August 1993  
**FULL MOON.** This is the anniversary of Gampopa, the disciple of Milarepa. Therefore it is an excellent day to do "A Kar Lamai Naljor", Guruyoga with the White A. It is also a good day to do the Long-life practice of Amitayus, "Union of Primordial Essences".

6th Month, 25th day Thu. 12th August 1993  
This is a **Dakini day**, so it is a positive day for reinforcing the

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

6th Month, 30th day Tues. 17th August 1993  
**NEW MOON.** This is a very important day to do purification practices, especially the "Purification of the Six Lokas". If you have the chance, you can also do a short, medium or long Tun.

7th Month, 10th day Thu. 26th August  
This is the anniversary of Jomo Menmo (1248-1283), a very famous woman Tertön, reincarnation of Yeshe Tsogyal. She was the consort of the great Tertön Guru Chowang. It is also a very special day of Guru Padmasambhava. Therefore it is an ideal day to do a Ganapuja and Long-life practice associated with Padmasambhava, "Universal Wisdom Union".

7th Month, 15th day Wed. 1st Sept. 1993  
**FULL MOON.** This is the anniversary of Tsarchen Losal Gyatso and Padma Karpo, a famous 17th century Drupa Kargyupa Master. Therefore it is an excellent day to practise "A Kar Lamai Naljor", the Guruyoga with the White A early in the morning if possible, or later in the evening when you are free. It is also an excellent day for the Long-life practice of the Dakini Mandarava.

7th Month, 25th day Sat. 11th Sept. 1992  
This is a **Dakini day** and also the anniversary of Pagmo Drupa (1110-1170), the chief disciple of Gampopa. Try to do a Ganapuja together with your Vajra sisters and brothers. If there are no other practitioners nearby, you can do a medium Tun on your own. In either case, when you transform yourself into the Dakini Simhamuka, recite her heart mantra as much as possible and then do an intensive practice of Ekajati.

7th Month, 30th day Thu. 16th Sept. 1993  
**NEW MOON.** This day is ideal for purification practices. Try to do either the "Purification of the Six Lokas" or the "Namchos Shitroi Naljor", the Yoga of the Peaceful and Wrathful Manifestations, either collectively or on your own.

8th Month, 10th day Sat. 25th Sept. 1993  
This is a very special day of Guru Padmasambhava, therefore do a Ganapuja with the Guruyoga and the Long-life practice of Guru Padmasambhava "Universal Wisdom Union" collectively. Otherwise you can do a medium Tun on your own.

8th Month, 15th day Thu. 30th Sept. 1993  
**FULL MOON.** This is an important day to do the Long-life practice of Amitayus, "Union of Primordial Essences". It is best to do it early in the morning, but if you cannot it is still good if you can do it later in the day or evening.

## Doing something for Tibet

by Andrea Dell'Angelo

A few days ago I found myself in Washington, D. C., for work. The Dalai Lama had also arrived there, invited by the Tibet Fund which had organised an intense schedule for him, including a meeting with President Clinton and an evening entitled, "A Tribute to Tibet".

Singers, performers and politicians participated during the evening, in particular the actor Harrison Ford, the singer Roberta Flack, the musician Philip Glass, the composer Marvin Hamlisch, Richie Havens, the monks of the Namgyal monastery and the Nobel Peace Prize Winners Elia Weisel and the Dalai Lama.

The Dalai Lama started his speech with a joke, saying: "...As Buddhists

we take refuge in the Three Jewels, Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, but as Tibetans we take refuge in the Four Jewels: the fourth is the International Community..."

I must say that seeing the work that has been done in America for Tibet and its culture one remains without words, and also understands why Tibetans take refuge in the fourth jewel.

The number of activities that have been undertaken, of people who participate actively, of projects that have been realised and the funds that have been collected make one really think, above all, if one is also trying - among many difficulties - to do something for Tibet, in a context that is very different from America, such as Europe and Italy

in particular.

In the last few years the Tibet Fund has collected over three million dollars, realised an incredible number of projects in India and Nepal, within a range that goes from developing the communities of refugees in India and Nepal to plans in the fields of health, education, economy, research and studies and to the establishment of scholarships for Tibetan young people who want to specialize themselves in America.

We, the people who work for ASIA, would also like to do something more for Tibetans and their culture, but unless we can overcome the bureaucratic and financial obstacles we find ourselves hampered by, it will be slow going...

## THE MIRROR

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

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

Direttore responsabile: Raimondo Bultrini  
Editorial advisors: Anna Eid, Giovanni Arca  
Editorial collaboration: Liz Granger, Robin Cooke, John Shane, Nina Robinson, Cristiana De Falco, Albert Benson  
Graphic assistance: Fulvio Ferrari, Felix Dawe  
Layout: Shang-Shung Edizioni  
Printer: Tipografia 2A, Arcidosso  
Issue 21, May-June 1993  
© 1993 Ass. Cult. Comunità Dzog-chen.  
Registrato presso il Tribunale di Grosseto al n. 5/1990 del 26 Aprile 1990