

THE MIRROR

The International Newspaper of the Dzog-chen Community

Issue 23

A.S.I.A. MISSION TO TIBET

by Andrea Dell'Angelo & Andrea Sertoli

In July and August of 1993, an A.S.I.A. technical mission to Tibet took place under the guidance of Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche; members of the A.S.I.A. team were Tsherintar, Phuntshok Wangmo, Andrea Dell'Angelo, Giovanni Boni and myself (Andrea Sertoli). The mission aimed to:

- verify, on the spot, actual requirements in health and education for the selected target areas in Eastern Tibet. Concrete access to missing technical data in these areas was considered essential by A.S.I.A. staff, since lack of background information had become a serious obstacle to implementing the scheduled projects;

- establish constructive relationships with local authorities who, until the mission, had never been directly encountered by A.S.I.A. staff. The creation of direct communication with the officials and administrators of the different prefectures and districts of Tibet where A.S.I.A. hopes to operate was clearly a pressing need, especially in view of the consolidation of A.S.I.A.'s presence in Tibet;

- set up agreements and conventions for the development of activities that could involve not only A.S.I.A. but also, for example, the Shang Shung Institute. Therefore attention was also given to culture and archaeology sectors not directly related to A.S.I.A.'s programme.

Most mission members met in mid-July in Chengdu, capital of Szechuan province, while I joined the team a few days later in Lhasa, capital of former Tibet and, nowadays, capital of the Tibetan Autonomous Region (T.A.R.). Our schedule was essentially divided between a period in Lhasa and a period to be spent in the field, travelling overland to Chengdu through the T.A.R. and part of Szechuan province.

Official meetings with local government members actually started in Chengdu, where Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche and team members met the provincial authorities of Szechuan who, once again, proved to be extremely rigid in regard to any type of contribution to the Tibetan people.

In fact, their unwillingness to cooperate with A.S.I.A. went to the



Tibetan children in Galenteng, Szechuan

extent of denying the necessary authorisations for travelling in Szechuan; it was only at the very end of the stay in Chengdu - and only thanks to the pressure exerted by Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche - that the travel authorisations were actually released.

The period in Lhasa was filled with numerous meetings and discussions with political, administrative, cultural and religious authorities. In fact, the popularity of Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche and the enthusiastic response to his work - coming from all levels of society - was a great support and resulted in a warm welcome from most of the local authorities.

General Convention

The intense activities undertaken in those days resulted in the definition of a General Convention among A.S.I.A., the Shang Shung Institute and the Government of the T.A.R.

The contents of this Convention included all possible sectors of collaboration from archaeology to textual research, from cultural and educational projects to those of health, etc.

The definition of this Convention proved to be rather complex and, because of the dependence of the regional authorities on the central government, the final version of the Convention was transmitted to Beijing in order to get the final

approval for its actual implementation.

Traditional Tibetan Medicine

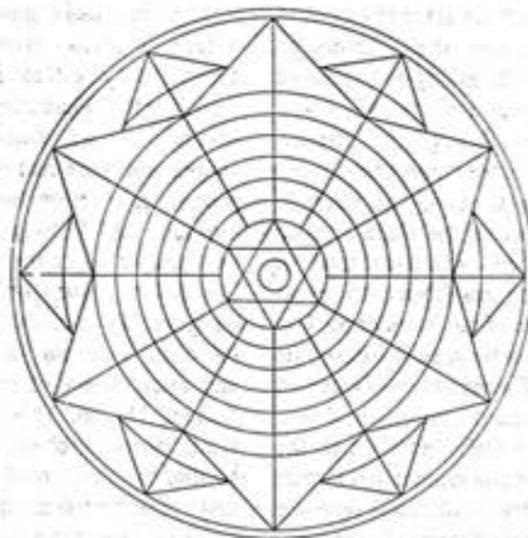
A second agreement was reached in the field of traditional Tibetan medicine, in which A.S.I.A. and the Shang Shung Institute will cooperate with the Institute of Traditional Medicine and the University of Traditional Medicine, both of them located in Lhasa, to organise a series

of courses on Tibetan medicine, to be held in Italy.

Those courses are to last for 4 to 5 years, and official recognition of their academic validity will be requested from the Chinese government. These two Tibetan traditional medical institutions are led by two famous doctors, Dr. Champa Trinley and Dr. Khempo Zenam.

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Dance of the Vajra



In this issue news and reports about recent and up-coming courses with qualified teachers, a practitioner's explanation, information about a corrected manual for dancers. A video with Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche's explanation and demonstration will be available next year. Reserve your copy now. pages 4, 5, 6, 7

The Turquoise Dragon Flies

"...to all dignitaries, religious and lay persons of the Land of Snow and particularly of Bhutan... When the Turquoise Dragon of the South ascends in blue space, the Thunder of Victory will resound..."

Kangkar ('Bo Gangs dkar) Rinpoche's 1955 proclamation on the spiritual and historical role of Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche. page 3

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Terma teaching: renewing the transmission

by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

Excerpts from a transcription of a teaching given by Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche at Merigar, April 13th, 1993

When you receive a teaching of any kind, especially if it is linked to *tantra* or to Dzogchen, you have to know what the source of that teaching is and how it is connected with the lineage of transmission. A teaching has its origin and its principle so you can understand that it is not something invented by somebody. If someone invented it with their intellect, it could not work. A teaching must have been taught and transmitted by a being who was totally realised, such as Buddha Sakyamuni, Garab Dorje, Vajrasattva, etc. There is always a source of the teaching and a continuous and uninterrupted lineage from that source up to the master from whom you receive that teaching and it is very important for you to understand the lineage and source of that teaching. If, one day, you have to transmit (this teaching), you have to know where it comes from. So whenever I give a teaching, I always try to enable you to understand what the source of that teaching is, where it comes from...

One can also have transmission through pure vision which is called *tag nang*. For example, if we are good practitioners of Dzogchen *longde* or *thödgäl* or *yangtig*, then we can develop pure vision and through that pure vision Guru Padmasambhava and Garab Dorje and other masters can manifest and we can receive teachings and clarifications. We can receive them because we have already received transmission and have a connection with it so we are living in that transmission and we have a relationship with those masters through the transmission. That is what is called *tag nang*.

Many of the teachings of Namchö Mingyur Dorje. *Namchö* is the name given to the teachings of Mingyur Dorje belong to the *tag nang* category. *Nam* is space; *chö* is teaching so "the teachings of space". What does that mean? It means that visions such as the Sambhogakaya and other various types of manifestations manifested in space and he received transmission through those manifestations.

Our practice of the *xitro* is an example of this. At the end of the *xitro* practice it is stated that when Mingyur Dorje was 12 years old, one day while he was sitting in contemplation, Vajrasattva appeared in his vision and communicated that teaching to him. He immediately dictated it to his disciples who wrote it down. So *namchö* means "a teaching coming from space" but in fact it does not come from space but from the manifestation of Vajrasattva. *Tag nang* is the name usually given to these types of teachings.

Another very interesting aspect of *tag nang* and one of the most famous examples of *tag nang*

Dzogchen teachings are those that came to the first Dudjom Rinpoche. The Dudjom Rinpoche who recently died was a reincarnation of the *terton* Dudjom Lingpa. While the first *terton* Dudjom Lingpa was in *togyel* contemplation, a practice through which one can have many visions, in the vision appeared a *tigle* in which there was a manifestation of Guru Tsokye Dorje, Guru Padmasambhava in Sambhogakaya form. The manifestation of that master communicated a teaching.

As Dudjom Lingpa, in the state of contemplation, received this communication he repeated the entire teaching to two disciples by his side who wrote it down. This comprises a very thick volume of pure Dzogchen teaching which is very interesting. If one reads it one can see that it was not composed intellectually. This teaching is called *tag nang yeshe trawa*. *Tag nang* means that it is teaching that has come through pure vision; *yeshe* means wisdom; *trawa* means a net or manifestation through light. That is an example of *tag nang* and there are many of these kinds of teachings.

Tag nang can also come through dreams and there are many masters who have had these kinds of teachings. For example, I received both the Dance of the Vajra and its *mandala* through my dreams. They are not teachings that did not exist before. Certainly the principle of the Dance of the Vajra and the Song of the Vajra existed in Dzogchen *tantras* although there was not a Dance of the Vajra danced on a *mandala* or the precise form of the *mandala*. These elements I received in my dreams, not only in the dream of a single night but through the dreams of many months and I wrote down all the teachings I received through these dreams. So you can see that there are many types of teachings and many of the teachings called *terma* arise from the clarity of one's mind...

Then there is another aspect of *tag nang* which is generally called

gongter. *Gong* is the state of the mind; *ter* is a treasure that is put in the mind and which then appears. We have many interesting *terma* teachings which are *gongter*. An example from the Dzogchen *upadesa* is a series of teachings called the *Khandro Nyingthig* which means the essential teachings of the *dakini*. This teaching was taught by Guru Padmasambhava who made it into a *terma* to keep the teachings and transmission pure for the future. He put this *ter* into the mind of the daughter of the Tibetan king Trisong Detsen. This daughter was very young and she was dying. In fact in the stories it is said that she was already dead. The king was suffering greatly and said, "Why do I have to suffer so much? This is my daughter who is so young and she has already died."

So Guru Padmasambhava told him a story: in very ancient times he and Shantarakshita and the king were building the very big *chorten* at Bodha together. One day while working to build this *chorten*, the king Trisong Detsen squashed a mosquito which had stung him. While the mosquito was stinging him, the king had slapped the point where it was stinging and accidentally killed it without intending to. He had interrupted that life and so he had created a negative action. But there had been a very precise connection between that mosquito and Trisong Detsen and as a repayment of the debt in that life, this mosquito had become his daughter. However she did not have the positive *karma* for a long life and many years of contact with Trisong Detsen. This is the way Guru Padmasambhava explained it so that the king could understand and not suffer too much.

Then the king asked Guru Padmasambhava, "Please do something, so that we can have some benefit from this happening." Guru Padmasambhava said, "You do not have to worry because although your daughter is very young, she has

already received a very important transmission of the teaching which will be a great benefit for her realisation". To make the king happy and for the benefit of the future, Guru Padmasambhava had summoned back the consciousness of the dead daughter into her corpse and he gave her a specific introduction placing the *terma* of the *Khandro Nyingthig* into her mind.

After many lives that daughter was reborn as Terton Padma Ledrel tsal who, even when he was very young, had many capacities. All these teachings of the *Khandro Nyingthig* came through him and he wrote them down and transmitted them. The third Karmapa, Rangyung Dorje was very interested in them and received them, so the Karmapa also became a protagonist of these teachings.

Before Padma Ledrel tsal managed to write all these teachings down, he died. There is also a very precise reason why that happened. His immediate reincarnation was Longchenpa who, when he was young, started proclaiming that he was Padma Ledrel tsal.

He studied and became a very famous scholar and to complete the series of teachings of Padma Ledrel tsal called the *Khandro Yangtig*, wrote down all the series of teachings. He also wrote the *Nyingthig Yashi*, the four series of *Upadesa* teachings.

These teachings are usually called *mind terma* and there are many kinds of them as well. When there is this kind of *terma* then the lineage or the transmission is direct. But there is never the continuity of the direct lineage without also the official line of transmission. These must always be tied and connected together. Why? Because we live in the limited human condition. For example, when we pursue an intellectual study such as history, we always have to have some reference as proof when we talk about a historical occurrence. In the same way it is not enough to say that this is a *mind terma* of

somebody and that is its history. It is possible to clarify some things but it has to have its foundation, its history related to social conditions and likewise with the teaching.

The *Kama* teaching is very important and *terma* have to adorn and enrich this knowledge and above all refresh the transmission. Sometimes in the transmission of the *Kama* there can be some problems because in the case of transmission from master to disciple along a lineage, the transmission has to be very pure. If it is not pure, if some obstacle is created, it becomes an obstacle to the functioning of the transmission. That is where connection with the *terma* transmission is important.

At times I have given a more traditional kind of teaching, the initiation and transmission of the *xitro* of the Master Changchub Dorje, who received this teaching as a *terma* of the mind. Why did he receive that mind treasure? Because it is considered that in one of his previous incarnations at the time of Guru Padmasambhava, he had been one of the sons of the King and Guru Padmasambhava had put this *terma* into his mind. He had received this *terma* and so the transmission was from Guru Padmasambhava to the son of the King who in a later life became Changchub Dorje.

When I transmit this practice of the *xitro* connected with this lineage, it means I received it from Changchub Dorje who received it from Guru Padmasambhava and there is nobody in between who could have created problems with that transmission. I am very sure that I have no problems with Changchub Dorje, I am certain of that a hundred percent. So if you receive the transmission of the *xitro* from me, you know that the lineage goes directly to Guru Padmasambhava. That is what is meant by "refreshing the transmission".

For example, if we consider Namchö Mingyur Dorje, certainly in that lineage Mingyur Dorje received a transmission directly from Vajrasattva. I received that teaching from Negyab Rinpoche, who received it from his master and there at least 20 masters between Mingyur Dorje and Negyab Rinpoche and we do not know precisely what the relationship was in that lineage.

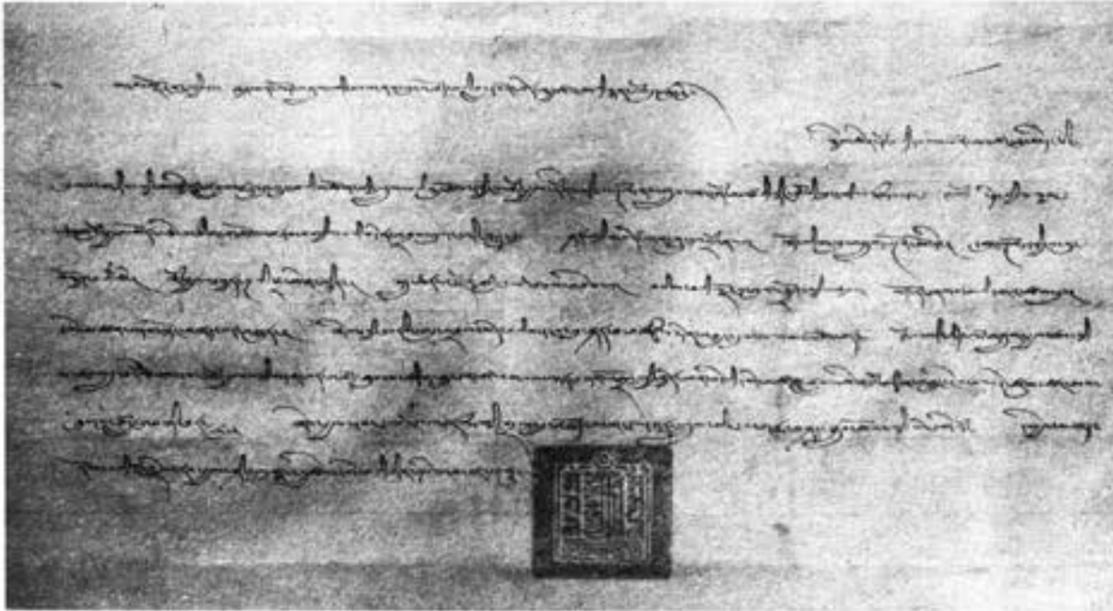
It is much more difficult when you have to look at the *Kama* lineage with a very important source like Samantabhadra or Vajradhara. From that source down to our own masters there is a lineage with many many links. Certainly we, too, can have our pure vision but we can never know precisely what the relationship is between each master and disciple in the lineage.

If each contact is not very pure it can become an obstacle to the function of that transmission. So in order to renew that situation the *terma* teaching is very important.



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The Turquoise Dragon Flies



Kangkar ('Bo Gangs dkar) Rinpoche issued this proclamation in 1955 concerning the spiritual and historical role of Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche.

Kangkar ('Bo Gangs dkar) Rinpoche Karma Shedrub (bShad sGrub) Chogyi Singe (Chos kyi Seng ge) (1903-1956) was one of the most illustrious personages of the Kagyupa (bKa' brgyud pa) school. Master of the XVIIth Gyalwa (rGyal ba) Karmapa, and a great Buddhist scholar and practitioner, Kangkar Rinpoche was considered among the most important religious authorities of the time, with numerous disciples not only in Tibet but also in China itself, where they numbered over

10,000. His written works, too numerous to be listed here, notably include Choying Topa (Chos dbyings bstod pa), an important commentary on Nagarjuna's philosophy. He was one of the three principal disciples of Khenpo (mKhanpo) Zhenga (gZhan dga') of rDzog chen monastery, a master of the Ris med non-sectarian movement which gave new impetus to the spiritual life of Tibet in the 19th century and included among its foremost proponents such luminaries as Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo ('Jam dbyangs mKhyen brtse'i dbang po) and Jamgon Kongtrul ('Jam mgon Kong sprul), the latter a master of Kangkar Rinpoche himself.

In 1954 Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche was invited to visit China as a representative of Tibetan youth. Thereafter, he was appointed teacher of Tibetan at the Southwestern University of Minor Nationalities at Chengdu in Sichuan, where he remained until 1956. It was in this period that he met Kangkar Rinpoche, and received from him various teachings, on Chagchen (Phyag chen) or Mahamudra, on Dzogchen (Rdzogs-chen), the Konchog Chindu (dKon mchog spyi 'dus) series and the (Chos drug gi skor) Six Yogas. Before Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche left him, Kangkar Rinpoche wrote the pronouncement translated here.



"The following pronouncement is addressed to all Lamas, dignitaries, religious and lay persons of the Land of Snow and particularly of Bhutan. The Supreme Reincarnation Choying Namgyal (Chos dbyings rNam rgyal), great holy being whose glory cannot be diminished, endowed with marvelous knowledge of religion and morals, was foretold in ancient times by the mahasiddha Namkhai Nyingpo (Namkhai 'i Nying po). I, too, have made a heartfelt invocation to the ocean of the Three Roots; its truthful fruit is the following prophecy:

Near the River of Golden Sand (Yang tse), when the Turquoise Dragon of the South (Bhutan) ascends in blue space, the Thunder of Victory will resound. He will cause abundant rain to fall in all the world and will spread heat in the Land of Cold. At the same time, in the forests of the South (India and Bhutan) thousands of petals (of the flower) of virtue will be strewn.

This is what was revealed to me in the non-duality of dharmadhatu (dbyings) and the state of rigpa. So that the opportunity of the manifestation of this master not be wasted, if he could accede to the residency of the Dharma Raja Ngawang Namgyal (Zhab Drung Ngag dbang rNam rgyal) Rinpoche of Bhutan (Lho 'brug), this would certainly bring enormous benefit to that country, to the Teachings, and to the welfare and spiritual happiness of all beings. Therefore I ask that all bear this in mind.

Written on the twenty-fifth day of the third month of the wood sheep year (1955) by the member of the lineage of masters of Gyalwang (rGyal dbang) Karmapa who bears the title of reincarnation of Kangkar Shedrub Chogyi Singe (Kang dkar, Karma bShad sgrub Chos kyi Seng ge), otherwise known as Gyendee Rolpai Dorje (dGyes mdead Rol pa'i rDo rje)."

To understand the above text, the following notes may be helpful:

1. Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche's birthplace lies in the region of the Yang tse, the River of Golden Sand of the text;
2. the country of Bhutan, frequently mentioned in the text, is called drug ('brug) in Tibetan, which means "dragon" as well as "thunder";
3. Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche has been recognized as the mind reincarnation of Zhab Drung Ngawang Namgyal (Ngag

dbang rNam rgyal), the spiritual and temporal founder and ruler (Chogyal or Dharma Raja) of Bhutan, by diverse masters, including the 16th Gyalwa Karmapa;

4. Choying Namgyal (Chos dbyings rNam rgyal) is the name conferred on Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche when, at a young age, he received the above-mentioned recognition as reincarnation of the Zhab Drung;
5. Victory is a name of the Dharma Raja.

In Buddhist symbolic terminology, the Victorious Sound of Thunder stands for the teaching of the Dharma and the word of Buddha; rain and heat refer to spiritual teachings;

6. Namkhai Nyingpo (Namkhai sNying po), cited in the text as having prophesied the coming of Choying Namgyal (see note 4), was one of the first Tibetans to take ordination, is counted among the twenty-five disciples of Guru Rinpoche, and left behind no body.

NAMKHAI NORBU RINPOCHE Teaching Programme

1993 - 1994



Nepal

Kathmandu/Chitwan

24 December - 3 January 1994

Teaching Retreat

For information contact: Ian Baker, GPO. Box 1373, Kathmandu, Nepal, Fax 01 977 1 415947.

For full retreat details see page 5

Australia

25 - 29 March

Course of either Yantra Yoga with Fabio Andrico or Dance of the Vajra with Prima Mai

1 - 10 April

Teaching Retreat with Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche

13 - 17 April

Course of either Yantra Yoga with Fabio Andrico or Dance of the Vajra with Prima Mai

For information contact: Herbert Jelinek, 31/3 Plowman Street, Bondi, NSW Australia, Tel. 61 6 257 1177, Fax 61 2 6923868

Ulan Bator, Mongolia

6 - 8 May

Teaching Retreat

For information contact: Batodalay Dugarov, Gusinoozerskaya 9/3, Ulan Ude, Buryatia 670026 Russia

Ulan Ude, Buryatia

13 - 21 May

Teaching Retreat

For information contact: Batodalay Dugarov, Gusinoozerskaya 9/3-3, Ulan Ude, Buryatia 670026 Russia

Moscow, Russia

27 May - 5 June

Teaching Retreat

For further information on the retreat see page 5

Merigar, Italy

Summer 1994

Teaching Retreat

For information contact: Comunità Dzog-chen, Merigar, 58031 Arcidosso GR Italy. Tel. 0564 966837-966322, Fax: 968110

Typhoon-Rainbow retreat

by Tetsu Nagasawa

On the 19th of August, 1993, Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche arrived at Narita airport for his fourth visit to Japan. Fabio Andrico and Prima am who had arrived ten days before to teach yantra yoga and Vajra Dance and two other members of the community went to welcome Rinpoche at the airport. Rinpoche looked happy after the one-month strenuous and sometimes dangerous but also very meaningful journey to Tibet.

On August 23rd, Rinpoche gave a lecture on Tibetan medicine and the *bardo* for the Association of Holistic Medicine of Japan. More than a hundred people, who came to the hall of Tokyo Medical University for the lecture, were happy to have the rare chance to know the general idea about life and death in the Tibetan tradition.

The nine day retreat with Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche started on the morning of August 28th in a traditional Japanese house of an old family at "Kanotoiwa" or "Rock Door of Divinities" in the western mountain area of Tokyo. It was a beautiful day. One of the biggest and strongest typhoon storms since the Second World War, which made all the transportation system and modern facilities in Tokyo utterly useless, had cleared away every particle of dust, every negativity from the retreat place; people had seen a very big unimaginably beautiful double rainbow rising just



Tokyo Conference on Tibetan Medicine

near the retreat place the evening before, which we took to be an auspicious sign to bless the retreat.

Around sixty people came to the retreat. Rinpoche started by singing the Song of the Vajra and then declared that he was going to dedicate three days each to the three series of Dzogchen, that is, *semde*, *longde* and *upadesa*.

We usually got up quite early in the morning. It was quite easy to find some place to meditate by oneself in the forest or by the river. Some people practised *chöd* while others did *powa*, deity or breathing practice. Others were busy preparing breakfast. The one-hour yantra yoga session conducted by Fabio Andrico started at 8 o'clock. Yantra being completely new to most of the newcomers, the majority of people were amazed to see Fabio showing

difficult positions of yantra while others who had practised Chinese Chikong for years, teaching themselves, were deeply impressed by the very precise and clear explanations Fabio gave. Someone asked me if he was a yogi from India!

After breakfast, people would walk down to the traditional Japanese house with a beautiful garden to listen to the very precious teachings given by Rinpoche and also to practise with him. Rinpoche gave a condensed and very detailed explanation of all the three series of Dzogchen teachings. He also gave a many *lung* of *mantra* practices. We were more than happy to receive the empowerment of Ngöndzong Gyalpo.

After the morning session, Rinpoche enjoyed giving some cookies which he empowered with

mantra to the fishes in the small pond in the garden. It was a great delight for everyone to see him laughing and throwing food.

Around twenty people met for the Vajra Dance course given by Prima mai at a comfortable grass field at 2.30 every afternoon which they enjoyed very much. One lady saw Prima as Tara in person! On the eighth day Rinpoche himself showed us how to dance, which made everyone extremely happy.

Rinpoche learned a lot of Japanese words during the retreat and we were sure that he would start teaching in Japanese after a month.

Day by day people came to understand the meaning of the teachings and were astounded by the clarity and depth of his knowledge, which came from his own inner realisation. This sense of wonder eventually ripened into the conviction that we were in the presence of and receiving teachings from a real Buddha lama.

We cooked breakfast and dinner for ourselves, groups of six people in turn. There were some Japanese Shingon priests and nuns from Koyasan, and I think those who came from abroad had some idea as to the daily food in Koyasan. After dinner, some people would gather around the fire, talking, dancing and enjoying wine while others found their own meditation places in a nearby temple or a shrine of the village.

The whole retreat ended in the

afternoon of September 5th with an extravagant *ganapuja*, which according to Fabio was the most generous one he had ever witnessed. We were expecting the second biggest typhoon after the war to come on that day, but she somehow changed her mind and we enjoyed a nice day. Anyway we felt that this was a kind of typhoon-rainbow retreat.

Rinpoche, Fabio and Prima left for India on the morning of September 8th.

The nine-day retreat, yantra yoga course and Vajra Dance course gave us much inspiration to proceed along the path. We have decided to continue the monthly collective practice of rituals. We are going to start bi-weekly yantra yoga practice meetings and a monthly Vajra Dance. A new collective practice group has started spontaneously in Kyoto. A group of people have begun translating "The Dzogchen Ritual Practices" and a small study group of Santi Maha Sangha has also started. We hope to publish the transcription (only in Japanese) of the retreats of 1989 and 1992 within this year. We hope we can build a good basis on which the genuine tradition of Dzogchen may flourish in the future.

We would like to say many thanks to Rinpoche, Fabio and Prima for all their kindness and we pray for their tour. We also want to thank those, both in Japan and in Italy, who helped us organise the retreat.

Vajra Dance in Athens



by M. Rita Leti

While the bus was carrying me towards Athens, as I watched the sun drenched rocks rising steeply out of the sea, a thought echoed in my mind, "I am part of the history of love for the universe". Everything was perfect, the day, the temperature, the colours, the fast-moving bus and my being there in the midst of reality, heading towards one of the streets of Athens, Solonos 46, where the day before, September 17th, the retreat of the Dance of the Vajra, guided by Adriana Dal Borgo, had started.

And so I arrived, bags and all, directly to this large room on the first floor of a modern building in a

suburb of Athens. There was nothing esoteric about it, it didn't overlook fields or parks, it was a house in the midst of other houses in a quiet street, white-walled with a balcony, with children playing in the courtyard beyond the large windows.

But this "normality", as I would soon discover, was to be the precious setting for ten days during which the experience of dancing together on the Mandala became part of us, creating an atmosphere of intense participation, both during the Dance and in many other moments of daily life (very enjoyable), that we passed together.

We were always the same people, a fixed number, usually twelve, by

chance but precisely an equal number of men and women and every day at the same time we found ourselves there, almost all of us having travelled quite a distance. There was a feeling of uniqueness in having both the precise space and a patient and exacting teacher available for the dance. This combination of things made possible not only the technical learning of the steps (which all of us learned up to the last step) but most of all, it seemed to me, an easy entry into the sense of the Mandala.

Sometimes I had the clear sensation that the Mandala wasn't only in that room but was part of other dimensions at the same time: a door, a luminous landing place visible from everywhere, while we were dancing in "space".

When I arrived in Athens, some people had asked me why I had come there. Why should an Italian travel so far to learn the Dance of the Vajra when she can easily do it at home? Sometimes it is useful to take a longer and more tortuous path which, strangely enough, besides being more fun, arrives first!

A warm greeting to all the other dancers on the Mandala in Athens. I really thank you for your generous welcome. All my best wishes that "the Dance" continues!

Earth, space and water

by Mary Finnigan

The name on the map is Trellys-Y-Crwc and it is a waste of effort for anyone born east of the Black Mountains to attempt a pronunciation. Cast your mind's ear onto what the Italians would make of it, or Hungarians or Greeks and it seems a fair bet that it will acquire a new, Gar-type name before very long and also a new, changing and developing identity as the headquarters of the UK Dzogchen Community.

At the moment it is a collection of dilapidated farm buildings on about a third of an acre of concrete in deepest Pembrokeshire. The journey there, even from Bristol, is long - and slow when you leave the M4. There are corrugated tin hay barns that need to be demolished as fast as possible and the concrete needs to go too.

the land is not first-grade agricultural, but then nor was Findhorn. With the gardeners among us itching with enthusiasm, I reckon two seasons should see us self-sufficient in veg, after three we should be getting decent yields from fruit crops.

The main, L-shaped stone building sits with geomantic precision on top of a small promontory that offers a spacious view over rolling moors and farmland. Stretch your eyes a little further and there is the sea; A small bay, inset left with your back to the house, guarded by towering pillars of rock. Spectacularly beautiful, wonderfully calm and gentle - the inspection party were entranced from our first footsteps. We had a powerful and immediate "sense of place", which gathered momentum as we explored and was enhanced when we sang the Song of the Vajra.

The potential is fabulously exciting. Our own home at last - after so many false dawns and so much criticism. A place of quiet refuge and retreat, a place of energy and renewal, a place to have fun and be uninhibited Dzogcherma/pas. It was worth the wait.

New Tsegialgar fax number

Please note that the fax number of Tsegialgar (USA) is now the same as the phone number:

413 6256378

Teaching Retreats with Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche

Nepal

December 24 - January 3, 1994

Registration for the retreat will be on December 23rd (4.30 - 6.30 pm) and 24th (10am - 1pm) at the Hotel Vajra in Kathmandu. Teachings will begin at 3pm in the Hotel Vajra's Naga Hall and continue at the same venue on December 25th.

On December 26th we will travel by bus through the Mahabharat Mountain range to Chitwan National Forest where the retreat will continue at a luxurious tented camp. The teachings will be held either out-of-doors or under a spacious Tibetan-style canopied tent. Accommodation will be in double occupancy canvas tents, furnished with camp beds and quilting. Hot water showers and modern toilet facilities are available. Meals will be served buffet style in a communal dining area. Daytime temperatures in Chitwan range from 15 - 20°C while nights tend to be chilly.

We will return to the Vajra Hotel on January 3rd. Total cost for the entire retreat including four nights accommodation at Hotel Vajra and eight nights at Machan tented camp in Chitwan will be \$650. This includes transportation to and from Chitwan, park entry and camping fees, as well as all meals throughout the trip excluding

breakfast and dinner on December 24th and 25th. Full payment is requested at the time of registration on December 23rd



or 24th. An adjusted cost of \$600 is possible at the less expensive Snow Lion Guest House in Kathmandu. Due to limited accommodation, preregistration is requested by December 1st. To make reservations please respond by letter or fax to Ian Baker, G.P.O. Box 1373, Kathmandu, Nepal, fax no. 01 977 1 415947. During the month of November Ian can also be reached at 7901 Winston Road, Philadelphia, PA 19118 USA, fax no. 215 242 5641.

Moscow

May 27 - June 5, 1994

The retreat is programmed to be held in the countryside outside Moscow.

A participation fee of \$200 is requested to cover the costs of the retreat, plus \$100 for food and accommodation for ten days.

In order to arrange visas for those who wish to participate, the Moscow Gakyil asks that these people communicate their name, citizenship, date and place of birth, passport number, date and place of its issue, validity, and place of residence to one of the contact people in Moscow:

Vladimir Karpinski, tel. 095 300 48 54

Vladimir Maikov, Sovetskaya Str. 14/7, Zheleznodorozhny, Moscow Region 43980. Russian Federation Tel. 095 522 75 83

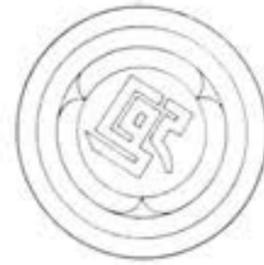
Helen Antonova, Korneichuka, 44-17, 127543 Moscow. Russian Federation Tel. 095 405 46 64.

Or by fax 095 292 65 11 or 095 444 75 25.

This information should be sent before March 15, 1994.

The participation fees asked for are based on current exchange rates and may have increased by the time of the retreat.

Shang-Shung Institute Second Tibetan Medicine Course December 4 - 10



The second course on Tibetan medicine will take place at Merigar, Arcidosso (Grosseto) and will last for a week, starting on Saturday December 4th and ending on Friday December 10th.

The course will be given by Dr. Pasan Yontin. As with the preceding course, several hours of lessons will be dedicated to studying the fundamentals of the Tibetan language.

The sessions will be divided as follows:

h.10.00 - 12.30 Dr. Pasan Yontin
h.15.30 - 17.00 Tibetan language with Dr. Adriano Clemente
h.17.00 - 19.30 Dr. Pasan Yontin

The registration fee is Lit. 600.000 and does not include accommodation and food.

As with the first course, an agreement has been made with the Hotel Caperti offering a daily cost 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 November 20th, 1993 indicating the type of accommodation required and with a receipt of payment of the Lit. 150.000 deposit.

Payment may be effected by either postal order to the address of the Institute or by means of a bank draft to account no. 4122.96 at the Arcidosso branch of the Monte dei Paschi di Siena.

For all further information, please contact the secretary at the Shang-Shung Institute between the hours of 10.00 and 13.00, Monday to Saturday at 0564 966941 (tel.) or 0564 966846 (fax).

Corrections to Vajra Dance

by Prima Mai

In June, 1993, during Chögyal Namkhai Norbu's stay at Merigar, he worked on the final corrections to the book of the Vajra Dance. These corrections clarified various questions which had arisen during the editing of the book. Consequently, there are some changes in the movements and basic steps as they have been taught of all three dances: the Vajra Dance, the Six Loka Dance and the Three Vajra Dance.

The three dances have already been taught in many countries around the world in their 'old version'. However, since the dances should be practised in a precise way in order to have their total function and benefit, Chögyal Namkhai Norbu has asked me to describe the changes to the dances in a simple way, so that practitioners of the dances will be able to correct themselves. To this end, I have prepared a simple text in English explaining the corrected steps, the arm movements and *mudras* of the three dances, copies of which have been sent to the international Gakyils around the world.

The text is not intended as an explanation of the dances for those who have not already learned them and to understand the corrections and explanations one should already have knowledge of the dances. Neither is it the final text of the dances. Instead it is hoped that it will provide a means for those who already practise the dances to correct themselves in the steps and movements.

Those people who wish to have a copy of this text should contact their local Gakyil. The definitive text on the Vajra Dance by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu will be published by Shang-Shung Edizioni in the near future in Italian and is presently being translated into English.

French summer retreat '93

by P. Lakhdari, A. Tardy, A. Viguerie

Our year of practice came to an end in the heart of a natural, protected and privileged place: the pedagogic farm of Borde Grande.

The area is situated in a grandiose and rocky environment with wild landscapes and impressive windswept fortresses burnt by the sun.

We came from all parts of France to meet in the heart of the Cathare country, in 120 hectares of land situated in the Hautes Corbières mountain range between Carcassonne and Perpignan and to practise the immaculate and deeply secret teaching of the Dzogchen Longde.

Under the inspiration of Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche, Jean Marc Costantini taught us the methods which introduce one to knowledge, the four DA.

We benefitted not only from the teachings that Rinpoche had transmitted during the previous retreats, but also from the instruction that Jean Marc had received from Rinpoche himself.

During the eight day retreat, we worked on the DA of: Mi-rtog-pa "beyond thought", Gsal.ba "clarity", Dde-ba "sensation", Dbyer-med "the non-dual state" and deepened the practice of the ten points of the energy of the Dzogchen Longde according to instruction by Vairiocara and Shri Singha. We shared our open-air meals under a luminous sky in a warm atmosphere, dinners under a blanket of stars, breakfasts under apple trees with blood-red sunrises.

We practised chöd, the practice of Ekajati and we ended the retreat with a ganapuja. We drank water and biological wine, but most of all we laughed and shared a spiritual experience.

Translated from the French Community's newsletter, "Le Chant du Coucou" nr. 18, October 1993

New Gakyils

Poland

The Dzogchen Community in Poland has informed us that a new Gakyil was chosen during a retreat held in Poland last February.

The Gakyil is composed of:
Yellow - Luomila and Tadeusz Sdonciuk from Slups
Jacek Lazarski from Lolsicz
Red - Krystyna Kijania from Krakow
Marian Straczek from Katowice
Grzegorz Dondrzo from Lodz
Blue - Alexander Skwara from Lodz
Artur Skura from Nova Deba
Mateusz Wisniewski from Lodz.

Yugoslavia

The following people make up the new Gakyil in Beograd:
Veona Tomic - Director
Zoran Zargoric - Blue Gakyil
Jelena Zargoric - Red Gakyil
Milica Stojanovic - Yellow Gakyil

Merigar's Mandala



Dancing under the tent

(photo Lauri Marder)

by Stoffelina Verdonk

The Mandala at Merigar is turning, spiralling the Vajra dance, carrying the Dance practitioners. They move into the sound of the Song of the Vajra, the Six Lokas and the OM A HUM, learning together how to move into the knowledge of our primordial state, harmonising body, speech and mind.

Situated in the Capannone (the "barn"), the Mandala is sandwiched between the woodshop and the offices of Shang-Shung Edizioni and The Mirror. The library is directly above it.

This year, the Capannone, which has taken over the function of the Gonpa as a place of practice and study while the Gonpa is being beautifully decorated, has become a real meeting place for practitioners. Besides being the basis for the Dance of the Vajra, the Mandala has also become the physical base for sessions of Yantra Yoga and other collective practices.

The Santi Maha Sangha study group meets around the Mandala as well. In these ways it is easy to find a cause to do, learn or get in touch with the Vajra Dance.

This summer there have been several courses to learn the different dances, some lasted for a week while others were weekend courses.

We were very fortunate to have the portable Mandala from Milan here which was set up in a tent located next to the "Yellow house".

In this way there was an opportunity for two groups to dance at the same time, giving space to those who wanted to learn the steps of the Dance as well to those who already knew the basic steps of the Dance but wanted to deepen their knowledge of the arm movements and other details. The summer courses stimulated many people to dance so that the practice has become very alive.

Learning the arm movements involved a strong concentration on

the part of the dancers in order to coordinate them with the movement of the steps and some effort was required. After learning the precise arm movements well, it seemed that the dancers had an extra tool to be present with during the Dance. Also the synchronising of the arm movements of the dancers seems to make clear both the complete movement of the body and all the interweaving patterns of the Dance as well as the interaction between male and female parts on the Mandala.

It is clear that to learn the Dance it is not necessary to have experience in dance or movement; the coloured circles and lines of the Mandala give a simple and perfect map of where to move. The Dance has its bases in the transmission of the Teaching and that is what is so precious about it. It is a practice and the practice functions for us when we learn the Dance. So then we continue dancing.

At the present time, you can find people studying one of the dances alone, together or in spontaneous groups at different times of the day, before and after work, during the lunchbreak, and late in the evening. From the time that Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche explained the *tun* of the Dance, we do this practice almost every day at five o'clock.

There have always been a greater number of women ready to practise the Dance so it is good to finally find more and more men inspired to learn the Dance as well. So we look forward to having a more balanced number of men and women dancing.

Seeing people dance for several months, it is clear how they relax more and more into the Dance, into their state, filling the movements of the Dance with presence, making the continuity of the steps more flowing in an elegant way.

Meeting in the practice on the Mandala of the Vajra Dance is a strong means to understand that we practise together, moving in the same Mandala.

The togetherness in this Dance, the spiralling towards and around each other, of men and women, moving harmoniously together, facing each other, feel like collaboration itself: collaboration in the knowledge of the state, being all part of the knowledge of the teachings, making them alive even if, after the dedication, we leave the Mandala. The weather is changing and now the autumn is here. The Capannone is a little chilly and Merigar is covered in twilight when we start the *tun*.

The Mandala shines brightly with its colours and keeps on turning as if spreading light for the benefit of all sentient beings.

The Dance of the Vajra

by Adriana Dal Borgo

The Dance of the Vajra is a teaching transmitted by Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche a few years ago. The Teaching includes an explanation of the steps, movements and mudras of the Dance of the Vajra and their meanings and is contained in Rinpoche's book "The Precious Light" which is a commentary on the tantra "The Dance of Liberation of the Beings of the Six Lokas into the Six Pure Dimensions". The book, which was translated orally into Italian by Rinpoche, has been transcribed and will shortly be available to those who are interested.

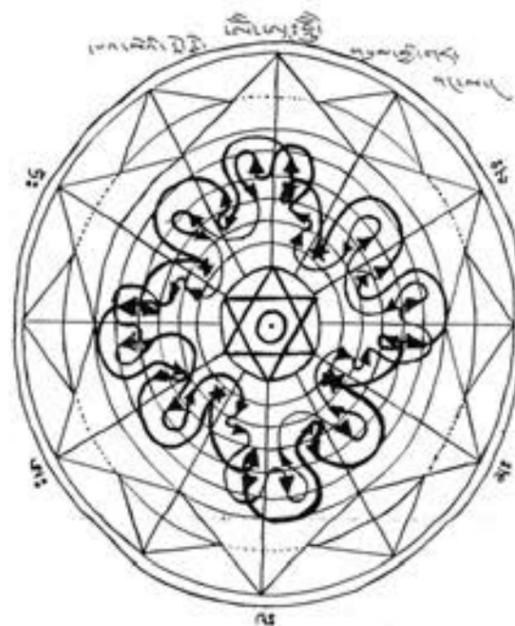
The Dance of the Vajra is above all a method to harmonise the energy of the individual. Practising the Song and the Dance of the Vajra (as it is explained in the tantra) we can integrate our three existences, body, voice and mind, in total contemplation: the voice integrates through song, the body through the movements of the dance, and mind in the state of contemplation.

There are three different dances: the Dance of the Vajra is done to the sound of the Song of the Vajra; the Dance of the Liberation of the Six Lokas to the melody of the six syllables 'A A HA SHA SA MA'; the Dance of the Three Vajras, repeating the melody of OM A HUM.

When one practises the Dance of the Vajra, either with the other dances or alone, one always begins and ends with the sound of the A and with its mudra. This means that all of one's vision is integrated into the state of rigpa and that, at the end, one continues in this integration.

The sound produced by each syllable of the Song of the Vajra corresponds to the principal centres of the body and so by singing, one harmonises one's vital energy and breathing.

Through the movements of the Dance, not only our physical body becomes harmonious but also "external" energy is drawn into harmonious relation with our pure dimension. This is because each step we take on the mandala corresponds to a sacred place, or point of energy, on the Earth.



There are three types of mandala: a small one which represents the Earth and which we are using in many places in the world. On this mandala there is space for twelve dancers, six pavo and six pamo (daka and dakini).

In the medium mandala, which represents our solar system, twenty-four people can dance. In the large mandala which represents the universe, there is space for thirty-six dancers plus musicians.

Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche has described the perfect correspondence between the precise points on the mandala we touched as we dance, 360 in all, and the sacred places on the Earth. According to the system of meridian co-ordinates, in the mandala the parallels correspond to the thigle (circles) and the meridians to the lines (which go from the centre to the outermost thigle) which divide the mandala into six dimensions. Each white triangle corresponds to one of the six dimensions. So, for example, the red fourth thigle where we always begin the Dance corresponds to the parallel where Merigar and Tsegylgar are situated. And it is at these very places that Rinpoche received and began to give this Teaching.

The mandala represents both the northern and southern hemispheres and the centre is respectively the north or the south poles. The external blue border, in both cases, corresponds to the equator. The northern hemisphere is governed by male energy, the southern by female energy.

Recently at Merigar we have been practising the Dance of the Vajra every afternoon and we have realised how different the experience can be when all of one's body is present in the movement, when there is no more concern about making wrong steps and finally the mind relaxes.

One afternoon Rinpoche spoke about the great respect we must feel for the Dance because it is a practice, not just an ordinary dance. To do the Dance of the Vajra, it is necessary, above all, to understand this, and to have received the transmission from the Master, or at least to be genuinely interested and to commit oneself to receiving transmission as soon as possible. Rinpoche also explained how we must respect the mandala itself and not walk on it as if it were a "carpet".

There is a precise way to do a complete *tun* of the Dance of the Vajra: the female dancers sit on the red triangles and the male on the white triangles, each one in the dimension from which the Dance will begin. After sounding A and singing the Song of the Vajra, the dancers get up and walk directly along the line until they reach the place where they start the Dance. When the Dance ends, the *tun* finishes with the final dedication and the dancers leave the mandala as they entered it, walking along the line.

Vajra Dance video

An exceptional documentary video film on the Vajra Dances is currently being produced which will provide a unique opportunity for all those who are interested in learning and practising the Vajra Dances.

In these two one hour videos, Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche explains clearly and fully the meaning of all the steps of the Dance of the Vajra which are demonstrated individually and in their entirety. The Dance of the Six Lokas and the Dance of the Three Vajras will also be demonstrated.

This project is very important for all practitioners of the Dzogchen Community and for this reason "The Mirror" would like to bring it to the attention of all those who are interested. Rapid completion of the project will depend on the support of us all.

For the first time, "The Mirror" is making an urgent appeal to all readers to give their maximum collaboration and send as soon as possible the preselling price of \$50 US for the two videos.

Calculated total costs for producing the video which include editing, rental of equipment and materials will be \$13,000 US. To facilitate funding for this project, the New York Dzogchen Community has already opened a fund account to which people can send their preselling fee or donations:

New York Dzogchen Community Fund Account,
No. 2115 4259 09, National Westminster Bank USA,
528 Broadway, New York, NY 10012.

Vajra Dance teachers Prima Mai, Adriana Dal Borgo and Stoffelina Verdonk are already trying to raise money through donations. The video will be distributed by Shang-Shung Edizioni and should be available at the end of 1994. Jennifer Fox is in charge of filming and editing will be done by Sylvia Morrison.

Working with bio-architecture at Merigar



Construction of the 'bois cordé' retreat house (photo Andreas Hannig)

For some time now, various experiments in wood construction following the principles of bio-architecture have been developing at Merigar. Four retreat cabins have been built on the land almost all respecting these principles. Laurent Soen from the Dzogchen community in France has spent the summer here working on two of the cabins. He shares his experiences with *The Mirror*.

The Mirror: You have been working for several months at Merigar on the construction of a yangtig house and another retreat cabin. When did you first consider the possibility of building houses for yangtig retreats and how did you develop the construction project?

Laurent Soen: The first time that I heard about yangtig retreat houses was during Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche's retreat in Marceval, France in May 1989. During this retreat Rinpoche spoke for the first time about the type of construction that was necessary for this kind of retreat. In particular he said that there were three important points to bear in mind: he felt that it was of prime importance to build the house well elevated above the ground so that the air can circulate freely under the cabin, that the construction should be built in wood and that each person who occupied the hut should have approximately 9 sq.m. of space.

On the basis of Rinpoche's suggestions and after this retreat I first considered the possibility of building this type of cabin.

(Editor's note: the first yangtig house which Laurent helped to build had an occupancy of 7 people and was situated in Plouray, France, inaugurated March 1991.)

The Mirror: What are some of the technical problems you have encountered in the construction of the different yangtig houses you have built and how have you resolved them?

Laurent: I have had more than 10 years experience in construction, particularly related to bio-architecture and this experience has helped me to resolve many of the technical difficulties which have arisen. For some specific problems I have had dreams which have clarified some of the technical

aspects of building the particular cabins.

The very first dream I had was about the shape of the cabin, which was octagonal. Through other dreams I developed a method of insulation for sound-proofing which is one of the most important and difficult aspects of construction. Then on other occasions I dreamt about a ventilation system which encouraged fresh air to enter the cabin floor from above the ground through a long underground pipe and took out stale air through a type of chimney. This was an important aspect of the cabin because while light should not enter, the air must circulate. The system that I developed creates a type of natural ventilation and avoids using noisy electrical equipment. When Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche saw it at Plouray, he said that a similar Bonpo system of ventilation already existed in Tibet.

The Mirror: You use the principles of bio-architecture not only in your own construction work in France, but also in the construction of the various types of retreat cabins you have built. How did you arrive at using this type of technique and in what way do you use the principles of bio-architecture?

Laurent: For many years I've worked reconstructing old stone houses in the country and during this time I've investigated and tried to use natural materials in the old traditional way of building. I've tried to restore these buildings in the way in which they were originally constructed. Certainly traditional building skills didn't make use of synthetic materials; bricks were sun-dried and plaster was made with limestone and sand. This experience helped me to develop a technique in wood construction that employs natural materials. For example I use natural treatments for wood and

other surfaces and build and insulate with wood and other natural products. It is better to avoid using synthetic products in any part of the construction, for example, artificial carpets, polystyrene insulation, etc. Especially in a retreat house, a non-bio construction can have a strong effect on a practitioner through static electricity, magnetic fields and harmful fumes. Particularly, if one intends to stay for a long period of time in retreat in the cabin, it is certainly much healthier to stay in one which has been built according to bio-architecture.

The Mirror: The first yangtig house in Plouray that you helped to build had rooms for seven people while the recently constructed retreat cabins at Merigar are for single occupancy only. Is there greater benefit with single or multiple occupancy?

Laurent: Through our experience with the multiple occupancy house at Plouray we found that with several people using it at the same time it was disturbing for them to feel the presence of others. There was a continual awareness of others' presence which was not helpful for this type of retreat because it created a sense of security. And though it is important for us practitioners to integrate, I feel the less integration that is required, the better it is. I feel that it is much better to have individual yangtig cabins although, of course, the cost is less for building a multiple house.

The Mirror: You are putting the finishing touches to a 'regular' individual retreat house at Merigar. Could you describe its construction?

Laurent: It is meant for one person and the form is similar to Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche's retreat cabin. It has electricity and running water, there is a bathroom and a kitchen with a small gas cooker and a sink. It is built on a platform approximately half a metre above the ground. We built it using a Canadian technique called 'bois cordé' which, while the material is very economical, is quite a lot of work to construct. We also chose this technique because it is biological and cannot burn.

The walls are basically constructed of short pieces of different diameter logs placed across the wall rather than along. We made a mixture using limestone, sand, sawdust and water to put the logs together and in the middle we put wood shavings for insulation, since they take humidity in the winter and give it during the summer. This type of construction also stops the wood expanding and retracting with changes in season. The roof is in wood with an insulation of straw, limestone and water which became very hard when it was pressed; this is topped by terra cotta tiles. The floor is also in wood with an insulation of sawdust and woodshavings, limestone and water.

The Mirror: What are your plans for the future?

MERIGAR CALENDAR

Sun 21 Nov	8/10	10.00	Karma Yoga
		16.00	Karma Yoga
		18.00	Practice of Avalokitesvara
Tue 23 Nov	10/10	18.30	Ganapuja with Long Life Practice of Guru Padmasambhava
Wed 24 Nov	11/10	18.30	Intensive Practice of Ekajati
Sat 27 Nov	14/10	10.00	Karma Yoga
		16.00	Santi Maha Sangha study group
Sun 28 Nov	15/10	10.00	Karma Yoga
			Santi Maha Sangha study group
		18.30	Long Life Practice of Mandarava
Sat 4th Dec	20/10	10.00	Dance of the Vajra, course begins
		15.00	Dance of the Vajra
		18.00	Practice of Tara
Sun 5th Dec	20/10	10.00	Dance of the Vajra
		15.00	Dance of the Vajra
		18.00	Practice of Tara
Wed 8 Dec	25/10	18.30	Practice of Tara
Sat 11 Dec	28/10	10.00	Karma Yoga
		16.00	Santi Maha Sangha study group
Sun 12 Dec	29/10	10.00	Santi Maha Sangha study group
		18.30	Naggon
Mon 13 Dec	30/10	18.30	Purification of the Six Lokas
Tues 21 Dec	08/11	18.30	Long Tun with Intensive Practice of Ekajati
Thu 23 Dec	10/11	18.30	Ganapuja
Sun 26 Dec	13/11	18.30	Long Life Practice of Amitayus
Mon 27 Dec	14/11	08.00	Tun with the Practice for the Nagas
		10.00	Santi Maha Sangha study group
		16.00	Practice Retreat Begins

Christmas Practice Retreat

from 27 December 1993 to 4 January 1994

The retreat will be based on a programme drawn up by Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche and will also include sessions of Yantra Yoga and Dance of the Vajra. Practitioners with experience of the Teaching will give explanations and lead the sessions of practice.

The participation quota to cover costs is Lit. 160.000 for the entire retreat. Members will be entitled to the usual discount.

Tues 28 Dec	15/11	10.00	Santi Maha Sangha study group
Tues 4 Jan	22/11	10.00	End of Practice Retreat. Ganapuja
		16.00	Santi Maha Sangha study group
Wed 5 Jan	23/11	10.00	Santi Maha Sangha study group

Vajra Dance teachers

Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche has recently authorised Adriana Dal Borgo and Stoffelina Verdonk to hold courses of the Dance of the Vajra in both European and Eastern European countries.

If any Dzog-chen groups in these areas are interested in organising courses, they should get in touch with these teachers through their Gakyil and the Blue Gakyil at Merigar.

Laurent: I shall shortly be returning to France where I must continue my work commitments. This has really been my "holiday" here at Merigar. (Ed. note: In fact a holiday of very hard work!)

Then I hope to return to Merigar in the spring to begin construction of a prototype individual retreat cabin. I am currently working on the design and the entire project with Andreas Hannig. It involves the preparation of a kind of kit designed on the principles of bio-architecture (probably the first of its kind) that can be easily assembled and commercialised in the future. The cabin at Merigar will be the first of

its type and it will be constructed in the workshop and assembled on site in a short time. We hope to be able to launch this building enterprise here in Europe and provide cabins for retreat or other purposes. The project is still in its early beginnings but we shall soon present the full plan.

The Mirror: Thank you, Laurent, for the interview and for all your weeks of hard work at Merigar.

For a cabin for retreat or holiday, Laurent can be contacted at this address: Laurent Soen, c/o A. Viguier, 2 rue Cazotte, 75018 Paris, France. Tel. (1) 42594945.

Note from the Merigar Gakyil: the yangtig house was financed by the contributions of many practitioners. This special fund is managed by Enzo Terzano. The 'regular' retreat house was financed mainly by a practitioner of the German Community. The Merigar Gakyil would like to thank all those who contributed to the project, especially Laurent Soen and Paolo Pagni (Red Gakyil) coordinator.

A.S.I.A.: FULFILLING THE DA

continued from page 1

The latter, Director of the University of Traditional Medicine, showed great interest in the proposed projects and declare himself ready to select and send traditional doctors to Italy. He also set up the general outline of a possible curriculum and gave the team text books currently used at the University. This agreement, like the previous one, has been sent for approval to Beijing, since Dr. Khempo Zenam does not have the authority for final approval of such a document.

New Lhasa Library Project

A third Convention was set up, with enthusiastic approval of local authorities, in the context of the New Lhasa Library Project. This large and interesting project, partly financed by T.D.F. (Tibetan Development Fund: the sole existing

could become an important vehicle for preservation of the threatened Tibetan culture.

Ralung Monastery

During the time spent in Lhasa there was some concrete action in regard to specific development and co-operation projects. Specifically, precise instructions were given by Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche to start the first phase of the reconstruction of Ralung Monastery. Ralung Monastery is an ancient and important monastery directly linked with Rinpoche's personal

history, since it is there that the Dharmarajas of Bhutan originate. Financial coverage was given to support the expenses of this first phase of infrastructural rehabilitation, as well as yearly scholarships for several monks. Later on, financial support will be necessary for completion of

route goes through Kham - the traditional Tibetan name for the eastern districts - and Szechuan. These are areas in which the majesty of nature is among the most imposing in the world. Impressive mountain ranges are crossed by the largest Asian rivers such as the Mekong and the Yangtze, while forests and endless grasslands create spectacular contrasts in landscape. However, it is almost painful to notice the massive deforestation of the last decades: according to official Chinese reports, in about 25 years more than 54 billion dollars US worth of trees were felled in Tibet.

Despite disappointment at such irresponsible abuse of forest resources, the drive on the Szechuan-Tibet Highway was a rough, exciting, dangerous and, above all, incredibly beautiful experience.

Collaboration in Kham

After passing through the areas of Nagchu, Sog Xian, Dengqen and Riwoche, the team finally arrived in Chamdo, capital of Kham, where the administration of the Prefecture is located. As in Lhasa, in Chamdo we had an intense schedule of official visits and meetings. These were very productive, in large part thanks to the favourable attitude of the Prefect, an open-minded Chinese, eager to contribute to the development of "his" Prefecture. The most important meeting was with the Departments of Education and Health, whose directors accompanied us during the inspections undertaken in the following days of potential locations for A.S.I.A. projects in Kham. Their willingness and participation was also shown by the already completed selection of staff to be posted to the health/medical projects; in addition they also committed themselves to



Tsherintar (4th from left), Giovanni Boni and Andrea Dell'Angelo among the Tibetans

complete the technical work that could not be finished during our mission.

Khamdo Gar

After Chamdo, we set off for Khamdo Gar, the former residence of Rigzin Chang Chub Dorje, root master of Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche. In Khamdo Gar, we were welcomed by the inhabitants of the village and by the authorities of Gonjo, the local administrative unit which includes the Gar. Khamdo Gar was originally to be the location of the Italian government-financed project, but after further consideration, the site had been moved to another village,

Jarkando, at about one day's drive from the Gar and very close to the Szechuan border. Basically it was decided that the realisation of a massive project in that remote area would not only be difficult to justify from a practical point of view, but moreover, would endanger the special nature of the place. Instead, A.S.I.A. decided to implement "The Khamdo Gar Village Hospital Project", an initiative in the health sector scaled to the actual requirements of the area. The location has been chosen and the amount of \$20,000 US to start building construction has already been delivered. A committee composed of local residents who will be responsible for the execution and monitoring of the construction, has been set up.

The time spent in Khamdo Gar gave us the opportunity to visit several of the places often mentioned in Rinpoche's teachings, and to meet several practitioners who are, directly or indirectly, connected to Rigzin Chang Chub Dorje. In particular we met the grandson of the great Master, Lama Garwan who is the son of Chang Chub Dorje's daughter. His younger sister, who went into retreat at the age of 16, is continuing her practice today, after 12 years, without - according to her own words - "any specific plan to stop". We left a personal donation of 10,000 Chinese yuen for the construction of a retreat house for her.

Above all Khamdo Gar seems to have remained almost exactly as often described by Rinpoche. Due to its isolated position, it has been only marginally affected by the Cultural Revolution. However, it should be noted that damage was limited, above all by the amazing cohesion among the village people



The site for the Khamdo Gar hospital project

non-governmental organisation in Tibet), has now completed the building and the infrastructural part. The cultural activity will soon start, with the aim of amassing as many Tibetan texts as possible and placing them in the library. The project also foresees the exchange of scholarships and the possibility for western scholars to stay for periods - up to one year - in Tibet. An agreement between the library and the Shang Shung Institute has been prepared. It is important to note that great support to this agreement was also given by the T.D.F., the official A.S.I.A. counterpart in the project, for which financial support has been requested from the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The T.D.F. is directly involved in funding this important project and was, thus, very keen to have other groups involved in its activities. In fact, the Technical Director of T.D.F., Mr. Wangchuk Namgyal, nephew of Rakra Rinpoche, accompanied the mission throughout the journey.

The final response on these three conventions is now expected from Beijing, and their approval would represent not only a significant recognition of the validity of Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche's approach to Tibetan problems, but

restructuring and for the restoration of wall paintings.

Nalendra Monastery Project

The reconstruction of Nalendra Monastery is similar to the project at Ralung Monastery and it, too, is directly sponsored by Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche and A.S.I.A. Nalendra is a famous Sakyapa monastery in central Tibet, currently guided by Khempo Tsultrim Gyalsen, who is one of the masters at the Medical Centre in Lhasa as well as one of the most knowledgeable experts in astrology. Khempo Tsultrim Gyalsen is also one of the masters of Dr. Phuntsok Wangmo. Rinpoche has decided to send some of the Galenteng Monks to continue their studies under his guidance.

Journey to Chengdu

After the period in Lhasa, the team started a long and adventurous trip with two 4-wheel drive jeeps heading eastwards through the Tibetan Autonomous Region and Szechuan to end up in Chengdu. The small convoy followed the "northern" Szechuan-Tibet Highway, since the "southern" one had been interrupted by heavy rains and the subsequent landslides. The

贡觉县相皮乡人民政府用笺

Handwritten text in Tibetan script, likely a receipt or official document, dated 1993.6.15.

"An A.S.I.A. Association Committee, composed of President Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche, Secretary General Andrea Dell'Angelo and other assistants, came to Khamdo Gar and delivered the sum of twenty thousand US dollars for the construction of the local village hospital. Consequently, both the monastery and the village people will commit themselves to work for the realisation of the planned project."

The village and monastery of Khamdo Gar

DANGCHE CHILDREN'S DREAM



people of Dangche

who, without exception, maintained a common aware behaviour in dealing with Chinese authorities. For this reason it is possible today to have access to the almost complete collection of Chang Chub Dorje's texts and terma, as well as statues, thangkhas, chorten and various other sacred objects.

Jarkando School and Hospital

After leaving Khamdo Gar we continued our journey eastwards and finally arrived in Jarkando, the site of the largest among the planned A.S.I.A. projects - "The Primary Boarding School and Tibetan-Western Hospital of Jarkando (ex-Dzong Thag)". This project is awaiting final approval from the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and A.S.I.A. is continuing its efforts to cope with the "endless" requests for further clarifications and additional technical details made by that body in order to grant funding. The project location, selected for its strategic position, will allow it to serve inhabitants of the adjacent Szechuan province as well as nomadic families scattered over an area of several hundred square kilometres. Jarkando lies on the floor of a relatively broad valley where flat land suitable for construction of the two structures has already been provided by the local administration. A technical survey of the areas has been done, and the maps are now awaited in Rome, in order to finalise the technical drawings of the buildings.

Situation in Galenteng

Once we had crossed the Dza-qu river and entered Szechuan, a great change was felt in official relations with local authorities who, as

expected, were less open than those of the Tibetan Autonomous Region.

Galenteng, which we reached after an exciting trip on horseback, was the residence of Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche's uncle, Chökyi Wangchug, the famous *tertön*, incarnation of Jamyang Kyentse Wangpo, and one of the principal masters of Rinpoche. It is a typical nomadic area where no education and health facilities are available.

Phuntsok Wangmo spent four years in Galenteng as a medical doctor before her recent visit to Italy; she said that while there, she examined up to 150 patients per day, providing without charge, not only medical assistance but often clothes and food as well. The people of that area are extremely poor and no schools, hospitals or even clinics are available. In fact the village itself requires technical assistance, specifically for reconstruction of severely damaged houses, for building a road and a proper bridge across the river, and for restoration of the ancient temple containing unique wall paintings of Mahakala (1200-1300 AD.). For the most urgent needs, a contribution of

settlements of the valley, since the rest of it is inhabited by Chinese. Tibetan children can currently attend only the Chinese schools located in Chinese populated villages: in these schools all subjects are taught in the Han language. Since most Tibetan children do not understand the Han language, or encounter major difficulties in learning it, less than half of them regularly attend these schools. In these circumstances it is understandable how, for several years, the Tibetans of Dangche have cultivated a strong desire to build a Tibetan primary school. A few years ago, the local government decided to contribute to the realisation of that desire by giving a plot of land suitable for construction. However, due to lack of resources and the poverty of the people, the construction of the school has not yet started. At the moment the county director is a Tibetan belonging to Tsherintar's natal area, who tries his best to help the Tibetan population. The technical staff under his direction proved to be very co-operative and active: they prepared the architectural executive plan for the school building.

"We thank Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche and all of you for what you are trying to do for Tibetan culture and for all of us, but now that you are going back to Italy, we fear that if fund raising for our project takes too long, the present favourable circumstances will disappear and, along with them, the possibility of seeing our project realised..."

The people of Dangche.

\$5,000 US was offered by Rinpoche and A.S.I.A.

Dangche School Project

After Galenteng, we travelled towards Chengdu, passing the towns of Manikango, Garze and Tazendo in three days of non-stop driving in order to arrive on schedule. At Chengdu, the team divided: Rinpoche flew to Japan, I (Andrea Sertoli) started back to Italy, while Tsherintar, Giovanni Boni and Andrea Dell'Angelo continued the mission, travelling from Chengdu to the town of Xining in Amdo. The trip took more than 46 hours on a most uncomfortable train, turning what was expected to be relaxing journey into a tough and rough experience. The final destination of the team was Guide County, where both family members of Tsherintar and local authorities warmly welcomed us.

Tsherintar's village is situated in a large valley of about 60 km² named Dangche, where eight different villages are situated. The area has a population of 6200 people coming from 1260 families of nomads and farmers. These villages represent the sole Tibetan populated

Agreement with Qinghai

Besides the progress in the definition of the Dangche Primary School Project, another important result was achieved with the signing of the "Co-operation Agreement between the Government of Guide in Qinghai Province and the Italian Non-Governmental Organisation A.S.I.A." (Association for International Solidarity in Asia). This document is not only an excellent result in itself, and recognition of what A.S.I.A. is undertaking in Tibet, it is also the first document of its kind that officially introduces the concept that "the aim of the project is to help the populations of Tibetan origin to develop and maintain traditional Tibetan culture, Tibetan language and Tibetan tradition...". The document also points out the necessity for "the recovery by new Tibetan generations of the cultural linguistic heritage" and proposes as a specific target "... to enhance the degree of literacy in Tibetan school children of the fifth and sixth grade...". We believe that this agreement will be very worthwhile in the future and will help projects to be initiated in other regions of Tibet.

Before leaving Dangche, we had a meeting with the authorities and people of the eight villages. Their farewell to us was sincere, touching and full of hope: "We thank Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche and all of you for



Valley and village of Galenteng

what you are trying to do for Tibetan culture and for all of us, but now that you are going back to Italy, we fear that if fund raising for our project takes too long, the present favourable circumstances will disappear and, along with them, the possibility of seeing our project realised..."

Funding for Dangche

We left Dangche with a very strong commitment to do our best to make the Dangche children's dream come true and to give them the possibility of growing up, learning their own language and culture.

The estimated cost of this project is \$130,000 US, which we intend to raise through private donations, contributions and sponsorship. We have decided to avoid a request for public financing through the Italian Government, because the required amount is too low and the bureaucratic procedures far too long anyway. According our schedule we plan to obtain the necessary funds by summer 1994. In the next issue of "The Mirror", A.S.I.A. will present some specific initiatives to raise funds for the Dangche Primary School Project.

With regard to fund-raising, we take this opportunity to express our sincere gratitude to Maria Grazia Florido and Giuseppe Palermo who decided, on occasion of their marriage, to request relatives and friends to give contributions to A.S.I.A. activities as wedding presents. The generosity of their offer has been already greatly appreciated by A.S.I.A., and our thought is that more significant gratitude will soon come directly from the Tibetan children of Dangche.

Preserving Tibetan Architecture

It may be of interest that for all the above mentioned projects involving construction, sharp negotiations were required to guarantee the use of traditional Tibetan style. Especially in large

towns, the preservation of traditional Tibetan architecture is threatened by the influence of the current dreary Chinese style; thus it is increasingly difficult to find Tibetan architects and workers experienced in the

construction of traditional Tibetan buildings. The preservation of Tibetan style and the utilisation of traditional Tibetan materials has been considered vital by A.S.I.A. and of great priority in defining project agreements with the authorities.

A few final words to point out that the mission and its concrete results have been made possible thanks to effort and commitment by all the members of the team and, above all, as usual, by the total dedication of Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche.

The work begun involves great responsibility for A.S.I.A., and most of all for Rinpoche himself. He contributed in all possible ways to the mission, and to achieve maximum outcomes with the financial and human resources which have been put into action. He is personally identified with the success of this imperative humanitarian endeavour.

It is clear that the effort made so far must not only continue but multiply, in order to successfully complete and develop what has been started. It is useful to remember that these projects are greatly needed in areas where educational facilities and medical assistance are virtually non-existent or too distant. Thus, we believe that the hope aroused among Tibetans for the realisation of the projects should not be deceived nor frustrated.

Financial support to A.S.I.A. is warmly welcomed. Donations can be sent to the A.S.I.A. Bank Account Number (Monte dei Paschi di Siena - Acc. no. 3893.50 - Arcidosso (GR) - Italy) by anyone wishing to participate in the progress of A.S.I.A. activities in Tibet.

Pure vision and the painter's eye

Talking to Chögyal Rinpoche, Master and artist

Dugu Chögyal Rinpoche is the VIII incarnation of Drukpa Chögyal Gyamtsho, a principal disciple of Khamtrul Rinpoche, an eminent master of the Drukpa Kagyu lineage.

Born in 1946, from early childhood he received education in the traditional manner. He trained in meditation and scriptures under great teachers of all traditions, particularly Nyingma and Drukpa Kagyu. Chögyal Rinpoche comes from a revered lineage of tulkus who have combined meditation practice with artistic expression.

He left Tibet in 1959 for India where he resettled under the guidance of his great master Khamtrul Rinpoche in Tashi Jong, northern India. At present he is the President of the Community, especially noted for its exquisite handicrafts and arts.

He has travelled several times to Europe, USA, South America, Malaysia, Singapore, etc., where he has given spiritual teaching, as well as lecturing on Tibetan culture and art, and exhibiting his paintings.

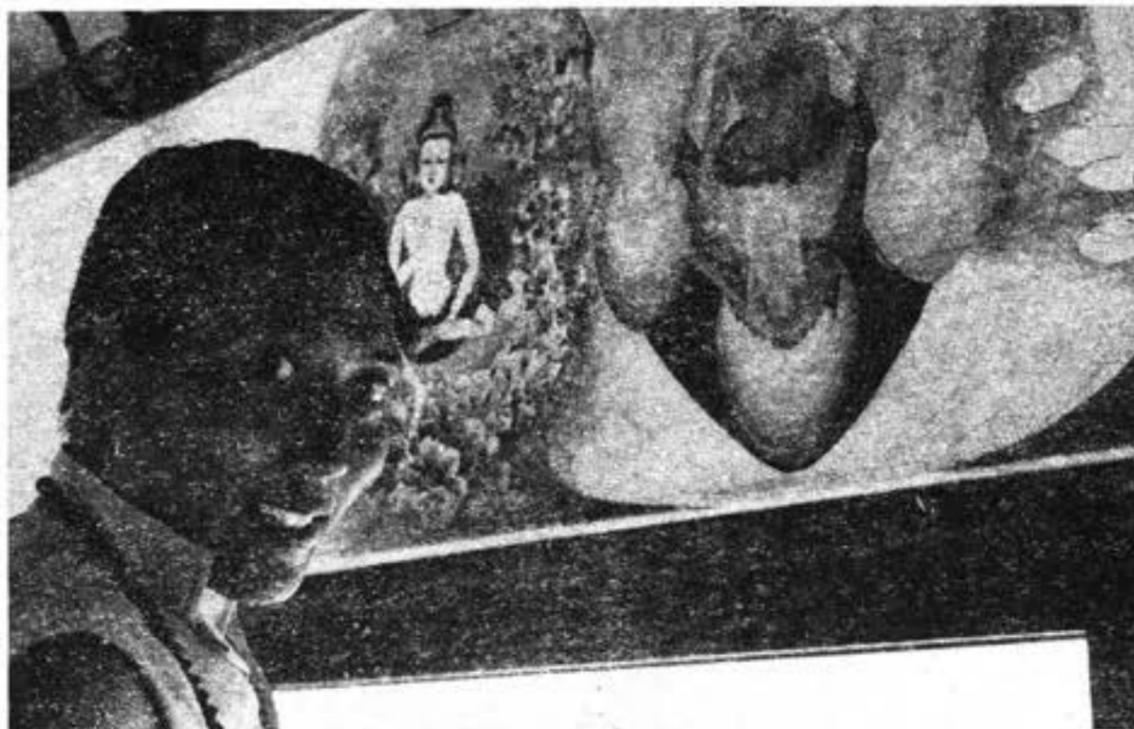
In his two visits to Tibet, in 1984 and 1987, he started several projects whose aim is to preserve Tibetan spiritual and cultural traditions. These include the reconstruction of the Dugu Monastery and the creation of educational and economic opportunities for his people, based on Tibetan language and traditional crafts. He is realising his projects in Dugu, Tibet and also in Senge Jingri, Nepal with funds raised in part from the sale of his paintings. In Nepal he is building a retreat place for yogis and yoginis from Tibet with the expectation that when they return to Tibet, they will share their knowledge with the lay people there. Anyone interested in contacting Chögyal Rinpoche can write to him at Tashi Jong, P.O. Taragarh, Dist. of Kangra, H.P. 176081 India.

Chögyal Rinpoche has been invited to Merigar by Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche to paint the figures of the lineage masters inside the Gonpa. He started this work during a visit to Merigar in June of this year and continued during his stay in September. He gave teachings at Merigar in autumn, 1986.

The Mirror: Rinpoche, when did you start to paint?

Chögyal Rinpoche: In Tibet when I was very small. I lived in my monastery where many precious *thankas* were to be found in every room, and where there was a magnificent collection in the library, so I had much opportunity to look at and study them. I was fascinated by all the different periods and generations of *thankas*. Whenever I had free time I always wanted to paint and draw.

The same was true when I came to India where I painted many scenes of Tibet because I was homesick. Then later I learned from Khamtrul Rinpoche, the late eighth Khamtrul,



Chögyal Rinpoche painting the lineage of masters in the Merigar Gonpa

(photo Wilvin Pedersen)

one of Tibet's greatest artists of this period. With him I had the opportunity to study, learn and observe *thanka* painting for 18 or 19 years.

The Mirror: Your style of painting is considered to be "free". Is it based on any particular tradition of painting?

Chögyal Rinpoche: My painting is a mixture of styles since I have painted differently at different periods. Most of these periods have been influenced by old *thankas* from the 9th, 10th and 11th centuries. My paintings also have a close connection with Indian and Nepalese art which has influenced me very much. I like as well the Chinese and Zen styles of painting and western art. Then from time to time I just paint the way I like. I express what I feel. Through that my style has spontaneously become a mixture which is my own.

My style is always changing, at least every year, sometimes every month. At the moment I have a collection of two hundred of my paintings for keeping in an archive in Tibet. When I look at them I realise how much my style has changed; at present I paint in one way, next year I am sure it will be different.

The Mirror: I wanted to ask a question about the images of emanations that you are painting in the Gonpa at Merigar. Since some are figures from the very distant past, how can you depict their forms?

Chögyal Rinpoche: Most of the forms (which I am painting in the Gonpa) are based on tradition and the old style of traditional *thanka* painting. The figure of Samantabhadra, for example, is a form which already exists in traditional *thanka* painting. Other masters after Samantabhadra were also portrayed in traditional

paintings. Their forms are not invented or created by me. They already exist in the texts and drawings, and prints (of them) are available.

In his book (about the decoration of the Gonpa) Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche described the forms to be painted and where they should be located. When I paint a figure I refer

own vision. I think that is very important. When I am painting other things like landscapes, that is another matter. In that case I can be free in my style. That is totally different.

The Mirror: These days, it is becoming almost fashionable for people to put *thankas* in their homes as works of art or for decoration



A lineage master from Merigar's Gonpa

(photo Mario Maglietti)

to his instructions and I express what I feel but I do not add my individual ideas. I always follow the brush technique, the colours and the style of traditional *thankas*. Basically all forms are expressed accurately according to teaching and the texts. It is better not to change anything or else the old wisdom will completely disappear. Preserving ancient wisdom is based on understanding and feeling and expression applied according to the explanation of the teaching and the story of the lineage. All of these forms come from the teachings and there is nothing of my

even though they have no interest in Dharma. What do you think about this?

Chögyal Rinpoche: For the Tibetan Buddhist way of thinking, a *thanka* is an object of respect and veneration. That is its significance. I cannot say much about the significance of a *thanka* for people who are interested in Tibetan Buddhist art and antiques only as objects except that their appreciation is limited to the aesthetic aspect. Of course Tibetans know little about the ways of other countries such as art dealing, etc., a life-style which now we begin to see

in Tibet. Before this type of commercial concept did not exist in Tibet. On the other hand that the *thankas* escaped destruction and that some people appreciate them is very good. Also from a Buddhist point of view any connection with the Dharma is good though people who put a *thanka* in the bathroom or as a table covering show ignorance, basically abusing another culture with their lack of respect.

The Mirror: Could you tell us a little about the history of Tashi Jong?

Chögyal Rinpoche: Tashi Jong was started by the late VIII Khamtrul Rinpoche who came from Kham in eastern Tibet near Chamdo. He was the head of all the Drugpa Kagyupa centres and monasteries in eastern Tibet. He came to India in 1958 with Dorzong Rinpoche who is the second most important Drugpa Kagyupa figure in eastern Tibet and together with them came about 10 or 11 great realised yogis, lamas and *tokden* (masters) and some monks and lay-people. They wandered in India for quite a long time and finally they bought land near Dharamsala, the residence of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. They gave the title of Tashi Jong to this land.

First they built the lay people's houses which was in 1969. At first there was no road, no water, no electricity, nothing. Everything was built by the monks, the yogis and the lay people, all working together. It was really a wonderful experience. There was a balance of harmony and spirituality plus dedication, hard work and peace of mind. There was such a quality of contentment.

Then Khamtrul Rinpoche started the monastery and then the centre which are now quite well-established and self sufficient. Many artists and craftsmen live there. Every year and every month many traditions of practice in Kagyu and Nyingma style are maintained. The monastery is known as belonging to the Drugpa Kagyupa tradition but it is also very much Nyingmapa. After Khamtrul Rinpoche passed away in 1980, Dorzong Rinpoche, for whom everybody at Tashi Jong has great trust and respect, very kindly helped to direct and look after the community. In the last few years, Dorzong Rinpoche has been busy rebuilding his monastery in Tibet so I have been elected the head of the community.

The Mirror: Thank you so much, Rinpoche, for your time and for all your work here at Merigar.

Chögyal Rinpoche: Thank you. I have been very happy to come to Merigar. Although my visits have been short, the more and more I come here, the closer I feel to Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche and everyone. Soon, it will be like another home, like another Tashi Jong!

Sept. 13th, 1993, Merigar

Shakya Shri's instructions on Dzogchen

Dugu Chögyal Rinpoche

In September 1986 at the invitation of Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche, two masters, Dorzong Rinpoche and Chögyal Rinpoche gave a week of teachings at Merigar. The following teaching of Chögyal Rinpoche is the first of six teachings that he gave in that period. The transcription of the teaching is preceded by a brief introduction by Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche.

Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche: I want to say a few words to begin. As I already said yesterday, we now have here two guest masters, Dorzong Rinpoche and Chögyal Rinpoche. Both of them live at present in India, in Tashi Jong, but in Tibet they did not live in the same monastery. Chögyal Rinpoche had his own monastery in one place and Dorzong Rinpoche had his elsewhere. They would meet at times in Khamtrul Rinpoche's renowned monastery.

The first Chögyal Rinpoche was a great master, very famous in Tibet, and a great *tertön*. There exist many teachings of the lineage of the Chögyal Rinpoche incarnations and he was also the principal figure of his monastery.

At this monastery there lived another great master who was a disciple of one of the previous Chögyal Rinpoches called Trulku Togden Shakya Shri, one of the most renowned Drukpa Kagyu masters. He had many disciples and was a great master of the Dzogchen teaching. He, himself was also a *tertön* and many *gongter* of his enriched the Dzogchen teaching. Therefore Chögyal Rinpoche has many transmissions of the teachings of Trulku Togden Shakya Shri. So now I have asked him to please give a teaching on Shakya Shri's instructions on Dzogchen.

(Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche invites Chögyal Rinpoche to sit down but Chögyal Rinpoche will not sit until Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche leaves the room.)

Chögyal Rinpoche: I asked Rinpoche not to stay here because I really do not want to give teaching in his presence. And I want to tell everybody that there are many lamas and that amongst them I am the most unlearned, unpractised and unrealised. I have come here to visit Rinpoche's centre because we have great feeling and respect for him.

I am going to read a *lung* which comes directly from Togden Shakya Shri and this is my mandala offering to the Dzogchen community. I do not feel that I am giving teachings but rather that I am here as a member of the community, and we are sharing this *lung* that I shall transmit.

First of all I will speak a little about Shakya Shri. He was one of the great teachers born around the

end of the last century. He realised both Mahamudra and Dzogchen. He first entered Dugu monastery (N.B. Chögyal Rinpoche's monastery in eastern Tibet) during the time of the VIIIth Chögyal Rinpoche. He stayed there for a while but subsequently, still very young, feeling that this was not really his life, he went into retreat doing much meditation in caves. He later received many teachings from Terpa Nima, the VIth Khamtrul Rinpoche, who was a great Drugpa Kargyupa *tertön*. Then later he married and travelled to different parts of Tibet, receiving teachings from Khyentse Rinpoche, Kongtrul Rinpoche and Chöling Rinpoche. He also had many other great teachers.

While he was staying in retreat in caves, he saw and received many direct teachings from Padmasambhava, Shri Singha, Vimalamitra, Milarepa and Lingshen Repa.

How did this teaching come to me? I received these teachings from Shakya Shri's disciples, Khenpo Tsoga, and Togden Cholen, who had received them directly from him. I received teachings on this particular text from Togden Cholen, who was a disciple of Shakya Shri, Adzam Drugpa, the VIth Khamtrul Rinpoche and Togden Mingdrol.

The text starts with an invocation to the *tsawai lama* (root lama). First he praised Terpa Nima because the first, most important thing that appears to him is his *tsawai lama*. He feels deeply about Terpa Nima, thinking about his kindness and that his kindness is not just an external thing, and since Terpa Nima made

"Once we are committed ... to opening ourselves to a teacher as a guide for practice, our minds must have this quality, this devotion, totally, so the result, the fruit, can be gained in this lifetime."

him realise that compassion perfectly, it is something he cannot describe in ordinary words. This is why his second phrase is, "How impossible it is to express my gratitude to you", reflecting that Shakya Shri became fully realised through his *tsawai lama*, and that what he received he cannot describe or pay back.

Then the text says, "Through your kindness, I have realised the nature of the mind, clear, void and ungrasping". Generally in tantrism and both in Mahamudra and Dzogchen, realisation depends very much on devotion. This emotion is



Chögyal Rinpoche's painting of Mandarava

described not as an emotional expression, but as a transcendental understanding which is a very clear certainty. The sutras and many other teachings say that one must first test the teacher and see if he has the qualities of a teacher. In tantrism this also applies though it sometimes happens that, as when Marpa's name was first heard by Milarepa, one immediately realises something within oneself. Also when Lingshen Repa first heard Pagmo Drubpa's name, he immediately and spontaneously invoked his innate wisdom.

This instantaneous maturation comes about, and it is not just blind faith or only an emotional feeling or just an external thing, but a hidden cause arising from past connections exactly at the moment when the mind is completely ready and prepared for the flowering of this connection. The contact with the master and the transmission, and this kind of devotion is a foundation for all realisations and whether the realisation will come in this lifetime, very much depends on this devotion. Without this foundation, the mind has not reached a completely honest level. "Without being at this honest level" means with doubt, and half-invoking the guru with an ordinary mind.

The realisation of this wonderful,

valuable lineage will be difficult to come and touch the very depths of mind, because this kind of teaching works with the very depths of the mind, the very nature and essence of mind.

All of us have been fortunate to enter this teaching, which works on the very base of everything, the nature of the mind. It is very fortunate to have found such a great teacher as Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche.

I must tell all my Dharma friends that the first important thing is that once we are committed - before that, of course, one has to doubt and study - to opening ourselves to a teacher as a guide for practice, our minds must have this quality, this devotion, totally, so the result, the fruit, can be gained in this lifetime.

This depends very much on our awareness and on what we perceive, not on the hidden side because we cannot see the Sambhogakaya, we cannot see Buddha Sakyamuni and the Nirmanakaya, but now the teacher is like the reality and embodiment and representative of all the kayas, and through this unbroken lineage comes certain realisation.

First of all we must have openness, devotion and high qualities and from Shakya Shri's words we can see how much feeling he has, describing first of all the kindness of his *tsawai lama*.

We must feel in the same way so that we also become like Padmasambhava; Padmasambhava was in the beginning, then Shakya

Shri and now Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche.

In circumstances of time some are earlier, some later, but on the level of quality it is the same for us. In the way that the teachers of the past lineage thought and behaved, we should also think and behave so that through that we can progress. Otherwise, if we want to be like the teachers, but think and behave differently, thinking that we are not at their level, or that we cannot become like them, condemning ourselves and not having enough confidence, then this becomes a hindrance to the speed of realisation. From the way they speak, we can learn how they think and feel. This is why I am first describing the way Togden Shakya Shri feels about Terpa Nima.

There are many different ways of dealing with the Dharma, for example as a philosopher, in the Hinayana way or the Mahayana way, or the Tantric way. The mind has different ways of opening. Once we are dealing with the Dharma as one who is committed to be an Ati Yoga or Mahamudra practitioner we must act in the way appropriate to our choice, which means we should have pure concepts about the teacher, pure concepts about ourselves and the right way of understanding many teachings. When I say many teachings I do not mean many complicated things, but condensing everything into its very simple and very essential meaning, so that we can practise in the most simple and essential way. I do not mean that I am like that, but this is what I have heard.

So Sakya Shri says, "Through your kindness I have realised the real nature of mind". He tells us that he did not understand the real nature of mind through study or his own mental elaborations but through a transmission of understanding from his *tsawai lama*. Of course this does not mean that Sakya Shri put Terpa Nima's realisation into his mind, like an object coming from outside being placed inside. Rather, the *tsawai lama* has enabled him to recognise the qualities within himself. As for instance when one is ready, having been prepared within oneself, then at the right moment the teacher will point and say, "That is the real thing" (like Tilopa awakening Naropa at the right instant).

A teacher who has real experience can tell the disciple when it is the correct moment. Otherwise many misunderstandings can result from someone trying to teach who has not really understood, as for example a blind man cannot explain a colour to another blind man.

When the disciple recognises the nature of his mind, the realisation he gets is due to his *tsawai lama*, his teacher.

continued on page 15

Continuing the Dzogchen teaching

The importance of permanent bases for the Community around the world

by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu
An article for *The Mirror* taped in Austria in June, 1993.

Why are Dzogchen Communities in different places and countries buying land and houses? It is not because those Dzogchen Communities have infinite amounts of money they would otherwise not know how to spend. Rather it is a manifestation of knowledge of the principles of the teachings and development of an understanding that the teaching is important and must be maintained, developed and continued on this earth. In this way the Community also shows an interest in the continuation of the teaching for future generations. This is not just my personal interest but one common to all those involved in the Dzogchen path. If one is sincerely interested in the teaching, one cannot close oneself in a corner somewhere, but through the teaching, one must integrate with society and with the condition one finds oneself in. This also means finding a solution, a way to continue and to collaborate.

I myself have been doing this for years. I go to different places when I am asked to come and teach and I try to collaborate. I certainly don't do this because I like being a tourist. The principle is that meeting people, I find a way to put into practice what I transmit.

On the same basis we also need a place where practitioners can meet and carry out their activities. Sometimes it is all right for people to be like nomads; today we meet here, tomorrow there. Living like this people don't need to plan because they have no commitment towards paying for and maintaining

a community building. It may seem much easier of course, but actually this means taking no responsibility whatsoever because if all goes well today there is no need to think about tomorrow, when, they hope, they will be able to meet somehow. This is how it goes.

But if we are a group of people who have recognised that collective needs exist, then we need an address. Nowadays, we practise Yantra Yoga and the Vajra Dance. It is not enough to learn Yantra or the Vajra Dance once a year; the practice must be applied continually in order to integrate movement into one's state of contemplation. A practice you can dedicate yourself to minimally amongst all our tensions, distractions and samsaric doings, is something important. For these reasons wherever possible we need to have land and buildings.

When we have land and buildings we can also organise places for personal retreat so when people have some time they can go there and dedicate themselves to practice.

"We are not buying land to grow potatoes. We are buying land to make rainbow bodies possible."

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, Tsegylgar summer retreat, 1992.

Practitioners can also meet in such a place from time to time, to collaborate and deepen their knowledge, and practise together. They can exchange knowledge.

In cities the situation may also not be ideal. It is not easy to find a space where one can practice the Vajra Dance or Yantra Yoga or meet for other practices. Such a place

may be expensive to rent or buy, but if enough people are interested, financing will not be so difficult; it is enough simply to give up going a bar or restaurant sometimes. It is not

necessary to renounce totally, just sometimes. Putting this money together you can do many things and have some benefit. So actually, if one has a principle of interest, it is not so difficult. Certainly if one is not interested then one has no idea to spend even minimally. One prefers to spend money on cigarettes, or coffee or drinks.

Thus it depends on one's point of view. It is very important to understand the significance of having a Community place with an address where activities can take place. When we talk about the Dzogchen Community in a particular city, in a particular



country, what is the address, where can we go when we want to participate in spiritual activity with other interested people?

Of course I am not saying we should develop and create centres, elegant temples, or complicated things. We don't need that. But what we do need, according to circumstances, is not always to be nomads. I am also more inclined towards people who commit themselves in this way.

I don't like the situation where I am invited somewhere to teach, people listen for two days and then "good-bye"; there is no follow up and people's interest in what I teach fades. If they do this two or three times, then I certainly don't feel like committing myself very much. But when I see that individuals are really trying to do their best, then I put my effort there. I think that in many places around the world where there are people of the Community that they understand this and that they

are preparing something, that they are doing their best. Collaboration is always useful for realising the path and the fruit. It is also useful for living. It is not necessary to isolate oneself and feel solitude but to collaborate spiritually, each one of us. Since we are already in the "boat" of the teaching, if we understand this, we can develop this knowledge and what it entails. This is what I think is happening.

On this level, it can be very positive. I am not saying that this is the goal of the Community because it is not. Practice can be done without a house, without land, anywhere, if we dedicate ourselves. But we have to understand well. Some people say, "I practice alone observing myself, I don't need to practice with other people". In this way they remain isolated. But I don't think this type of person really succeeds in integrating and realising much because they still live within society and also with distractions. Much better to distract oneself with practice and practitioners, rather than all the total distraction of infinite emotions, passions and confusion.

Therefore I maintain that collective practice and collaboration are indispensable and very useful. If all this is important it is also important to have a place, a permanent base, not only for today but above all for tomorrow.

At the moment we are developing the Santi Maha Sangha training programme so there will be much to do both for practice and study amongst the practitioners of the Community.

All these activities require their dimension, their space, their opportunities. For this reason, I think, people of the Dzogchen Community are committing themselves to finding land and houses everywhere.

"Portrait of a Master"

With the blessing and participation of Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche, I am working on a film, temporarily entitled, "Portrait of a Master", about the teachings and life of Namkhai Norbu.

My intention is that this film, which will run approximately one hour, will be able to be shown on television around the world. The organizing of the over 175 hours of footage we have and the editing should take approximately one year and is a costly enterprise. Many may ask, well, if you intend to show this around the world, then surely you will make enough money from tv sales to cover the cost of the documentary, but unfortunately this is not true.

Independent documentaries, meaning those that are not done within a tv station, almost never

make enough money to cover the high cost of production. The amount that countries pay to buy a pre-produced program is minuscule compared to the program cost. That's why traditional documentaries are made from donations, government grants, and what we call non-profit dollars, or money that never gets paid back.

I myself have already put a considerable amount of money into this project as well as donating my own time, which I will continue to do, but my financial resources have run dry. The costs of all that still has to be done is approximately \$85,000 US dollars. While we have gratefully received a few donations to the project from practitioners, a great deal of funds are still needed to complete the next 12 months of post-production. While I will be applying

to foundations for grants in America, it is hard to predict how successful we will be. I am hoping that those in the Community with means will be able to help keep the project going.

I would like to offer to pre-sell a special video tape copy of the film for a donation of \$100 each. Anyone donating \$1000 or more will automatically get their name in the end credits of the film. Also anyone who has a suggestion for a better title for the film, I would love to hear your idea. If we select your title, your name will also appear in the film credits.

Please make your check out to and send your donation to: Jennifer Fox, Zohe Film Productions Inc., Acct. no. 04352249, Citibank, N.A. Branch 39, 108 Hudson St., New York, NY 10013, USA.

SHANG-SHUNG VIDEOS

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A complete course of Yantra Yoga teaching given by Fabio Andrico in Argentina. All the preliminary movements, the warm-up exercises and the five movements of the first two groups of Yantra Yoga are shown in detail. Available in Italian, English, Spanish.

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A diary of the travels of Master Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche around the world giving Dzogchen teachings to the practitioners of five continents. Available in Italian and English.

Gcod

Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche does the complete Gcod practice. (Filmed by G. Cocco.)

Tun

Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche does the Tun practices and then shows the principal positions of the Longde. (Filmed by Y. Namkhai.)

Price per video including p/p \$23. PAL system only.
Shang-Shung Edizioni, 58031 Arcidosso (GR). Italy.

BOOK REVIEW

The Heart Treasure of the Enlightened Ones The Practice of View, Meditation and Action: A Discourse Virtuous in the Beginning, Middle and End

By Patrul Rinpoche with
Commentary by Dilgo
Khyentse
Shambala, 1992. \$15 US



This book is "for the benefit of those desiring liberation ... It comprises all the essential instructions and, because of the profound meaning it contains and the beautiful language in which it is expressed, it really is like an elixir for reviving the dead." H. H. Dalai Lama. The root text of this book, "The Practice of View, Meditation and Action: A Discourse Virtuous in the Beginning, Middle and End", was written by the nineteenth century master Patrul Rinpoche, one of the most outstanding Buddhist teachers of his time. The teachings it contains focus on Chenrezi, and relate the preliminary practices, the stages of development and completion, and the nonconceptual meditation of Mahamudra and Dzogchen to the six syllable *mantra* of Chenrezi.

"In order to bless beings, Chenrezi empowered his mantra to be exactly the same as himself. It is the resounding of the unborn void.

Written, the mantra liberates by sight; as sound, it liberates by hearing; arising in the mind, it liberates by recollection; worn on the body, it liberates by contact. If you accustom yourself to perceiving all sound as mantra, you will feel no fear when you hear the terrifying sounds of the bardo. Through his mantra, Chenrezi performs his vast and compassionate activity on an infinite scale. So with fervent devotion, hearing all the many sounds of the universe as the reverberation of the mantra, recite the six syllables".

An interesting feature of Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche's commentary is "that it is not a text that Khyentse Rinpoche wrote down: he simply spoke it, just as it is, without an intermission or pause for thought". Anyone who had the good fortune to receive teachings from Khyentse Rinpoche on his numerous visits to the West, cannot fail to have marvelled at and remained spellbound by his remarkable ability to teach effortlessly and at great length, as if reciting a text from memory. In fact the interweaving of Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche's commentary with Patrul Rinpoche's root text (which is included separately at the end of the book) in a themeless whole, is an example of his teaching style.

Following the introduction, which describes the right motivation for receiving and studying the teachings, and Khyentse Rinpoche's comments on the opening verses of homage to the three jewels, the first part of the teaching describes 'The Shortcomings of Our Decadent Age'. Patrul Rinpoche observes:

"In this dark age, what people think and do is vile;

None of them will help you,
they'll deceive and trick you;

And for you to be of any help to them will be hard;

Wouldn't it be best to quit the whole rat race?"

And advises:

"Base your mind on the Dharma,
Base your Dharma on a humble life.

Base your humble life on the thought of death,

Base your death on a lonely cave."

In fact Patrul Rinpoche's strongly worded criticism of the deceit and hypocrisy prevalent in everyday life is a major feature of the first part of the text, and Khyentse Rinpoche is no less outspoken when he comments on how little masters and teachings are appreciated by those who receive the precious teachings: "such disciples are no better than ordinary people; they neither serve the Dharma nor help others".

The second part deals with 'The View, Meditation and Action of the Mahayana', comprising the paths of *Sutra* and *Tantra*. In 'The Path of the Sutra' Khyentse Rinpoche elucidates Patrul Rinpoche's advice on the Preliminary Practices of Taking Refuge in Chenrezi, generating the Thought of Enlightenment taking Chenrezi as witness, Purification through Chenrezi who is "the quintessential support for purification", offering everything to Chenrezi to generate generosity, and Guru Yoga through devotion to our teacher as Chenrezi himself: "Chenrezi is the Buddha, Chenrezi is the Dharma, Chenrezi is the Sangha; Chenrezi is the Guru, Chenrezi is the Yidam, Chenrezi is the Dakini; Chenrezi is the Dharmakaya, Chenrezi is the Sambhogakaya, Chenrezi is the Nirmanakaya; Chenrezi is Amitabha, Chenrezi is Guru Rinpoche, Chenrezi is Arya Tara; and above all Chenrezi is our own root teacher", and applying the six-syllable 'mani' mantra of Chenrezi, "the compassionate wisdom of all the Buddhas manifested as sound".

'The Path of the Tantras' starts with Empowerment, and Patrul

comments:

"The essence of the four empowerments is the teacher Chenrezi;

If you recognise your own mind as the teacher, all four empowerments are complete;

Receiving innate empowerment by yourself, recite the six syllable mantra".

Khyentse Rinpoche then describes a practice to purify perception through visualising and praying to Chenrezi, and concludes: "All phenomena of samsara and nirvana are projections of your mind. So, too, is Chenrezi. To merge all practices into one, remain in the state where emptiness and appearances are of one single essence, and recite the mani".

In order to simplify one's practice Patrul Rinpoche tells us:

"The mind cannot cope with all the many visualisation practices; to meditate on one *sugata* is to meditate on them all", and Khyentse Rinpoche comments that by "thoroughly mastering a practice focused on a single Buddha you can discover the wisdom and compassion of them all". Or, as Sogyal Rinpoche once said, "Indian masters meditated on one deity and achieved enlightenment, Tibetans meditate on one hundred deities and get nowhere". In this Khyentse Rinpoche guides us step by step through Development State practice in order to purify perception: one visualises Chenrezi to see all appearance as the form of Chenrezi

and oneself and all beings as Bodhisattvas, one recites the *mani* to recognise all sounds as the speech of Chenrezi, and meditates on Chenrezi to see all thoughts as the mind of Chenrezi. He gives precious advice on how skilfully to develop visualisation of the deity, and explains that we must maintain the practice during all our activities in post meditation in order to experience the profound meaning of the Vajrayana.

Patrul Rinpoche and Khyentse Rinpoche next turn their attention to the Completion State practice of the Great Perfection, starting with recognition of the nature of mind.

"It is no good looking anywhere outside you for the ultimate nature of mind: it is within". To illustrate the distinction between the ordinary mind (not in the sense that Suzuki Roshi used this term; here Khyentse Rinpoche is referring to the thinking ordinary mind that "is as capricious as a restless monkey") and the nature of mind, Khyentse Rinpoche quotes an amusing teaching of Lord Buddha's on the "two ways to meditate - like a dog and like a lion. If you throw a stick at a dog, he will chase after the stick; but if you throw a stick at a lion, the lion will chase after you. You can throw as many sticks as you like at a dog, but at a lion only one. When you are completely barraged with thoughts, chasing after each one in turn with its antidote is an endless task. That is like the dog.

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Longde Teaching transcription '93

The complete transcription of the Easter 1993 retreat held at Merigar from April 9 - 18 is now available. Most of the teachings were on the Longde. Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche has specified that it should only be made available to those people who attended that particular retreat. When ordering please confirm that you were present on that occasion. 200 pages, spiral bound. £25 (English pounds)
Contact Annie Stratton, 11 Ridge Road, Hornsey, London N8 9LE, GB. Tel. 81 341 7872. Fax 71 601 8171.

CHÖD: Cutting Through Dualism

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

This digital recording of Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche, is the first in a series which Amrita Records will dedicate to the preservation and propagation of Tibetan culture. The series will focus on the Dzogchen teachings but will also include selected recordings, both religious and folk, from various parts of Tibet.

"Chöd: Cutting Through Dualism", was originally intended to be a clear representation of the Chöd practice for the benefit of practitioners.

However, during the recording session, which took place in Rinpoche's little retreat hut, nestled in the wood below the



The cover of the CD and cassette

Gonpa at Merigar, Rinpoche spontaneously gave us a complete rendition of the Long Life Practice of Mandarava. To this, he added the Song of the Vajra and a dedication. Needless to say, thanks to the generosity of Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche and to the quality of the recordings, we and successive generations will have an opportunity to learn these practices in a precise way.

CHÖD: CUTTING THROUGH DUALISM is available on CD (\$18 US) and cassette (\$14 US) including postage, through Shang-Shung Edizioni, 58031 Arcidosso, GR, Italy.

SANTI MAHA SANGHA "The Wish Fulfilling Vase"

In 1992 Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche wrote the Tibetan text, "The Precious Vase", to be used as the basis for studying and practising Santi Maha Sangha. Following this he compiled a shorter version which has been translated from Tibetan into Italian by Adriano Clemente and into English by John Shane and published by Shang-Shung Edizioni under the title, "The Wish Fulfilling Vase". The text is not in book form but bound photocopies.

Copies are available from either your local Gakyil (each Gakyil around the world has received a copy) or from Shang-Shung Edizioni, 58031 Arcidosso GR, Italy. Due to differences in postal rates, the text including postage and packing will cost: Europe - \$20 US, USA and overseas - \$22, Australia and New Zealand - \$24 US (or dollar equivalent).

"The Precious Vase" will be translated into English in the near future and its publication will be announced in The Mirror.

In the land of the Dakini

A journey with Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche around the sacred mountain Dril Ri

This article arrived by post only hours before the printing deadline and due to limits of time (the printer's) and (layout) space, was put on this page. The author, Fabio Andrico is accompanying Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche during his travels in India.

by Fabio Andrico

In ancient times there was a king in this country and one beautiful day in that period, a Master called Drilbupa arrived and went to live in retreat on this mountain. He was a monk and since there were not many monks in that country, especially ones who were important practitioners, the king became curious and invited him to town. Drilbupa said he was a perfect monk, that he did not want to leave the mountain but preferred to remain there practising and living in solitude.

Although the king invited him many times, Drilbupa always refused to leave his hermitage. The king became annoyed and thought, "Drilbupa claims to be a perfect monk and will not mix with lay-people and refuses my invitation to come to town. So I shall do something to put him to the test."

In the town there was a beautiful and clever girl. The king presented her with gifts, then asked her to go



Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche walking around the sacred mountain, Dril Ri

(photo Fabio Andrico)

of lay-people but now you have a girl-friend who even has two children. What kind of monk are you?"

In this way he publicly criticised the monk in order to shame him. At this point Drilbupa manifested his realisation of Chakrasambhava openly, appearing in union with his Yum. They flew up into the air, and

A brief pause for breath and we continue to climb. We are going around the mountain sacred to Chakrasambhava close to Kardang, in Gharxha, "the land of the Dakini", better known as Lahaul. Rinpoche is recounting its history. Lahaul is a beautiful land. We arrived here from Manali by jeep after hours of travelling on dusty, rocky dirt roads in a landscape which very much brings to mind Tibet. Indeed, we do not seem to be in India. After days of rain it is finally good weather and we have a vision of mountains and waterfalls, the great potato harvest, men bringing the crop from the mountain slopes to the trucks and horses waiting at the roadside. The road is continually under repair by workers, grey like the rocks and the tar, who seem to live in one of the circles of Dante's shell, among smoke and flames.

In the evening we arrive at the Drugpa Kagyu monastery, Kardang Gonpa. It is a little monastery situated on the slopes of the sacred mountain and it is poor. Many practitioners live there on practically nothing and, in the winter, as in the entire area, they remain snowed in

and seduce the monk and also take him wine (chang). So the girl went up the mountain carrying the chang and went to find Drilbupa. Though she had had the idea of ruining him at the beginning, she was, in fact, a dakini with many good qualities. When she met Drilbupa she reawakened and became his disciple. She stayed on the mountain to assist the Master and to practise. Once in a while she would go to town and return bringing food and chang.

The king was dissatisfied because he had not managed to accomplish what he wanted. After a few years, the girl had had two children and so the king forced the monk to come down from the mountain, saying, "You said you were a perfect monk who did not want to mix with the life returned to the top of the mountain. He was recognised by all as a Mahasiddha and many disciples came from far away. Drilbupa gave teachings on Chakrasambhava of the Five Manifestations, his special teaching which was the means of his realisation.

It is said that he lived a little longer after this, and then that both he and she, in yab-yum union, vanished into the rock at the centre of the mountain. Everyone considers this an important place of pilgrimages, and many come there to visit and to practise.

Some time after, another Master called God Tsharpa, a practitioner of Chakrasambhava and Mahamudra, came there and the place became even more important.



A panoramic view of Dril Ri

(photo Fabio Andrico)

for months. Both monks and nuns receive us with great hospitality and try to do their best for Rinpoche and us all. The monks in charge of the monastery spend a long time with Rinpoche getting him to tell them about Tibet while they, in turn, tell him about this part of the world, about Masters and practitioners.

Early in the morning of the second day, we left for the korwa (circumambulation) of the mountain (Jampel, our travelling companion

rain, and the wind seems to want to help. But it is beautiful, and when we arrive exhausted at the summit, we see the mountain in the centre of a mandala of higher mountains with peaks of crystal and light. It is a spell-binding place.

Here we sing the Song of the Vajra and give homage to the sacred rock of Chakrasambhava, and then, very slowly, start the descent. Amidst the sun and the clouds, tiny flakes of snow swirl in the wind like miniature flowers. Once, twice, then the sun comes out again.

We thought that the entire walk done gradually would take four or five hours with stops for practice and a picnic at the sacred rock. It actually took nine hours of hard work and we returned to the monastery only in the late afternoon.

With our sun-burnt faces and our painful legs and feet, we go to sleep as soon as dinner is over.

Early the morning after, we leave for another sacred spot, this time in the valley, easy to reach by jeep! But this sacred mountain with its history and its presence will remain in our hearts.



Rinpoche, Fabio Andrico and their guides

(photo Prima Mai)



Signs of pilgrimage on the sacred mountain

(photo Fabio Andrico)

Shakya Shri's...

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A master has different aspects, according to what and how he teaches. There is the *lama* who teaches on the level of duality who is called simply *lama*. The *trinchin lama* gives teachings, invoking the disciple's innate quality, his primordial state, through verbal explanations and initiations, etc. Then there is the *tsawai lama* who has made us recognise our own state, so that we have full certainty without feeling pride in our self-recognition. The first one is the *lama*, the second is the *trinchin lama*, the third is the *tsawai lama*. This can be the same person who changes from time to time, or it can be three different people or it can be one person from one time to another, or for one instant. But there is a different level of importance to oneself.

It can happen in the very instant or be a longer process, but to open oneself one needs both mental and physical openness. Physical openness means that one is not only willing to open but totally absorb this understanding. The main reason is that when we know that the nature of the mind is most important and once we realise that there is nothing more important, we go beyond faith, we go beyond different views, we go beyond the duality of having realisation or not having realisation. First we know intellectually that being in the natural state of mind is the most valuable thing, and then we know that the path is only mind to mind transmission, and that in order to realise that we must have a teacher who has that value and whose quality as a teacher we know.

When we have this kind of openness, we completely forget the importance of ourselves and being absorbed in that importance. Also physically we do whatever the teacher says, as though one completely forgets what one is doing and what one thought was important. We are not looking outside at the teacher, rather we are able to look deep into the teacher, so whatever he says, however he behaves, our confidence is unshakeable. With that kind of wholehearted quality, then one is able to realise within oneself wholehearted realisation. To receive the wholeness of Mahamudra and Ati Yoga realisation, we should also have the wholeness quality. This does not mean an easygoing presence, but it means we ourselves have this quality, it is there, we just have to know it is there, recognise and realise it.

I am not talking at the level of realisation but at the level of devotion. We have all this work on the present instant, and simply, we must know that that is the essence of all teachings. All teachings when they are written and spoken seem long, complicated and different. They are all working simply on very present ordinary mind and there is nothing that we have to change or alter. We only have to recognise that truth in the most subtle and simple way.

This quality of simplicity is so pleasant, beautiful and profound it

can inspire millions of verses of poetry to describe it. But actually it can also be indicated by a hair, it is so simple and subtle. This is not talk on the conceptual level, this is talk on the level of when mind is simply being in its nature. This all points to the nature of the mind which is ours at every instant, and to realise that we have it all the time, every moment, is what is called realisation of the Dharmakaya. And with this we can work, we can sleep, we can sit, think, doing it all the while, never being separate from this, being very clear to ourselves, without basking in a feeling of being clear. That is called realisation of the nature of mind.

Now Togden Sakya Shri describes the realisation of void, clarity and non-grasping which he says he realised. Many very old philosophies and teachings from even before the Buddha's time teach about *sunyata*, and how everything is like a mirage. Always mentioned in this context is *dzinpa medpa* which is described in sutric and tantric texts as having no ego. When they talk of having no ego they mention this very point in which there is no grasping or *dzinpa*. This grasping occurs when mind is not in its nature, but being dual, existing as a subject with objects, looking at something as something that can be seen. This kind of duality, however subtle, is still duality. In the texts, in the teachings on practice, it is said not having an ego is *dzinpa medpa*, or leaving mind in its nature.

Then Shakya Shri says, "Listen my friend, you must pray to the Buddha and *tsawai lama* again and again. A great important key lies there." First Shakya Shri says, "Guru yoga is very important, like the root of realisation. First you look at the face of the nature of mind, then you meditate on it like a slowly moving river, without making modifications, without getting stuck in the observation. These are the secret words of a crazy old beggar man." Then he says, "Again listen my friend, first try to arouse renunciation in your mind and a feeling of non-attachment to samsaric life. Try to implant this very deep in your heart with regard to the eight worldly illusions." This world is impermanent, everything that is created has the nature of decaying and dying, not only this planet or universe, but anything that is created or accumulated. Do not think of anything as permanent.

If you cannot see the nature of mind in this life, then there is great danger of falling into another illusory level of suffering where you won't get this opportunity again. So as not to feel regret later, you must do your best practising the Dharma. Look at the nature of your mind, and you should also carefully take account of *karma* and not be distracted, so it becomes possible to not fall into a level of suffering again.

Guru yoga is of utmost importance and the first thing to do, and then comes meditation and understanding the nature of one's mind. With that realisation arise effortlessly the qualities of

compassion, being able to help others, the knowledge of *karma*, impermanence and renunciation. These understandings occur spontaneously and are also needed as supports for meditation. Usually concepts, they will naturally arise as qualifications. So meditate.

This is my little mandala offering to my Dharma friends here.

Transcription by M. Simmons

Heart Treasure

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It is better, like the lion, to look for the source of those thoughts". Khyentse Rinpoche then gives an exhaustive exposition of the Four Yogas of Mahamudra: one-pointedness, simplicity, one taste and non meditation, and then describes the Transformation of the Senses, Emotions and Aggregates through Chenrezi: "When we see that everything arises out of voidness as the manifestation of Chenrezi, and thus recognise the expanse of infinite purity, we then no longer discriminate between good and bad, pure and impure; it is all the display of Chenrezi. Friends are Chenrezi, enemies are Chenrezi, all are one as Chenrezi".

Patrul Rinpoche concludes the section on View, Meditation and Action:

"One deity, Chenrezi, embodies all Buddhas;

One mantra, the six syllables, embodies all mantras;

One Dharma, bodhicitta, embodies all practices of the development and completion stages.

Knowing the one which liberates all, recite the six-syllable mantra".

The final part deals with the 'Determination to be Free from Samsara', with the exhortation to leave behind the samsaric activities of speaking ('Now you'd better just keep silent'), moving around ('Now you'd better just settle down and relax your mind'), eating ('Now you'd better nourish yourself with the food of samadhi'), concern with possessions ('Now you'd better put an end to your possessive grasping'), sleeping ('Now you'd better start to exert yourself wholeheartedly') and thinking:

"What use are all your thoughts? They've just bought more delusion-

Look how few of all your aims you've managed to achieve.

Now for this life's concerns you'd better not think too far ahead;

Dropping all your plans, recite the six-syllable mantra", and the urgent plea to practise to master the mind.

"The practice of Dharma should bring you to the point where you can maintain the same awareness whether in or out of practice sessions. This is the quintessential point of all spiritual instructions; without it, however many mantras and prayers you recite, however many thousands of prostrations and circumambulations you do, as long as your mind remains distracted none of it will help you get rid of your obscuring emotions".

Andrew Lukianowicz

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The Dalai Lama's teaching on patience



His Holiness the Dalai Lama

(courtesy A. Caballero)

by Judy Hezl and Charles Hoy

From September 11 through September 15, the Sheraton El Conquistador hotel in Tucson, Arizona became a Buddhist Institute, as the Dalai Lama gave teachings on patience based on Shantideva's Bodhicaryavatara. The staff of the resort was well prepared for his arrival having been shown the film "Compassion in Exile". As we drove in, we were moved to see the Tibetan national flag as well as prayer flags blowing in the wind along with the United States and State of Arizona flags.

His Holiness gave two hours of teachings each morning and afternoon which included a short guided meditation period as well as at least half an hour of questions and answers. About 1,400 people attended the teachings. Although this was a fairly large group of people, a feeling of warmth and intimacy

pervaded the space.

In addition to the teachings given by His Holiness, there were also guided sitting practice sessions every morning, and special question and answer sessions with Ven. Geshe Sopa and Ven. Thubten Chodron. There was also an evening program of discussion on the meaning of patience in Buddhist traditions by Sharon Salzberg and Sylvia Boorstein (Vipassana), Jakusho Bill Kwong-roshi (Zen) and Ven. Thubten Chodron (Tibetan). Professor Robert Thurman spoke on the Bodhisattva vows with great humor and skill.

Verse by verse the Dalai Lama went through the sixth chapter of the Bodhicaryavatara, sometimes speaking at length, other times briefly.

During a discussion of one verse, he went over it three times with his translator trying to evoke the correct

meaning. He then looked up at the audience, smiled and said, "I don't know, this is even difficult to understand in Tibetan". Many of the verses discussed indicated methods to work with irritations seemingly caused by others. Hearing His Holiness discuss these verses gave new significance to them, for he appeared so willing to work with all of us.

During the first day's talk he emphasized that patience is not for the weak and that one of the main qualities of patience is tolerance.

On Tuesday, during a discussion of the gratitude we should feel to sentient beings for the opportunity they gave us to practise, His Holiness stopped for a minute, silently, as tears came to his eyes.

On Wednesday many of the participants took refuge and bodhisattva vows.

It was a truly profound experience to witness His Holiness, someone who has no fear or anger in his being, doing prostrations every day and realize that he is a being who wishes to give to others all that is needed. As he walked down the aisles entering and exiting from each session he made as much contact as possible with everyone in his path, as if to give all that was asked for to us humans.

As we left the Sheraton on Thursday, the Tibetan flag was still blowing in the gusts of the early afternoon Tucson winds. The Dalai Lama was soon to give a blessing to all of the staff at the El Conquistador. We thought to ourselves, "We can be patient, we can be kind towards one another".

PRACTICES FOR SPECIAL DAYS

9th Month, 30th day Sat. 13th Nov. 1993

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

10th Month, 10th day Tues 23rd Nov. 1993

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

10th Month, 11th and 14th day

Wed. 24th and Sat. 27th Nov. 1993

These are very special days for doing practice of Ekajati. If you know how to perform the rite of Ekajati, then do it in the usual way, otherwise you can do it in a very simple way with the "Medium Tun"; reciting the heart mantra of Ekajati as many times as possible.

10th Month, 15th day Sun. 28th Nov. 1993

FULL MOON. This day is considered to be the day to honour the Lord Buddha in general, and it is one of the best days to do the Long-life Practice with the Dakini Mandarava particularly. Therefore try to do the Long-life Practice, "Cycle of Life's Vajra".

Generally the best moment to do this kind of practice is at 7-8 o'clock in the morning. But if you don't have this possibility, then do it in the afternoon or later in the evening when you are free.

10th Month, 25th day Wed. 8th Dec. 1993

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

10th Month, 30th day Mon. 13th Dec.

NEW MOON. This is an excellent day to practise Purification of the Six Lokas.

11th Month, 8th day Tues. 21st Dec. 1993

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

11th Month, 10th day Thu. 23rd Dec. 1993

This is a special day of Guru Padmasambhava. If you have the time and possibility it is good to do a Ganapuja collectively with your Vajra brothers and sisters, otherwise you can do the Long-life practice of "Union of Primordial Essences".

11th Month, 15th day Tues. 28th Dec. 1993

FULL MOON. This is an important day to do the Long-life practice of Amitayus, "Union of Primordial Essences".

11th Month, 25th day Fri. 7th Jan. 1994

This is a day of the Dakinis in general, so if you have the opportunity practice a collective Ganapuja, with the transformation of the Dakini Simhamuka, and recite her heart mantra as many times as possible.

Otherwise you can do a Medium Tun either collectively or personally.

11th Month, 30th day Tues. 11th Jan. 1994

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

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