

# THE MIRROR

Newspaper of the International Dzogchen Community

May/June 1995 Issue No. 31

## H. H. Penor Rinpoche

Head of the Nyingma Tradition  
On his first visit to Italy, will give,  
at the request of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu,

The Teaching and Initiation of the  
**Konchok Jidus**

July 25th - July 31st, 1995  
at Merigar, Arcidosso (GR), Italy

H. H. Drubwang Pedma Norbu Rinpoche, widely known as H. H. Penor Rinpoche, was chosen head of the Nyingma tradition in January, 1992, by the principal Nyingma masters gathered at Bodhi Gaya. Because he was about to visit Tibet, announcement of his appointment was postponed for a year, and made in January, 1993 before an assembly of over 3,000 Nyingma lamas, abbots and disciples. This position is a recognition of his remarkable qualities as an enlightened teacher and scholar, and of his tireless contribution to preserving the Dharma.

H. H. Penor Rinpoche was born in 1932, in the twelfth month of the Water Monkey Year, and recognized when two years old as the third Drubwang Pema Norbu. At the age of four, he entered Palyul, one of the six major Nyingma monasteries, each of which has its own unique lineage. He studied with, and received transmissions from revered masters of the time and became the twelfth throne-holder of the Palyul lineage. He left Tibet in 1959 with twelve of his disciples, and resettled in Mysore in south India. In 1963, he founded Nandroling monastery, where he reinstated many of the Palyul ritual traditions. Today, Nandroling is a community of more than a thousand monks, the largest Nyingma center in the world.

From the **Konchok Jidus** comes a practice for long life, the "Union of Universal Wisdom", linked to the Guru Yoga of Padmasambhava and originally taught by him to his disciples, which he then hid as a *terma* for the benefit of future generations. It was discovered by the great master Rigzin Jatsun Nyingpo (1585-1656), who practiced it for many years and transmitted it in turn. This transmission continued without interruption to Choskyi Khentse Wangchuk Rinpoche (1910-1963), master and uncle of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, from whom our Master first received it. It is included among the collective practices of the Dzogchen Community.

Rigzin Jatsun Nyingpo, a monk, repeatedly met Guru Rinpoche, in reality, visions and dreams. In February of 1620, he found a treasure inventory written by Yeshe Tsogyal, inside a chick-sized iron garuda. Following these instructions, he drew from the iron gate at Horrang the *Utterly Profound Gathering of All Precious Jewels* (*yang-zab dkon-mchog spyi-'dyusor* Konchok Jidus, the first of many *termas* he discovered. He spread the Teaching widely, gathered many disciples including the Karmapa and Shamarpa, displayed extraordinary powers, and died amid signs and miracles.

## Rejuvenation Therapy

Presented by Dr. Puntzo Wangmo

The passage of days and months, seasons and years, consuming diseases extending over long periods of time, and excessive mental, verbal or physical exertion cause the signs of decay to appear in any sentient being. These signs include the gradual loss of strength of the body constituents (blood and so forth) and of the strength of the five internal elements (water, fire etc.). The body becomes crooked, wrinkles spread all over the body, the skin becomes rough, the hair on the head and the body whitens, the perceptive clarity of the sense organs (eyes and so forth) fades away and the will power and other mental functions weaken. Old age thus begins, together with the approaching exhaustion of one's life span (caused by the actions of previous lives).

The therapy of *bcud len* is undertaken to extend one's life, to maintain one's health and avert the signs of old age before these signs actually manifest. The benefits of this therapy include: extending one's life span; retarding the manifestation of the signs of old age; acquiring, for a determined period of time, a youthful body; increasing the radiance and strength of the body; the perceptive power of the senses augmented;

continued on page 4

## A.S.I.A. Current Developments

by Andrea Dell'Angelo and Andrea Sertoli



Chögyal Namkhai Norbu being welcomed in Galenteng in 1993.

(photo A. Sertoli)

Several events have significantly marked the current development of A.S.I.A. activities. A short description of the most relevant of them may help to consider the actual growth potential of the Association and the responsibility and work load involved in its functioning; the reader may also evaluate the effects that such growth will have on the life and on the image of the Dzogchen Community.

- Approval of the "Development of health and education conditions of the village of Dzam-thog in the Tibetan Autonomous Region" project by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs; the request for financing was presented in 1992 in cooperation with the COSV (another Italian NGO) and will be executed by both organisations (ASIA and COSV).

- The actual start of the "Construction of the Tibetan language school project in the Dangche district, Amdo region". The school building is currently under construction; an A.S.I.A. technical mission is scheduled for the month of April. The cost of the school will be about US\$100,000 of which \$30,000 have already been deposited in Tibet and \$60,000 more has been transferred to Tibet during the mission in May.

- The success of the "Sponsorship Program for the children of Tibet", where A.S.I.A. has, as a counterpart, the Dharmasala based "Tibetan Children Village" organisation;

this A.S.I.A. program has presently reached 150 sponsorships (150 children sponsored for their education). In the future, a similar scheme will be extended to the Dangche school, to the Nalendra college, to the Shandrob Shang school, to the Khamdogar school and to the Lopon Tenzin Namdak monastery in Nepal.

- Five new requests for technical and financial assistance have been received from Tibet:

- a) *Riwoché Environmental Project*. A project proposal for the preservation of forests, flora and fauna of the region;

- b) *Sala Rinpoché Semgye Namdrak Project*: A project proposal to provide financial support to the scholar's college built by Sala Rinpoché, disciple of the famous Master Togden Urgyen Tenzin, uncle of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu.

- c) *Lopon Tenzin Namdak Project in Nepal*. A request to contribute to the purchase of land of approximately 10 Nepalese *bigas* in Kathmandu (1 *biga* costs about \$6,330) to dedicate to crop cultivation for the nutrition of the students at the college.

- d) *Bir (India) School project*. The project consists in the enlargement of the present primary school building to host the secondary school classes.

- e) *Mongyal Lhasa Rinpoché Project in Eastern Tibet*. The project aims at the construction of a traditional medical hospital in the Nyarong region.

- The start of a new collaboration

with the C.I.S.P., an Italian NGO that will be put in charge by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of carrying out an important health project in the Lhasa district; the collaboration with A.S.I.A. concerns the publication of a major monographic volume on Tibetan medicine.

- A.S.I.A. participation at the "Country Fair" of Rome from April 21 to May 1. The "Country Fair" was visited, in the 1994 edition, by more than 50,000 people.

continued on page 12

### CONTENTS

On Contemplation and the Dedication of Merit	2
Chögyal Namkhai Norbu	
Editorial	3
Book Reviews	5
The Naked State of Intrinsic Awareness	6
Dugu Choegyal Rinpoche	
International Community News	7-10
Opening the Eye of Rigpa	11
An Interview with Gelek Namgyal Sey Rinpoche	
Shang Shung Institute in Italy	13
Enrico dell'Angelo	
Reflections	14
The History of the Dzogchen Community Depends on You	15
John Shane	
Liberating the Fish	16



*This is the second part of a teaching on the Three Sacred Principles given by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu at Tsegylgar in October 1994. Part I: Refuge and Bodhicitta was published in the last issue of the Mirror (no. 30).*

The Three Sacred principles are Refuge, Contemplation, and the Dedication of Merit, so contemplation is right at the centre of them, and in fact it is really the main point of them all.

Whenever we begin a session of teaching in the Dzogchen Community we always sing the Song of the Vajra. We do this in order to bring ourselves into the state of contemplation. This is particularly important for those who already have knowledge of the state but do not yet remain in that state all the time. Entering into the state of contemplation together through the Song of the Vajra at the beginning of a session of teachings reawakens us to the fact that the process involved in receiving teachings from a Master is one of working together in collaboration through transmission, and not one in which the student is either merely passive or only engaged at an intellectual level.

Following the teachings of Tantra or Dzogchen always involves the principle of transmission, and this transmission is not something one can receive through reading books or through the words of an oral explanation alone. That kind of approach is more characteristic of how one might follow the teachings at the level of the Sutras.

In Dzogchen, transmission is the life of the teaching; one cannot attain realisation without it. There are three kinds of transmission: direct, oral and symbolic.

Garab Dorje was the first human teacher of Dzogchen on this planet in this time cycle. Before he concluded his life in the realisation of the 'Body of Light' he summarized his teaching in what became known as the 'Three Statements of Garab Dorje'. The first of these statements is 'Direct Introduction'. In this Direct Introduction the teacher introduces the student to the state of contemplation through experiences of Body, Voice and Mind. The second statement is 'Not Remaining in Doubt'. The student experiences the state of contemplation through the transmission he or she has received in the Direct Introduction and no longer remains in any doubt as to what contemplation is. The third statement is 'Continuing in the State'. This means that the student seeks to

remain in the state of contemplation all the time, remaining in the natural condition of instant presence without correcting it when it is there, and applying practices as necessary according to circumstances to re-enter the state when she or he has become distracted from it.

Thus when we practise Guru Yoga what we are trying to do is to find ourselves, through our practice, in the state which the teacher has transmitted, the state in which the teacher remains all the time. When we are in the state of

In contemplation we find ourselves beyond the distracted state of our habitually confused minds, completely relaxed in the naked awareness that is our natural condition. In this natural condition thoughts or emotions can arise, but they do not disturb us; we remain in the non-dual state integrated with whatever arises, without accepting or rejecting anything. Practising in this way we are able to remain in contemplation working with whatever situation or circumstance we find ourselves in.

prosperous life with as many positive factors influencing it as possible. But if that were to be our only intention, it wouldn't be enough. We need to ask ourselves why we want a long life. We should not just want to prolong our lives in order to have more time for our business or for our political interests. We should practise Long Life practices because we wish to live for a long time in order to attain realisation. If we live longer we will have more time to practise, and if we are prosperous we will have less

lifetime. But we must not only think of ourselves; we must remember the suffering of all sentient beings, and thus cultivate 'Bodhicitta'; the aspiration to arrive at realization for the benefit of all those other beings, applying this Bodhicitta in a way that is alive and concrete, with a real compassion that is not just a matter of words.

Sometimes people speak a great deal about Bodhicitta and love for others but they never actually observe their own thoughts or intentions at all. Then everything they do can become a little like the games politicians play. Politicians promise all sorts of things, but often don't keep their promises once elected. For example, a certain party might continually make promises that if they are elected they will provide everything the people need free of charge. But once they win the election they conveniently forget whatever they promised to get people to vote for them. Unfortunately, we sometimes do just the same: we grandly claim to be practising compassion for the benefit of all beings, but if we were to really observe ourselves and the way we actually behave in our lives, we would notice that in fact we never even relax our tensions enough to get along with our own friends or with our sisters and brothers of the Vajra. We don't even have compassion for those close to us, let alone all sentient beings. This kind of falsehood clearly does not correspond to real Bodhicitta, to the real expression of a pure intention to benefit others.

We accumulate merits through practice, particularly through the practice of contemplation. In fact, when we practise something as profound as the Song of the Vajra and we find ourselves in the state of contemplation, we can accumulate infinite merits. And then again, when I give an explanation of the teachings and you try to understand this knowledge through your intention and through collaborating with me in the field of transmission, you can accumulate infinite merits.

We should then dedicate these merits to all sentient beings. Once the merits have been dedicated, they always develop: they can never be destroyed. But if you have not dedicated your merits and you become distracted, losing your awareness perhaps in the experience of a strong emotion such as anger, you can destroy in that one moment of anger the accumulation of thousand of kalpas of merits. That is what the great Master Shantideva, author

*continued on page 3*

## The Three Sacred Principles

### Part II

### On Contemplation and the Dedication of Merit

by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu



contemplation there is no separation between the teacher and ourselves. Through Guru Yoga we can enter the state of contemplation, but the teacher is indispensable in Dzogchen because without receiving direct transmission from the teacher there can be no realization.

Parallel to the Direct Introduction I have just explained there are in fact two other kinds of transmission spoken of in the Dzogchen teachings. When we listen to general explanations of the teachings or to particular instructions relating to various methods such as, for example, instructions for visualizations, special examples etc., that is called 'Oral Transmission'.

And then there is what is known as 'Symbolic transmission', which refers to the use by the Master of objects such as a crystal, a mirror, or a peacock feather as symbols to help the student discover the nature of the inherent potentiality of their own state, and how that potentiality manifests as energy in various ways. (See: 'The Crystal and the Way of Light', by Namkhai Norbu. Published by Penguin Books, in their Arkana imprint.)

The reason we sing the Song of the Vajra so often in the Dzogchen Community is to enable us to find ourselves in the state of contemplation. When we are in that state, we are in union with our Master, united in the experience of the knowledge that he or she transmits, united in contemplation.

In the state of non-dual contemplation there is really nothing to do, nothing to apply. There is no need to struggle with anything; everything can be left just 'as it is'; with nothing to purify or transform. Then we discover for ourselves what is meant by 'The Great Perfection', or 'Total Perfection', which are both ways that the Tibetan word 'Dzogchen' can be translated. When we discover the self-perfected nature of our own state we understand that Dzogchen is a word that, rather than referring to a tradition or school, really refers to our own inherent condition, the 'self-perfected state' that is always there in each of us, but which is only experienced in contemplation.

So contemplation is the most important of the Three Sacred Principles.

The third Sacred Principle is the Dedication of Merit, which is a practice that is inseparably linked to our intention. When, for example, we do Long Life practice, we do it because we want to have a long and

obstacles to interfere with our realization. And the purpose of realization is to benefit all sentient beings; this is why we are on the path.

We must be aware that the infinite sentient beings to whom we dedicate any merits arising from our good actions and practice have no knowledge of the teachings or of the Path; This means that they experience infinite suffering. So we are seeking our own realization not just for our own benefit but with the awareness of the infinite suffering of all the infinite numbers of beings in Samsara. If we really develop this awareness there arises a real, rather than an artificial compassion.

The Buddha taught that we should observe ourselves, and that through observing our own condition there would arise the wish to benefit others. If, for example, we imagine ourselves in the place of those who are not on the Path we can understand how infinite their suffering is. Such beings have no guarantee of liberation, and that is very heavy.

Those of us who are on the Path have made a connection through which we are not only able to receive and practise the teachings, but what is more through the power of this connection we have a real guarantee that we will one day attain realization. We have the good fortune to have learned many methods, some of which, if we use them correctly, can even bring us to realization in this very



continued from page 2

of 'The Bodhisattvacharyavata', the guide to the Bodhisattvas's Way of Life, said.

But if you have already dedicated your merits, they can never be destroyed, they can only accumulate. for this reason we dedicate our merits to all sentient beings using the following verses in Tibetan:

*Geva diyis gyevo gun*

*Sodnam yexes cog zog xin*

*Sodnam yexes las jyunvai*

*Damba gunis tobbar xog*

These words of invocation were composed by Nagarjuna, and it is good to use them at the end of a session of teaching.

*Geva* means 'virtuous actions' or 'merit', which we have accumulated through practice, listening, sitting in a meditation posture, and so on. All these things require effort and therefore accumulate merits. *Diyis* means 'with these'; so the first two words mean 'with these merits', which we have accumulated. The next two words, *Gyevo gun*, mean 'all sentient beings'.

*Sodnam yexes* refers to the two accumulations: the accumulation of merit which derives from good actions (*sodnam*) and the accumulation of wisdom (*yexes*: non-dual awareness wisdom) which derives from the practice of contemplation and meditation. *Cog zog xin* means 'accumulating'. So we express the wish that all beings accumulate the two accumulations of merit and non-dual awareness wisdom through the merits we have accumulated with our practice.

*Sodnam yexes las* means 'from these two accumulations of merit and wisdom'; and *jyunvai* means 'that come', or 'that develop'. *Damba gunis tobbar xog* means 'may they attain the two sacred realizations or dimensions'. The realizations referred to are the Dharmakaya and Rupakaya. The Dharmakaya is the aspect of realization beyond all limits of form, the dimension of 'emptiness' that is the inherent condition of all phenomena and the state of realization of all enlightened beings. And Rupakaya means the dimension of the myriad forms that manifest as the spontaneous play of the formless energy of the Dharmakaya.

Sambhogakaya and Nirmanakaya, are two dimensions of realization not referred to in these verses but which are commonly spoken of together with the Dharmakaya as the 'Three Kayas'. Sambhogakaya and Nirmanakaya are both aspects of the dimension of form. Sambhogakaya is the dimension of form in the pure manifestation, in which the formless Dharmakaya manifests as the essence of the elements as

light, while Nirmanakaya is the realized energy of the Dharmakaya as it manifests in the impure manifestation of form. So the physical manifestation of the Buddha as Buddha Shakyamuni is, for example, a Nirmanakaya manifestation. The attainment of the Two Kayas, Dharmakaya and Rupakaya, mentioned here, is really the same as the attainment of the Three Kayas.

So in this invocation, using the words of Nagarjuna we are expressing the wish that all beings may accumulate the two accumulations of merit and non-dual awareness wisdom through our accumulation of virtuous action in the teaching activity or practice that we have just participated in, and we wish that through the merits and wisdom that come from our practice all beings may attain the realization of the two bodies.

Then we always add the mantra: *Om dhare dhare bhandhare svaha jaya jaya siddhi siddhi phala phala a ah ha sha sa ma mamakolin samanta*. This is a very powerful mantra used to empower and to make our practice real or concrete. It is not just an invocation. Since we are not yet realized beings and lack sufficient power, we need to use the potentiality of this mantra to empower our practice.

*Jaya jaya siddhi siddhi phala phala a ah ha sha sa ma mamakolin samanta* is a mantra with which we empower our capacity of knowledge and understanding of the Base, the Path and the Fruit, the three fundamental aspects of the teaching.

*Jaya* means victory and represents the understanding of the Base. From the very beginning our real nature, our real Base is the 'victorious' condition of the self-perfected state, a state that has overcome all obstacles. With this mantra, we empower our practice through knowledge and understanding. We repeat *jaya* twice: the first time we use it, it represents our real condition, or Base; and the second time it represents the recognition that we are actually now in that real condition, in the state of presence, in contemplation. We have actually entered into the understanding of our real nature, which is what is meant by the word 'Base'.

*Siddhi* means 'attainments'. Here the word *siddhi* stands for the Path, or meditation. On the path we generally meditate. Why do we meditate? To attain realization. But we must remember that the attainments referred to here are not something we acquire newly. They are aspects of our real nature which is

self-perfected from the very beginning. All that is necessary is that we find ourselves in our real condition that has always been there from the beginning, but from which we have become distracted. So the word *siddhi* is used here in recognition of the fact that it is by means of the practice, the Path, that we do actually find ourselves in our real condition, a condition which in Dzogchen is called the state of *lhundrup*, the self-perfected state.

Then we repeat the word *phala* twice; *phala* means knowledge of the Fruit. We generally have the idea that it is at some day in the future that we will become realized. Realization is seen as something that will come later for us. But in the deepest sense, our real nature is self-perfected from the beginning. And actually finding ourselves in this state of knowledge is what is meant by *phala*, real experiential knowledge of our own condition as the Fruit, understanding the actualization of our practice to be realization itself.

Thus using these words *jaya jaya, siddhi siddhi, phala phala* we empower our practice with knowledge of the Base, the Path and the Fruit.

Then we continue, empowering our practice further by reciting the syllables *a ah ha sha sa* which represent the six spaces of Samantabhadra. Samantabhadra is not only the name of the Ati Buddha, the primordial Buddha; it also refers to our inherent potentiality, our real condition. This real condition has six aspects or manifestations, because it is arrived at through reversing the causes of the six realms of Samsara, which process the use of these six mantric syllables activates.

Finally we recite the words: *mama kolin samanta*. Reciting this mantra, we continue in the state of instant presence empowering everything in our lives with contemplation. We continue in the state of contemplation so that every circumstance in our daily lives becomes practice.

We can see from this discussion that whenever we practise or apply the teachings it is essential that all our intentions and activities should be connected to the Three Sacred Principles. It is important that we understand these principles and ensure that no aspect of them is missing from our practice. We must be aware of them at all times: in the practice of Dzogchen everything in our lives is totally integrated, nothing is left out.

Edited by Barbara Paparazzo and John Shane.

## The Health of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

As of noon, Friday, May 12th, the situation is as follows:

Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche is at his temporary home in New York City, active, relaxed and in good spirits. The leukemia from which he had been suffering is in remission, as stated in prior bulletins.

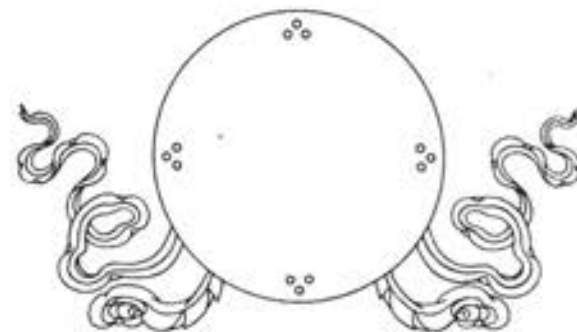
Seeking to ascertain the exact cause of his recurrent attacks of high fever, his doctor have examined and tested Rinpoche repeatedly, both during his latest hospital stay and since release.

On Tuesday, May 9th, Rinpoche met, at the Sloane-Kettering Memorial Institute, with a specialist in infectious diseases who had evaluated those test results and further examined him. It emerged that the high fevers, which arose at moments of immunodeficiency due earlier to leukemia or more recently to the effects of chemotherapy, do no result from tuberculosis, as had been thought. That malady is present, but only in a dormant state. Instead, Rinpoche is suffering from what is called a non-TB mycobacterial disease, caused by the microbe known as *mycobacterium avium* which, on becoming active, in his case has provoked an asymptomatic infection spread widely through the body. Happily, the impact of this infectious agent is much less serious than tuberculosis.

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu returned to hospital at the Sloane-Kettering Memorial Institute on Saturday, May 20th and underwent the second cycle of chemotherapy without negative side effects and with apparently positive results. He was released on Tuesday, May 23rd.

May the lotus feet of the glorious gurus remain firm upon the earth!

## Working with circumstances



Being active in a mundane world while following a spiritual path is, in itself, a teaching. Even though one feels that worldly difficulties and obstacles will be resolved through one's spiritual practice, they continue to arise unceasingly. Our practice can be considered to be working with the changing circumstances of which we are part. Meeting and working with them are an intrinsic part of community.

This newspaper, The Mirror, which we try to bring to you as a source of news and a forum of communication throughout our world wide community, is also subject to changing circumstances. Last November the main office of The Mirror was officially transferred from Merigar in Tuscany, Italy to Tsegialgar in Massachusetts, U.S.A., the result of a long standing plan of Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche's to expand various Community linked activities and went hand in hand with the inauguration of the American seat of the Shang-Shung Institute. Since November the Mirror offices at the two Gars have continued to work together to publish the newspaper with production and mailing taking place in the United States.

Circumstances arose in which the managing editor at the Tsegialgar office felt unable to continue and after the mailing of the last issue (no.30) it was decided that this issue of the newspaper would be produced at the Merigar office.

For these reasons you will have noticed a different "Mirror" with the last two "American" issues and again with this "Italian" one. This is mainly due to technical circumstances - the two American issues were printed on better quality paper. We found this to be too costly. The issue you are reading now is printed on cheaper recycled paper and while the printing is not up to the quality of the last two issues, a fact which has also affected technical aspects such as font sizes and general layout, we've brought the costs down. The financial circumstances have not permitted us a wide choice.

Then we owe a sincere apology to our European readers who have waited patiently to receive their last issue which was, unfortunately, sent surface mail from the US. The American editors did not realise just how long international surface mail takes.

And so circumstances are changing for the Mirror. The small group of people who are involved in producing The Mirror are doing their best to work with them in order to continue to bring you our Community newspaper. We ask you to be patient with us and support us with your articles, your subscriptions and your collaboration.



continued from page 1

the mind and memory are clarified; there is a sharpening of the intellect, the voice acquires a good tone, and one's virility and fertility remain undiminished.

This therapy should be undertaken in an ideal place which is an unpolluted environment, free of distracting crowds (and involvements), isolated and pleasant, where the air is clear and small limpid rivers flow here and there, pervaded by fragrant aromas and populated by birds singing among the varied vegetation. The environment should not produce fear of the danger of wild animals or malicious creatures nor should there be danger of bacteria or organisms that cause illnesses.

For the therapy to be effective, it should be applied before the signs of old age are evident, before the body shape becomes crooked. It should not be undertaken by someone who is effected by a serious consuming disease such as cancer.

During the therapy the person should not expose him or herself to excessive doses of sun or other sources of heat. One should restrain his or her involvement in sexual activity, avoid physical or mental work that is too hard or exhausting and avoid situations that may result in mental sorrow. The dietary requirements during the therapy are that one should avoid old (rotten) or acid foods, rough (uncooked) foods and old greens. On an astrologically appropriate day one starts the therapy after having performed rites to one's protective deity and taken purifying baths.

The therapy may be followed strictly, abstaining during the time of therapy from working activities, or while leading a normal working life.

#### THE STRICT THERAPY

The strict therapy includes the preparation and the actual method itself.

To purify body channels from the residue of imbalances of the humours the person undertaking this therapy should take the following food and medicine: rice soup to which is added good quality melted butter or fat or bone marrow three times a day. This is eaten for three days in a row. Compresses of heated salt should be applied on the weak spots of the body such as the stomach, bowels and back. The final purgative before starting the therapy should be made of the following substances: the short beaked Myrobalan (*terminalia belerica*) (this is the Myrobalan that does not have a longish protuberance like a pear), *emblica officinalis* (*skyu ru*), ammoniac salt (*rgyam tsha*), long pepper (*piper longum*, *pi pi ling*), *acorus calamus* (*shu dag dkar po*), fennel (*bca'*) ginger (*ska*), *curcuma longa* (*yung ba*) and *embelia pulchella* (*byi tang ka*). These

components are powdered, sugar cane molasses ('solid' molasses which is a clear brown/orange colour) (*buram*) is added and pills are prepared. Tibetans also add the urine of a cow of reddish colour. These pills, which purify the body internally, are taken two or three times.

put into a container which is placed in (if possible) old barley (or other) grains and left for 21 days.

The paste should be taken in the early morning on an empty stomach for the number of days equal to the days it was left to sit (21, 10 or 7 days). By using this *bcud len* a person with a preponderance of the

grinding capsicum and adding honey. This preparation is taken alternating it with food and a diet that are appropriate to one's physical condition (phlegm, bile or wind). In this way, one's life is extended, the body constituents increase and the body heat augments. In particular this *bcud*

female counterpart of the yak, adds to the nutritional power of the above five essences and is the essence of liquids.

The four herbs as essences are:  
- Himalayan cypress seeds (*ghug bzu*);  
- white webbia flowers (*ba lu dkar po*);  
- lug mtsheg;  
- Himalayan artemisia (*mkhan pa dkar po*);  
- *aconitum napellus* (*bdud rtsi zil pa can*).

These herbs are characterised by the fact that they remain green in winter. When they are correctly prepared and taken in appropriate doses they restore life. This *bcud len* can free one from the nine fatal illnesses. In particular, it increases the strength and the radiance of the body and the signs of old age vanish, the person becomes like a 16 year old boy or girl with the dexterity of a lion, the strength of an elephant, the radiance of a peacock, and the speed and strength of a stallion. The life span and life energy become equal to the sun and moon.

The process of preparing this last *bcud len* can be either complex or simple.

#### COMPLEX PREPARATION

In the complex preparation one takes calcite (*cong zhi*) and crushes it to the size of barley grains, enough to make a measure. This is mixed with six measures of water and boiled. When the water has evaporated to a measure, filter the calcite and keep the liquid. Then take half a measure of each of the remaining five essences and four herbs, grind them coarsely and boil and strain as with the calcite. This is added to the calcite liquid and mixed and boiled again together until they become one measure. Then add one and a half litres of milk and butter (in lesser quantity) and boil again so that the liquids are absorbed into the milk and the milk into the butter. The final essence which has no water is mixed with the same amount of sugar cane molasses, ground finely and mixed with the same amount of honey. With this preparation pills of 5 grams each are made.

Starting from the first day of the waxing moon, take one pill in the morning on an empty stomach. The pills should be started a considerable time before the seasonal heat begins (i.e. before the summer) when the body tends to sweat from the external heat.

#### SIMPLE PREPARATION

Crush the calcite to the size of dice, take two handfuls of it and burn it in the fire. When it becomes red, place it in pure clear water and it will dissolve with a rumbling sound. Later grind the calcite, add a measure of water and 500 grams of butter and boil until the preparation becomes dense like sheep's yoghurt. To this preparation add a handful of

continued on page 16

## Rejuvenation Therapy in Tibetan Medicine

Dr. Puntzo Wangmo's presentation of the Rejuvenation Therapy (*bcud len*)  
based on the Oral Instructions *tantra* (*man ngag rgyud*)



There are several kinds of *bcud len* pills:

1. garlic based *bcud len* for people with a strong wind disposition;
2. bitumen based *bcud len* for persons with a strong disposition to heat related illnesses;
3. capsicum based *bcud len* for persons with a strong disposition for phlegm disorders;
4. *bcud len* based on the three Myrobalan fruits (*arura - terminalia belerica*, *kyurura - terminalia chebula*, and *barura - emblica officinalis*) for persons with a strong disposition for combined humoral disorders;
5. *bcud len* based on the four herbs and five essences which can heal any ailment.

#### 1. GARLIC BASED *BCUD LEN*

Garlic is the so called "blood of the demigods" since legend has it that it originated from the nectar falling from the slain body of Rahu.

First of all the garlic is peeled and then soaked in a good alcoholic brew (best if made of barley) for a day and a night. The garlic is then strained and thrown away and the liquid, mixed with sesame oil and the water from the top of the yoghurt, is taken in the early morning on an empty stomach. Immediately after, one should take some milk and a little melted butter or a meat broth from animals that live in a dry place, such as chicken, yak, sheep or wild ungulates.

Garlic *bcud len* can also be prepared in the following way: the garlic is cooked in a little water and then made into a paste after which a little butter is added. The paste is

wind humour will remain young and healthy.

#### 2. THE BITUMEN (*BRAG ZHUM*) BASED *BCUD LEN*

This is made with iron bitumen (among the five types of bituminous). This bitumen is black in colour, unmixed with sand and tastes like the urine of a cow. It has lustre, is bitter and astringent and has a heavy potential which results from an alchemical transformation of iron. The powder of burnt gold, silver, copper and iron is added to the bitumen. This preparation should be taken with milk in the early morning on an empty stomach.

To prepare this *bcud len* in a different way an equal quantity of the medicines appropriate to one's physical constitution (according to the predominance of the wind, bile or phlegm humour) is added to the bitumen. This preparation is ground and placed in an iron container and left for seven weeks. In the first week of the seven week therapy one takes 5 grams a day, in the following two weeks 7.5 grams a day and in the remaining four weeks 10 grams a day. While taking this *bcud len* one should avoid red 'Mon' beans (*vicia faba*), soya beans and pigeon meat.

There is no illness that cannot be treated with this *bcud len* and in particular it is very effective in the case of those predisposed to heat illnesses caused by imbalances in the blood or bile. This *bcud len* is the best method to increase one's life.

#### 3. THE CAPSICUM BASED *BCUD LEN*

This *bcud len* is prepared by

*len* increases the life of a person predisposed to phlegm illnesses of a cold nature.

If the urine of a reddish coloured cow is added to the above ingredients, one can also cure leprosy.

#### 4. THE THREE MYROBALAN (THREE FRUITS) *BCUD LEN*

This *bcud len* refers to pills prepared from: *terminalia chebula* (*aru*), *terminalia belerica* (*ba ru*) and *emblica officinalis* (*skyu ru*). This preparation clarifies the senses, strengthens the physical constituents and, in particular, dispels the illnesses of a combined imbalance of the three humours and maintains youth and virility for a long time.

#### 5. FOUR HERBS AND THE FIVE ESSENCES *BCUD LEN*

The *bcud len* of the four herbs and the five essences of the external elements is a preparation based on the interdependent connection between outer and inner elements which aims to cure the internal imbalances of the elements. The five essences are the following:

- bitumen from rocks containing deposits of iron, the essence of earth, which cures diseases of the flesh;
- orange striped calcite, the essence of minerals, cures the diseases of the bones;
- pure sugar cane molasses, the essence of wood, restores one's strength;
- honey, the essence of flowers, cures diseases related to the depletion of one's radiance;
- the butter of the *dri* (*bri*), the



# Lives of the Great Masters

Patrul Rinpoche  
1808 - 1887



Patrul Rinpoche painted by Tsering Wangchuk in the Merigar Gonpa

Patrul Rinpoche, though he lived as a vagabond, was one of the most renowned spiritual teachers of the last century. Born in 1808 in Dzachuka, a nomad area of Kham, he was recognised as the tulku of Palge Samten Phuntshok, a master previously living in that area. Later, several great Lamas recognised him as being an emanation of Shantideva and also the speech incarnation of Jigme Lingpa.

The young Palge Tulku met his principal teacher, Jigme Gyalwai Nyugu who was one of the main students of Jigme Lingpa, soon after being established as the head of Palge Samten monastery. From him he received the Longchen Nyingthig which is a summary of Longchenpa's teaching written by Jigme Lingpa. He also met and studied with most of the great lamas of the time, including the first Dordrupchen, Jigme Trinle Oeser, Jigme Ngotsar, and the great Siddha Do Khyentse Yeshe Dorje.

On one occasion Patrul Rinpoche met Do Khyentse in the marketplace. Do Khyentse shouted, "Hey Palge! Come over here if you dare!" When Patrul approached, Do Khyentse grabbed him by the hair, knocked him to the ground and dragged him around the marketplace. As Do Khyentse's breath smelt heavily of beer Patrul thought to himself, "Even a great master like him can get tipsy and rave in such a way!" Just at that moment, Do Khyentse suddenly let go of him and staring into his eyes said, "What one-sided, pretentious ideas you have, you old dog!" And he spat in Patrul's face and left. Realising that he had been mistaken Patrul sat in meditation and spontaneously experienced natural awareness clear as an empty sky. Later Patrul Rinpoche would joke about it saying, "Old dog is the secret initiation name Do Khyentse gave me". He even signed some of his

writings "Old dog".

After his predecessor's nephew died he started to live as a wandering mendicant without home or possessions. First he went to the area of Dzogchen Monastery where he received many teachings from Gyelse Shenpen Thaye and the Siddha Mingyur Dorje while living in the caves around the area. In one of them, the Yamantaka Meditation cave he wrote his famous text, "The words of my perfect teacher" When he was teaching he emphasised love and compassion as the root of all spiritual practice.

The force of his presence was so strong that many hunters gave up killing and bandits their robbing after hearing him teach. He taught in a direct language using few simple words, but this apparent simplicity had a background of a deep realisation and a vast knowledge of the Buddhist teachings.

During his youth he had studied with the greatest teachers of his time and due to his amazing memory, committed most of the teachings to heart, so that he could teach the most complex subjects of Buddhist philosophy for months at a time without a single page as reference point. He practically knew by heart the famed "Seven Treasures" and other works of the fourteen-century master Longchenpa, whom he considered the ultimate authority on the various levels of the Buddhist path.

Patrul Rinpoche instructed followers of all schools without bias and together with Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo and others played a major role in the development of the Rimé movement. But for all his brilliance, there was nothing in his outward appearance or his behaviour towards people who didn't know him that made him different from an ordinary person.

He was completely detached from the affairs of this world. When he stayed somewhere, he had no particular plans, and when he left, he had no particular destination. He would just leave with his walking stick, the clothes on his back, a small bag containing his teapot and a copy of the Bodhicharyavatara. He rarely spoke and if so only to teach the Dharma.

In 1885, Patrul Rinpoche, then 77 returned to his birthplace where he remained till his death two years later. He died sitting in the posture of Vairochana gazing into space. Among Patrul Rinpoche's many disciples were the third Dordrupchen Rinpoche, Adzom Drukpa Mipham Rinpoche and Katok Situ Rinpoche to name but a few.

## Living the Mindful Life - a handbook for living in the present moment.

Charles Tart  
Shambhala 1994

"... while reading about mindfulness is helpful, ideas about mindfulness are not mindfulness. Thinking about being present is not being present. The ultimate value of this book lies in the degree to which you try out the mindfulness practices and apply them in your life."

This book by Charles Tart, Professor of Psychology at the University of California and an authority on the interface between psychology, spirituality and mindfulness practice, is the lightly edited report of a series of workshops on the psychological approach to mindfulness conducted on Sogyal Rinpoche's invitation at Rigpa Fellowship in Autumn 1991.

Using insights and practices derived from Gurdjieff, Buddhism and contemporary psychology (there is an intriguing reference to the Fisher-Hoffman Therapy workshop, which the author of this review too had occasion to go through in a group led by Dr. Claudio Naranjo) Tart offers the workshop participants (and hence his readers) some simple exercises as viable ways of maintaining awareness of the present moment in everyday life: by developing mindfulness of the body (through consciously sensing the arms and legs), mindfulness of sensory perception, apperception and proprioception (through the process of consciously listening, sensing and feeling) and recalling presence to the present moment (through the bell-ringing 'stop exercise', cleverly embedded in the text of the book so that it can also be applied by the reader).

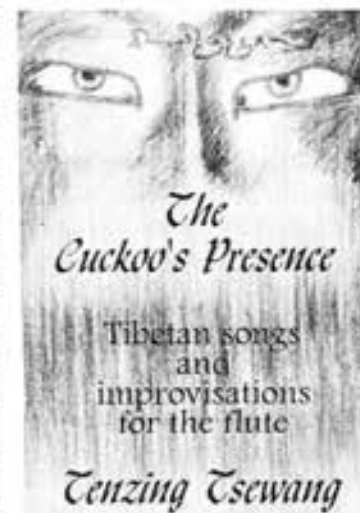
I think most readers will readily identify with the kind of problems related to maintaining mindfulness voiced by the participants and find useful Tart's responses, which alongside affording precious glimpses of the distilled wisdom of the mindfulness methods elaborated by Gurdjieff also offer advice (and heart-felt encouragement) on practical ways of overcoming the psychological and social conditioning to remain pathologically asleep in *samsara* (Tart makes the interesting observation that "Samsara, living in illusion, is an Eastern concept, but curiously, I now think that Western psychology knows more about the details of living in illusion ...") we all undergo and of instead awakening, and staying awake, to the present moment. Tart also deserves praise for the

way he consistently thwarts, warns against, and advises on how to avoid, succumbing to the thinking mind's attempts to take possession of the mindfulness exercises in order to reassert its dominion over us by rationalising and thus undermining these endeavours to establish awareness.

This is an admirable book to be recommended both to those interested in the theory and practical application of the spirituality/psychology interface and to those keen to develop mindfulness practices in daily life.

Andy Lukianowicz

## The Cuckoo's Presence Tibetan songs and improvisations for the flute Tenzing Tsewang



Tenzing Tsewang, born to a nomadic family in western Tibet, now lives near Sydney Australia and has been an active member of the Dzogchen Community there for several years. He received extensive education in the Tibetan monastic tradition at Namgyal Tantric College from 1969-76.

Under the tutelage of the renowned Tibetan flautist, Ngawang Khechok, Tsewang has developed his improvisational skills over the past five years. In this privately produced album, he presents a pleasant mix of enchanting improvisations, Tibetan folk songs and inspirational chants.

The album begins with a chant.

A deep and resonant drum announces the piece with slow, compelling rhythm, one is drawn immediately into a kind of quiet presence. An invocation to Padmasambhava sets the respectful tone, and the one hundred-syllable mantra prepares the way through purification.

The first bamboo flute improvisation follows. The music is quietly relaxing but not of the numbing "new-age" mode. There is a subtle structure in which the short phrases float out in succession from a calm center. In this track, "Dig it in, cockroach," the melody unfolds in short ascending phrases, fluttering lightly like a bird in flight. Brief explorations over peaceful mountainous terrain, then coming to rest in a moment of reflection.

The title track is next: Tsewang's lyrical poem praising the Cuckoo's herald of spring. Sung simply, the melody is natural and evocative but well-founded in the folk tradition. More flute improvisations follow. At times, the brief phrases, which seem to spread like circles in quiet water, begin to call to one another until a whole community of voices join in the echoes.

A playful folk song: "Don't wear collarless shirt", changes the mood a bit in what I can only imagine to be the Tibetan equivalent of a "cowboy" diddy—complete with yodel-like laughter. The final improvisation: "Be modest, after all its a tuneless tune" is a longer musing. Here the flute spins out melody and draws one deeper and deeper into quiet relaxation. Finally, one returns to drum and chant. Tsewang beseeching the Masters: "Stay! Please Stay." Tsewang has devoted this album to Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche and prays for speedy recovery of his health.

Tapes are for sale for \$ 8.00 plus \$ 3.00 handling U.S. or \$ 5.00 elsewhere. CD recordings may be available at a later date. Checks should be payable to Essential Sounds. Orders can be placed with: Woody Paparazzo, Parsons Road, Conway, MA 01341, U.S.A.

## Tibetan Astrological Calendar Wood Boar Year 1995-1996

Contains all the astrological data of the Tibetan calendar and the individual aspects for those born in 1915-1995. The calendar is indispensable for finding out the days that are favourable and unfavourable for both mundane activities and those linked to practice. There is a short explanatory introduction. Dates until 17 April 1996.

Available from Shang Shung Edizioni, 58031 Arcidosso GR, Italy for Lit.10.000 (or equivalent) including postage or, from end of June, Shang Shung Editions, PO Box 82, Conway MA 01341, USA, for \$5 plus \$ 2.50 for postage.



# The State of Primordial Perfection

Dugu Choegyal Rinpoche



(photo Liane Graf)

In October 1994, Dugu Choegyal Rinpoche resigned from his position as president of the Tashi Jong Tibetan Community where he had worked to serve his root guru H.E. Khamtrul Rinpoche for six years. Since then he has been working for his retreat centre, Tara Bhir Dugu Retreat Centre in Nepal where selected students coming from Tibet are trained in meditation and art. Besides his commitment to the retreat centre, Rinpoche is starting up the Saraha Institute for seminars and translation of Dharma texts and has established a carpet company outside Kathmandu in order to raise funds for reconstruction of the monastery in Tho-Dugu, Chamdo, Tibet.

Dugu Choegyal Rinpoche is head of the Tho-Dugu region which consists of Tho-Dugu monastery, established in 1676 and Lhadrak Yangven Retreat Centre. The region is also home to the Yangram, Yargon Teng and Drilkyi Retreat Centres which have produced many great masters including Dugu Tokden Sakya Shri (1854-1919), the great Drukpa Kargyudtokden of the last century. There are also two yogini and nunnery centres, Khakyo Thongmonling and Tsogyal Choeling there. The centres and lay communities all work together for the preservation of religion, traditional education and handicrafts as well as for the preservation of the environment.

I would like to express what I feel about all the teachings I received from my teachers and especially from Khamtrul Rinpoche who to me was a real Buddha Vajradhara just as my other teachers were, too. There are masters who have recently passed away but we are very fortunate to have some great masters who are still among us today. Having the opportunity to be in contact with them makes our lives extremely precious.

It is obvious and we all know very well that our precious lives will not last very long. Therefore it is very important for all of us to use every hour, every day, every month of our lives in the most useful way. Life is impermanent and very short and the years pass in the blink of an eye. Therefore, the most important thing in our precious yet brief lives, is to find confidence in our minds, and to discover what mind is all about. If we think and look for other things first in this life and always put off searching for what is really important, we will arrive at the end of our lives completely empty handed.

The reason we have these great teachers, first and foremost, is to help us find the answers for which we are looking. However we ourselves must work hard, too. Therefore without wasting any time, whether it is day or night,

whether we are studying or practising, the first thing is to find the answer for which we are searching.

We are all practitioners and we all share the same experience. Sometimes we think we have found the answer but when we continue to practise, that answer changes and there is another because the real answer to what is the mind doesn't come from studying or learning. It only comes through practising. And practice requires time and effort. And then with experience the practice develops, like peeling away the layers of skin of an onion.

To find the real answer, you need effort and to stimulate effort it is important to have a consideration of the preciousness of human life and impermanence. Knowledge of impermanence doesn't increase suffering within one's mind. On the contrary it is the source of reducing one's suffering and pain because it finally helps to find the solution to one's fear.

We can be fooled by illusion thinking that the things around us are long-lasting and real and in the same way we are all completely fooled by the delusion

of having an ego. Through practice we finally come to realise that there really doesn't exist an ego but this knowledge comes after a long process of meditation.

At the same time we are very attached to things and we think we will live forever. But we all know very well that one day we will all be corpses. There is no escape from that even though we run away and hide. If we keep that fear away and hide from that reality then we become so attached to things that everything that happens in life - people, situations, pleasure, etc. - seems very important to us. But this doesn't mean that we have to feel disgust about life; we can enjoy the beauty of this life. The thing which we must tame and uproot is the source of all pain in our mind, our strong attachment to ego.

In our life as practitioners, compassion and meditation should go hand in hand. Compassion is the path of method and meditation is the wisdom path. Therefore the first thing when we practise is to make sure that we are doing it for the benefit of all sentient beings which means for the enlightenment of all sentient beings. Compassion and love are like the ground, the base and since we are followers of the Buddha we should practise according to his teachings as much as possible. All the great teachers

matter what people do towards us, we absolutely should not have a feeling of hatred towards them. What others perceive is not important. How we perceive others is. We are followers of the Buddha

Perhaps it is not necessary for me to explain as you already know but when we speak of Dzogpa Chenpo, the Great Perfection, we are speaking of a great perfection which is the state of the perfection



The Magnificent Ghajudhari painted by Dugu Choegyal Rinpoche

and his teaching and if we develop a feeling of hatred towards others due to precise reasons, this is a double mistake. If someone dislikes us this is not very important. What is important is that we don't dislike others.

And then there is another very important aspect that we call pure concept which is frequently spoken of in the practice of Vajrayana. The term 'pure concept' has many different levels. At the highest level it refers to how Buddha (or totally realised beings) sees sentient beings. This is the final state towards which we are working. For example if Buddha considers on the one hand another Buddha and then on the other hand a very cruel being, Buddha's way of considering the two is the same: there is absolutely no difference. This doesn't mean that Buddha hasn't got a discriminating capacity to distinguish between what is bad and good. It means that he has reached total equanimity beyond duality and he sees the essence of these things. The reason is that actual reality doesn't exist as pure or impure. Pure and impure are dualism, dualism is samsara and the differentiation of nirvana and samsara doesn't exist in Buddha's wisdom. This is the wisdom of equanimity.

of all beings, of all religions, of all minds, of all qualities, even the perfection of the five poisons. Therefore when we deal with things such as different religions, different schools, different lineages, different words, different concepts, if we, in our daily life, lose ourselves in dualistic concepts, then we don't recognise that the state of everything is self-perfected. We will be fooling ourselves. We will be losing time because struggling with duality is only an illusion of ego.

Whatever practice we do, the first thing is to have an easy, relaxed mind. With that, then we can look at the natural state of the mind. If our mind is completely attached to worldly things, it is like being on the waves of the ocean in a big wind. However, when one's meditation becomes a little more stable then one becomes aware of how the waves are and then one realises that the waves are the ocean itself. And finally we find that everything is in the state of primordial perfection.

Excerpts from a transcription of a teaching given at Merigar on January 21, 1995. The complete teachings given by Dugu Choegyal Rinpoche at Merigar during two week ends this winter, will shortly be published by Shang Shung Edizioni.



Nangwa Tampa one of the twelve Primordial Dzogchen Masters painted by Dugu Choegyal Rinpoche in the Gonpa of Merigar

have given great importance to love and compassion. Even to gain rebirth in the upper realms of the six spheres of existence we must practise compassion.

Method and meditation can be considered to be like the two wings of a bird. In Mahamudra and Dzogchen, particularly, these two wings must be used together for enlightenment. For compassion, the first most important thing is not to have hatred in one's mind and to have respect for all others. No





# INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY NEWS

## The Flower is Opening ...

Report from Merigar

by Anna Eid

Now after many months of patient work the figures of the lineages of the masters have manifested at the Great Flower, the Gonpa at Merigar. We're finishing the last panel: in the centre is the figure of Garab Dorje surrounded by the Indian master of the Semde lineage, with Kumadevi, Buddhagupta, Kukuraja, Nagarjuna, Shri Singha, Vimalamitra and other important Dzogchen masters.

In April the sixth panel was completed: the Dzogchen Masters of the Bon tradition with Tapihritsa as the central figure surrounded by masters of other traditions including Trenpa Namkha, Chang Chub Dorje, Padma Dundul and Ayu Khandro as well as the figure of the Guardian Dorje Legpa riding a goat.

Here in the Gonpa one will see 148 figures of important masters and protectors, ornamented by flowers, mountains, symbols of offerings, clouds and so on. The central panel depicting the Primordial Buddhas of Dzogchen, the precious work of Dugu Choegyal Rinpoche, will be

finished on his next visit to Merigar.

The basis for the many months of detailed work are the extensive notes and drawings for the Gonpa by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, created long before the actual painting began. Rinpoche's notes describe, in the minutest detail, just how the decoration of the Gonpa should be carried out, including the colours and positions of the masters, the mantras and many other important aspects. Although the work is not actually finished, we estimate that by summer the work should come to an end.

The Tibetan artists, Tsering Wangchuk and his wife Sonam Palmo, who have almost completed the seven panels have been here for eight months, painting every day, from morning to evening, even on weekends. One cannot easily imagine how much work has been involved in the decoration of the Gonpa, how much patience and presence has been necessary to carry the work almost to its end.

The work on the panels has followed a precise process, which

begins with the figures being drawn freehand by Tsering Wangchuk on a prepared white base. Then the background details such as the mountains, clouds and sky are filled in with colour and the shading begins, by making myriads of tiny dots. At a certain point, the original line drawing which involved so much fine detail disappears, and all the lines must be drawn once again on top of the colours. At the end, Tsering Wangchuk draws the beautiful ornamentation in fine lines, using pure gold. Each figure is like a thangka. It is interesting to observe how all this is gradually growing. Moment by moment, day by day, the figures come alive and everything together becomes harmonious.

And thus the great manifestation of the Masters slowly takes form...

The Mirror  
office at Merigar can  
now be contacted by  
E-Mail  
100530.527@compuserve.com



The ornamented dome of the 'Great Flower' (photo M. Maglietti)

## MERIGAR SUMMER PROGRAMME 1995

June 23-25

Yantra Yoga Course

for both beginners and advanced practitioners  
with Fabio Andrico and Laura Evangelisti  
Participation fee Lit.150.000 - no discounts

June 16-18

Dance of the Vajra Course

for both beginners and advanced practitioners  
with Adriana dal Borgo  
Participation fee Lit.150.000 - no discounts

July 25-31

WITH H. H. PENOR RINPOCHE

Teaching and Initiation of the Konchok Jidus  
Participation fee Lit. 350.000 with discounts for members

August 2-12

Retreat of Dance of the Vajra

for both beginners and advanced practitioners  
with Prima Mai and Adriana dal Borgo  
Participation fee Lit.350.000 with usual discounts for members

August

Teaching Retreat

with a Tibetan master (to be announced)

Participation fee Lit.320.000 with usual discounts for members

August 23 - September 5

Yantra Yoga Course

with Fabio Andrico

From the evening of August 21st to the morning of September 3rd a course of Yantra Yoga will be held at Merigar for those who want to have the possibility to teach it or who simply wish to deepen their practice. In order to participate in this course it is necessary to already have a good knowledge of the practice.

Those who are new to Yantra Yoga will not be able to participate because a good knowledge of Yantra is a prerequisite for this course which is intended for perfecting the practice. At the end of the course Chögyal Namkhai Norbu intended to give a diploma of participation so that those who are interested in teaching could ask Rinpoche for his authorisation to do so. This course is also important for those who are already teaching Yantra Yoga, and in fact Rinpoche expressed his wish that all the teachers of Yantra would coordinate their practice in order to have a homogenous and correct practice.

The contribution to expenses for each participant is Lit. 350.000 with the usual discounts for members.

Merigar, 58031 Arcidosso, GR, Italy.

Tel. 0564 966837

## You Can Still Help Complete the Temple of the Great Liberation

by the Gakyil of Merigar

The Temple of the Great Liberation, conceived by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu and planned in detail by him, constructed with the collaboration of architects and builders of the Community, is in the last phases of painting and decoration, nearing its completion. On May 29th 1990, it was inaugurated with the presence and teachings of H.H. the Dalai Lama.

The work in progress involves many details of this luminous octagonal structure, which is painted with sacred Dzogchen texts and symbols. Numerous hands are finishing the frescoes, which proceed from Kuntu Zampo, the Ati Buddha, to celebration of the *rigdzins*, the masters of Dzogchen and of all the currents of Tibetan Buddhism and Bon. The Tibetan artists who have done much of this work will be at Merigar another month. Dugu Choegyal Rinpoche, sublime lama and master painter,

will return a fourth time to complete the central panel. He has written: "I feel very blessed for having the opportunity to make a direct work link with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu's Temple of Great Liberation according to his vision for the seat of the Dzogchen Community... Having this link through my painting to this Temple of Great Liberation will bless me for many lifetimes with Samaya."

Money is lacking for the final stage. Expenditures have exceeded income to the Temple building fund by about eight million Italian lire (approx. \$5,000 U.S.), and we estimate that another twenty million lire (approx. \$18,500 U.S.) will be needed to complete the project. We are hoping for the empowerment of the Temple of the Great Liberation soon, possibly this summer when the Master, his health restored, is expected to return to Italy to convalesce.

You who are reading these

words are invited to participate in the effort to complete the Temple by making a generous contribution. Members and friends of the Community from many countries have given time, effort and money. Now we are asking again. *Everyone who offers a sum equivalent to \$100 U.S. or more will receive a poster of the Temple, currently in preparation, in recognition of their help.*

Thank you for your good will, your prayers and your material help.

Please send your gift to: Monte dei Paschi di Siena, Arcidosso branch, Account number 312029, Bank code 013072160 or by postal money order to Comunità Dzogchen, Merigar, 58031 Arcidosso (GR), Italy

In both cases, please indicate clearly your name and address and purpose of your contribution: "For the Temple of the Great Liberation".



## News from Yugoslavia

from the Dzogchen Community of Yugoslavia

After a couple of years of difficult circumstances, the Community in Yugoslavia has made some progress, which is very encouraging. We have some new members who are interested in the Dzogchen teaching some of whom were able to attend Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche's teachings in Greece and Italy last summer.

Since we have been back we have organised small retreats every weekend. The new members have made a difference to our group and created a positive influence with their freshness. Our Gakyil is publishing a small newsletter three times a year.

The news about Rinpoche's health struck us like it did everyone in the Community and we are doing our best to help in every way. We do twelve hour practices of naggon as often as we can and we also include the practice of Guru Dragpur and Mandarava in our daily practices. We hope that Rinpoche will overcome his illness and be able to be with us very soon and for a long time. We also support our Vajra brothers and sisters in their struggle with problems about Rinpoche's hospitalisation.

We have finished painting the mandala and we are very happy with it. We are discussing news ideas for organising retreats of Vajra Dance and Yantra Yoga as soon as possible. Circumstances in our country are changing and possibly moving in a positive direction and we hope that we can invite our Vajra sisters and brothers from other countries to be our guests. Our Gakyil is considering buying a piece of land because at the moment the prices are good. At the moment it is just an idea, but an encouraging one.

## Tibetan studies in Finland

by Sasha Poubants & Kaisa-Liisa Puonti

Here in Finland we have had a good opportunity to study Tibetan one weekend a month since February 1995. Our coach in this endeavour is Sasha Poubants from St Petersburg.

This translation course is the idea of Ilkka Tanner, who spent some days at Sasha's apartment that summer. Because of his organising efforts, we now have the possibility to enjoy our collaboration on the inspiring and beautiful Tibetan verses of *Rig pa ngo sprod gceer mthoong rang grol*, "The Direct Introduction into Primordial Awareness - Self-Liberation through Naked Seeing", the famous text from the cycle of Shitro written by Padmasambhava and rediscovered by Karma Lingpa.

A small group of some 10 enthusiastic learners gather every month for a weekend in Tampere, in southern Finland. We began with the rules of how to read Tibetan, and then it has been a kind of analytical reading, based on practitioners' intermediate needs. We learn the language itself, studying the rules and structures of written Tibetan, simply by going through the text, translating and understanding it verse by verse. When we study we work together analysing the ways of expression. It is very helpful for understanding the Teaching and also for finding the best method of translating the Teaching into our own two languages - Finnish and Russian. One of the results is that if we want to read and understand a Tibetan Dharma text, we need relatively little material for training in this manner - and then we are ready to use original Dharma texts for own education and practice.

Our last session this spring was on 20-21 May. There are thoughts of continuing the course in autumn. And we might find other ways of collaborating: we are looking into a possibility of having a joint retreat place in Sortavala on the Russian side near the Finnish border.

## Synchronising our watches

Fellow practitioner Vladimir Karpinsky, an experienced practising astrologer, has kindly pointed out that the universal timetable for starting special practices done worldwide is incorrect for Russia. Since 1930 Russia has used "Decree Hour" adding an extra hour on to each time zone hour, and "Summer Time", from March to September, adding another hour onto the "Decree Hour". Decree Hour was cancelled in Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Ukraine and Byelorussia after these countries separated from the Soviet Union, but Summer Time is used with the same formula.

Therefore the Universal Timetable for the ex U.S.S.R. is the following:  
Anniversary of Padmasambhava Sat. 8th July 1995

Kiev, Minsk, Riga, Tallin Vilnius	05.30
Moscow, St. Petersburg	06.30
Kirov, Samara	07.30
Sverdlovsk, Tjumen', Ufa, Tashkent	08.30
Omsk, Novosibirsk, Alma-Ata	09.30
Barnaul, Krasnoyarsk, Tomsk	10.30
Irkutsk, Ulan-Ude	11.30
Chita, Yakutsk	12.30
Khabarovsk, Vladivostok, Verkhoyansk	13.30
Magadan, Yozno-Sakhalinsk	14.30
Petrovsk-Kamchatskiy, Anadyr'	15.30

## Kundro Ling at a Crossroads

by Dick Drury



Practitioners meeting at Kundro Ling

During the Easter long weekend of April 14-17 several practitioners were present at Kundro Ling, the UK community property in West Wales, to do practice on and for the land. The property consists of a derelict farming compound, with a stone L-shaped building for which we have outline planning permission to renovate, in the form of two separate dwellings, as the central structure of our projected retreat centre. Practices performed over the weekend, mostly led by Dima Ermakov, included a Puja for Nagas on Saturday 15th by the stream below, and a Fire Puja with Sangqod and Lungta ceremony and the raising of the prayer flags on Sunday. Weather was cold and windy until Tuesday when the last of us departed in warm sunshine, with the feeling that we had done our best and made a positive influence in our ongoing attempt to acquire some of the large area of surrounding land that is on the market, in order to make Kundro Ling more complete and viable as a retreat centre. We rambled over some of this land; it is indeed looking very lovely and suitable for our purposes in its spring awakening, with the streams flowing among the rocks and grassy banks, peacefully green and lush with sprouting bulbs and flowering bushes.

Some unwelcome news was received after leaving Kundro Ling when I stopped in the nearby town of Fishguard to see Mr Thomas, the agent for the sale of the land. He informed me that the land is no longer on the market as Capt.

Carlisle, the landowner, has accepted an offer equivalent to his asking price for the entire 82 acres surrounding Kundro Ling. Mr Thomas had phoned me one evening the week before to ask me if I would like to raise the price we would be prepared to pay for the 28 acres we are interested in, as other offers had been made, but I had decided not to do so.

Mr Thomas was careful to point

out that nothing is certain until contracts have been exchanged, and if this didn't happen within a few weeks the land could well be back on the market again.

As for the possibility of our purchasing some of the land from this buyer if and when the sale goes through, it seems unlikely that someone who has paid so much for it would be prepared to part with any, this also being the opinion of Mr Thomas. If this turns out to be the case, and the buyer has the intention of ripping up the overgrown sections, draining and actively farming it to its best potential, or has some other plan that would not be conducive to our presence there, we may have to consider offering to sell him our property for a decent price and finding somewhere else. Without the addition of this surrounding land Kundro Ling will be incomplete and of very limited use to us.

On the other hand, it may well be that this offer of such a high price for the land, nearly double its estimated value, is purely a ploy on the vendor's part to extract some higher bids from other parties, such as ourselves, by getting one of his cronies to make a bogus offer which will of course never materialise.

This possibility, which is not so unlikely in the circumstances, and the uncertainty of whether a sale will go through to this other party even if their offer is genuine, coupled with the intended effects of our practice, is enough basis for our continuing to hope that the surrounding land will eventually become ours to make use of and care for.

There seems to be not much we can do about the situation at present except continue our practice and see what happens next.

The impulse to immediately offer a higher price is probably too late if the potential buyer is genuine and mistaken if he is not. However, if there are any rich practitioners/benefactors/lottery winners out there they should

make it known immediately if they are willing to help, in case the opportunity arises whereby we could secure the property if we had the funds on hand at short notice.

In the meantime we shall continue with our short-term programme of activity, tidying up the place and making use of it as far as possible; the next major occasion being a long weekend of work and practice May 29-31, with a "Vision Weekend" in July when community members come and view the situation and offer their ideas of how the property should be developed to best suit our purposes. Dzogchen practitioners through Europe and the rest of the world are invited to visit Kundro Ling at these times and/or whenever they have the opportunity.

Facilities are still at a bare minimum at the moment but should increase gradually. We are at present unable to use the water pipeline which crosses Capt. Carlisle's land; water containers may be filled in St Nicholas. Visitors may pitch tents or sleep in the main building or the barn. A latrine area is in the trees behind the barn, plenty of corrugated sheeting around for screening.

We have the intention of purchasing a used static caravan (trailer) to place on-site with the mains electricity supply connected to it. This will be useful for visiting practitioners and for a person or couple who should be residing there to take care of the place and receive visitors.

My own view of the current situation is that the future of Kundro Ling hinges on whether we can acquire the additional land, with its fields, springs and streams, marsh, rock, bushes and trees, and its possibilities for personal practice and retreat in seclusion.

Rinpoche visited our present property last September, giving his approval and blessing, and its name meaning "Place of Eternal (Continuing) Liberation", and he said then that we should try to acquire additional land, which almost immediately became available, albeit at an extortionate price. It has taken us years to find and purchase such a property for the use of our community, which would also of course be useful for practitioners throughout Europe and elsewhere. The notion of having to give it up now is hard to entertain.

The situation may well have changed or become clearer by the time you read this. Please do not hesitate to contact me with enquiries, offers and suggestions - Tel. 378-470777 or write to me at Yew Tree House, Bladbean, Kent CT4 6LU GB.



# A Time of Change

Report from Tsegialgar

by Lauri Marder



At the retreat cabin in Buckland

This is spring, and the peepers in the swamp are singing in the night, the birds are carrying on all day, and the trees are about to explode into green leaves. The winter is over, and the Dzogchen Community has shaken off the cold chill and stepped into the sunlight.

Tsegialgar is being strongly challenged in some ways. This community, which has been able to meet almost any occasion fairly easily is now facing a completely new experience.

The Conway community has always known how to get things done. Any time a structure needed to be built or repaired or some shelves put up, or a retreat to be planned and hosted, it's been accomplished without wasting time or motion, no matter how huge the job, or how difficult. Collaboration has been a strong point here.

When Rinpoche taught here last fall, dressed in a beautiful yellow silk gown from Buryatia, the leaves were golden, the light was golden, and the teachings were golden. All through the dark winter his words echoed in the building, and the new practices on the first level of Santi Maha Sangha were sung, and the golden color remained, because of the reality of the teachings in the hearts and minds of the students. What else could be needed other than the opportunity to practise these teachings, and learn well enough to receive more?

Well, it's been said more than once that this community needs to become more "professional," or more efficient. It is often more like a family business with everyone deciding everything, than a well-run, well-planned venture. But now there is so much to do - the diversity of activities means everyone cannot be informed enough about everything to have a meaningful opinion to offer. But something

more than the old, casual method is probably needed.

The experience of having The Mirror here makes it clear that a better level of organization could be useful. The Tsegialgar community also has the responsibility to host the Shang-Shung Institute, distribute books and information, develop a library and preserve its tape archive and maintain a schedule of practice and classes, as well as retreats. And there is a responsibility to more than the immediate Dzogchen family. It almost seems overwhelming at times.

Gakyil meetings are long. Sitting in the library, which is still half a library and half a storage room, with the tables laid for tea, the gakyil laughs and groans as the agenda is planned, and then settles in to work. First the singing of Song of the Vajra, then the meeting begins, and sometimes, as when the resident artist says "It doesn't take a brain surgeon to run a computer," a certain giddiness takes hold, as the roles of brain surgeon, artist and layout person for The Mirror begin to mingle in the minds of all present. The artist offers to learn to operate a computer, something he has never wanted to do, and all are amazed, then half expect a volunteer brain surgeon to speak up too. The different colors of the gakyil may have prepared well, yet it is seven hours later before all the decisions are made and the gakyil members can go home.

Everyone who is part of this community has a distinct effect on it, and offers their own unique gift - from the ongoing labors of the one who balances the books and the one who schedules all the practices, the care of those who do the physical maintenance, and the efforts of the Mirror team - to the dedication of those who are coming to a practice when they can, or the generosity of those sending some money, or the

loving-kindness of those caring for others, or inspiration of someone attending a class, or diligence of those working on a text somewhere else, all have some effect on community life - and the result is a beneficial and bracing mixture.

It is so comfortable and pleasant in the room that was intended for the Institute's offices, that the practices are held there, but once the Institute is real, that room will become a room for the public to enter, and the practices will be elsewhere. As it is with other aspects, the roles of the rooms, too, are still in flux. Circumstances continue to dictate what is done.

The artist has been studying one of the best programs for graphic design. He works at it hours at a time, and though his paintings are done with all the traditional materials, it seems his mind is able to accept the world of the computer as well. Now when he isn't drawing a deity or hammering on something, or painting a mandala to send across the world, he's in the office, learning Quark Express. No one knows yet if he'll be a good designer, but it's nice to see him trying.

The guiding principles of the changes which will occur or not occur here are the ones that were studied in the text of the Precious Vase: in this there is a way to relax and be sure that, with such a teaching and such a master, things are possible. They will never be linked to the principles laid out in a book on how to run a successful small business, though there might be some good ideas in such a book.

When on a bright spring day the birds are singing outside, inside one might also find the secretary singing, singing a song which sounds Tibetan, and then later, one would surely hear him say, "Oh, it is so fortunate for us to have this school, this copy machine, these teachings! I am so happy. Isn't it wonderful!" and one has to agree with that. It is not so serious, how it goes, when the way is interesting and challenging and one has a supremely wonderful teacher and good companions on the path.

We pray for the long life and health of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu.

## Tsegialgar

P.O. Box 277, Conway, Mass.  
01341 USA  
Tel. 413 369 4153  
Fax. 413 369 4165  
E-Mail address: 74404.1141@compuserve.com

## Yantra Yoga Retreat

with Fabio Andrico

Santa Fe

July 1 to 5

The Santa Fe Gakyil is sponsoring a Yantra Yoga Retreat from July 1 to 5, 1995 at the new yurt at Lidian King's in Santa Fe. \$15 per session or \$125 for entire retreat. Call Lidian at 505/988-5995 for information.

## Yantra Yoga Retreat

with Fabio Andrico

Tsegialgar

July 15 to 23

What is Yantra Yoga? In the ancient tradition of the Union of Sun and Moon tantra, Yantra Yoga consists of simple and profound, yet challenging movements that coordinate channels and prana. Yantra begins with bodily exercise to acknowledge the importance and strengthening the facilities of the body. It then proceeds to breathing which is the vehicle of the vital force called prana; and finally reaches the level of mind.

This retreat includes methods for: loosening the joints, purification of prana, control of the channels and effortless control of prana. The teachings are open to anyone who is interested.

Why Do Yantra Yoga? Develop healthy and harmonious condition of the elements, so negative conditions are pacified and positive ones enhanced. Discover and integrate the knowledge of the natural state in body speech and mind. Applied in practices in the Base of Santi Maha Sangha. Absolutely necessary for Stage 5 of Santi Maha Sangha.

Schedule: Retreat starts 10:00 am on July 15th and ends the afternoon of July 23rd

Weekends: Morning Session 10:00 am to 12:00 Noon

Afternoon Session 2:30 pm to 4:30 pm

Weekdays: Afternoon Session 2:30 pm to 4:30 pm

Evening Session 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm Schedule may change if group agrees

Registration: Contact the Secretary at Tsegialgar to reserve a space. Deposits are useful and appreciated.

Retreat Fee: \$200 for the whole retreat. \$25 per day with \$50 minimum. Basic (\$300) members 30% discount, Sustaining (\$600) members 100% discount Dormitory: Limited spaces are available in the dormitory at the school. Leave a message for the Geko at 413-369-4153. It's \$5/day. Other Stuff: Wear loose comfortable clothes. Bring exercise pad or blanket. There are no meals provided with this retreat.

## Vajra Dance Retreat

with Prima Mai

Tsegialgar

June 8 to 14

This is one of two Dance Retreats that Prima Mai is teaching in the USA in 1995. Participants must have transmission of Vajra Song from Chögyal Namkhai Norbu. The retreat will include the Dance of the Song of Vajra for beginning and advanced dance practitioners. Beginners should attend from the beginning of the retreat.

Schedule: The retreat starts 10:00 am on June 8th and ends the evening of June 14th

Beginners Class: 10:00 am to 12:00 Noon

Beginners Class/Practice: 2:30 pm to 4:30 pm

Advanced Class: 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm The schedule may change if group agrees.

Registration: Because of limited space, preference will be given to those who register in advance. Contact the Secretary at Tsegialgar to reserve a space. Deposits are useful to confirm your space and commitment; and are appreciated.

Retreat Fee: \$140 for the whole retreat. \$25 per day with \$50 minimum. Basic (\$300) members 30% discount, Sustaining (\$600) members 100% discount.

Dormitory: Limited spaces are available in the dormitory at the school. Leave a message for the Geko at 413-369-4153. It's \$5/day. Other Stuff: Bring some dance/movement shoes or an extra pair of socks. There are no meals provided with this retreat.



# A year, a shed and a practice retreat

Report from Namgyalgar

a pastiche of writings from Patty Chandler, Jean Mackintosh and Pamela Oldmeadow

After many years of searching for a piece of land to be our Gar, we have chosen our land and within a less than a year we have built a splendid building. The Shed.

For those people involved in the purchase and setting up of the land purchase, and the loan scheme, and land planning, it has been a busy year. Without people's dedication and the inspiration of our teacher, none of this could have happened. Whilst Rinpoche was so seriously ill in hospital, we continued with determination to plan for the future.

The Shed is large enough to hold 200 people or two Vajramats, and will provide shelter from rain and hot sun for many retreats to come, as we develop Namgyalgar, as envisioned by Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche, to be an important place for the preservation and continuance of the precious Dzogchen teachings.

In late December, members of the Australian Dzogchen Community gathered on Namgyalgar, to practice, to prepare campsites and facilities for Fabio Andrico's visit and to build the shed. Having disrupted the forest beings by clearing the site, digging the foundation holes and cutting trees from the forest, we did Sangchod using eucalyptus leaves on the fire for the practice. The sweet smelling smoke drifted over the prepared site as we chanted and the atmosphere lightened and cleared as we finished with a Ganapuja.

Everyone worked hard to make Namgyalgar a more comfortable place to be. Some people built a toilet with bush poles, hessian

walls, a tin roof and a view through the forest. Others constructed a bathroom with bush showers and a bath in amongst the trees. A tent was used for the kitchen with two sinks set up outside. The camp fire was the main gathering point in the evening when people ate together, played music, sang, talked and rested after the day's work. Small camps nestled amongst the trees in the forest and people would visit each other and practice at night. A twenty four hour practice was held in a small grove in the forest with a statue of the Buddha under a tree keeping the practitioners company through the night.

Large foundation holes, some of which required a jackhammer to dig through the rock, had been dug for the poles. However, it wasn't until we saw the poles arriving that we really appreciated the dimensions of the shed - it is 10 metres wide by 20 meters long. The huge logs were dragged by tractor and then lifted by crane into position. All hands were at the site the day the concrete truck came to pour the cement into the holes, with people helping direct the cement and gather stones and rocks to reinforce the foundations. As the beams went up the majestic nature of the building became more obvious. People referred to it as a temple. When the huge centre pole was put in place we did another Sangchod and Ganapuja and placed a small copy of the Song of the Vajra in the beam.

Concurrently with the construction of the shed, a 5,000 gallon cement water tank was constructed on site and filled with the water from Couria Creek. In

future the water will come from the rain water off the roof of the shed.

On January 21, after a much delayed flight from Argentina, Fabio Andrico flew into Sydney and headed down to Tilba. Because of delays caused by the rain, the 34 Yantra Yoga participants settled into the hall at the little town of Tilba Tilba for teachings. They came from all places, including a passing tourist - a chiropractor from New York. Fabio's excellent teaching and entertaining talents made the course very enjoyable and successful.

Meanwhile the building continued on the shed. Finally we put the sisalation and the hessian underneath and the iron on top of the roof. We levelled the earthen floor, covering it with the Vajra mats and carpets. Colourful Tibetan hangings were hung and all was splendid. The shed was finished at 5 pm on Saturday afternoon just as our practice retreat was about to start.

Not one disagreement had been heard for the entire time of building. From the beginning to the end. Starting with the deep foundation holes, filled with rain water and mud, they were emptied by buckets, jackhammered deeper and yet we only encountered enthusiastic support from the people who volunteered their labour and help. One reason for the smooth progress was that all had been so well planned by Jean, who had quietly negotiated with the local builders and suppliers. Patty gave tireless support and did all the financial management, while Alex and Laurence laboured daily



Putting up the logs for The Shed

on the project. Thanks to all the wonderful people whose hard work contributed to save us thousands of dollars.

So we have The Shed and really, it is beautiful. It is very solid and substantial. Under its roof there is a sense of achievement, and satisfaction from the magnificent wooden beams, held high by the strong rough hewn posts, which echo the surrounding landscape. Inside it is like an organic sculpture.

So, we had a practice retreat for seven days. We did Mandarava practice at 8.00 am and then Mandarava Ganapuja with the Ganapuja of Jigme Lingpa at 10 am, dedicated to the health of Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche. In the afternoon we practised Semzin. Firstly we discussed the Semzin of the day and then each person found a place in the valley to practice. Practitioners could be seen and heard as they scattered over the fields, practising, laughing and shouting and gazing into the sky. In the evenings we did Yantra Yoga and the Guardian practice.

The atmosphere was light with a real sweetness in the air. By the time Fabio left for Melbourne and Byron Bay the members of the Australian Dzogchen community

were feeling inspired and very fortunate that he had come to Namgyalgar and led our timely retreat. We thank him for his kindness and skilled teaching. And for his hilarious health stories from round the world!

The Yantra courses, retreat and auction helped raise much needed funds for the shed. Regular gatherings are being held to continue to build on what we have learnt from Fabio. We met again at Namgyalgar at Easter and elected our new office bearers: Luciano Limonta is our new president, Barry Gazzard, vice president, Tim McEntee, secretary, and Althea Vavasour, treasurer; Helen Williams continues as public officer. May their energies guide us well and unite us throughout the coming year.

Thanks to all the people who have supported Namgyalgar and worked to achieve its ends. Thanks especially to the out-going office bearers and other gakyil members, for a mammoth job over the last twelve months when responsibilities have grown so much. Thank you to Rinpoche for his teachings and sending Fabio to Australia. We had very good teachings, and a retreat. A lot has been learned!!!

## Changing perspectives

Report from Tashigar

The scene was in Cordoba, about one hour's drive from Tashigar, the Dzogchen Gar in Argentina. It was winter, July 1994. The group was intensively involved in the Santi Maha Sangha training. While studying, we, as a group, started to feel more committed, we began to understand many things that were scattered through our education, everything was falling into place and it was a relief. Devotion was growing and filling us. How marvellous it was to have a Teacher!

In the meantime, the house at "El Durazno" was facing some changes, too. The bathroom was remodelled, the kitchen was made anew, and when almost everything was ready to receive the Master in December 1994, we

were reminded of impermanence and its inexorability: Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche was not going to be able to come to Tashigar now for the scheduled Christmas retreat and Santi Maha Sangha exams and First Level Training in January.

The news struck us in typical Latin American style - we took it dramatically. To think that Rinpoche was suffering, if only physically, and the unexpected realisation of the urgency to practice, quickly before falling in the darkness of samsara gave way to different modalities of responses in the group. Some people sank into depression, we suppose, because for a while they didn't show up at all, surprisingly, for they were there the day before. Other people went into

"fundamentalism" as Fabio Andrico called it, and have been practising fervently since then. It took a while to develop a perspective and to really understand we are not anyone's children, but practitioners in the making. We are responsible. Then and there the words of Rinpoche saying, "The Buddha shows the path. It depends on yourself alone to arrive," made true sense. So the whole thing woke us up pretty much, shaking our foundations and putting everything in a more mature perspective.

So Fabio Andrico came to teach Yantra Yoga, and he did so in his own amusing way. He also led the practice retreat scheduled for Christmas. He is fun to be with, he is energetic, and had a lot of stories of his life with Rinpo-

che that we enjoyed hearing during the breaks. We like him a lot here in Argentina.

Then in March, at the request of the Drukpa Kagyu Center and the Dzogchen Community, Sey Rinpoche came to lead an intensive practice course on *shiné* and mainly to teach us the *phowa* practice. For four days in Cordoba city, from seven to nine in the morning and from 8.30 to 10.30 in the evening we sat. He would walk around checking our posture. His explanations were direct and simple, "I'm not a scholar," he said, "but I have practised a little bit and I know about *shiné*". He looked bored at our complicated questions and stories of experiences and at the end we understood what he meant by that. Now we want to practise *shiné* more often since we have remembered how important it is.

Then we moved to Tashigar. More than forty people attended the *phowa* retreat given by Sey

Rinpoche. The house has 24 beds, some people stayed in tents and the meals were organised at our new kitchen. For five days we had four sessions of two hours each, and amazingly in such a short time, with such little effort, and - we must say - a lot of determination on the part of Sey Rinpoche, everybody showed the signs. "Now you can rest in peace" was a typical joke during the retreat.

On his resurrection, Jesus said to his incredulous disciples, "Put your fingers on my wounds". We did. That collective experience reinforced our faith in the path.

A deep feeling of gratitude arose in our hearts towards Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche for offering us his constant guidance and for the opportunity to have a place and an environment for realisation.

May the lotus feet of the precious Masters remain firmly upon the earth!



**The Mirror:** You are the third lineage holder of Tokden Dugu Shakya Shree Rinpoche and the reincarnation of his disciple, Tripon Pema Choegyal in the Drukpa Kagyu lineage. Could you tell us a little about this lineage in particular?

**Sey Rinpoche:** Our particular lineage comes down from Shakya Shree's teachers Tsog nyid and Tenpa Nyima Khamtrul to Shakya Shree and then to his disciple, Tripon Pema Choegyal, who I am supposed to be the reincarnation of, and from him my father received teachings of the Drukpa Kagyu lineage which he transmitted to me.

Tripon Pema Choegyal had a lot of disciples such as my father and Thuksey Rinpoche and I received many teachings, transmissions and empowerments from them. However I practised more with Lopon Sonam Zangpo Rinpoche, another of Shakya Shree's disciples, so I feel a lot closer to him.

**The Mirror:** Could you give us a little biographical information about Shakya Shree.

**Sey Rinpoche:** Shakya Shree was born into a very poor family who were almost beggars and was not recognised as a reincarnation, a *tulku*, by anyone. However, when he was born he already had his hair in locks, a bit like Bob Marley and during his childhood, he always played at being a meditator or a master who was teaching and these kind of activities.

Then at some point he became an ordained monk in Dugu Choegyal Rinpoche's monastery called Dugu Gonpa in Kham but since he belonged to a very poor family he became a worker, a sweeper, at the monastery, cleaning the floor and passing most of the time in the kitchen, cooking and washing the dishes. When important lamas came to give teachings and initiations, he was unable to attend because he was expected to work. But whenever he had the possibility to receive teaching or an empowerment he used to put it into practice, not keep it as something theoretical.

Since he had to work in the monastery he didn't have much time to practise during the daytime, so he used to meditate at night. But because he was so tired after working all day he used to fall asleep while practising, so he would attach his hair with a cord to the ceiling so that whenever he fell asleep, he would be immediately woken up by the tugging on his hair. This is an example of how much effort he put into his meditation.

Once Tsog nyid Rinpoche came to the monastery to give an empowerment, Shakya Shree also tried to enter into the *sangha* for the empowerment but the monks told him that it wasn't important for him and that it would be better for him to go and work in the

# Opening the eye of rigpa

An interview with Gelek Namgyal Sey Rinpoche



*Ngawang Gelek Namgyal, better known as Sey Rinpoche, is the third lineage holder of Tokden Dugu Shakya Shree Rinpoche and the reincarnation of Tripon Pema Choegyal, a great tantric practitioner. His father, Apho Rinpoche, was a great tantric master and grandson of Shakya Shree. Born in 1963 in Sikkim, India, Sey Rinpoche was recognised by Dudjom Rinpoche as the reincarnation of Tripon Pema Choegyal at the age of two. Five years later he moved with his family to Manali in the north Indian state of Himachal Pradesh where his father established his monastery. During these early years, he received teaching and empowerment from Khamtrul Rinpoche and Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche and then studied for four years in Darjeeling with Thuksey Rinpoche. Later in Bhutan Sey Rinpoche received teachings on and practised the Six Yogas of Naropa with his teacher Lopon Sonam Zangpo. Following this he studied at the Institute of Buddhist Dialectics in Dharamsala for three years. In 1986 he married. He currently lives in Manali. During his stay at Merigar, Sey Rinpoche kindly gave this interview to The Mirror.*

kitchen. But Tsog nyid Rinpoche told the monks as a prediction that while at this moment they were treating him like an animal, in the future they would not even be worthy to receive his piss as a blessing. Anyway, Tsog nyid Rinpoche became Shakya Shree's first lama.

Another of his most important teachers was Tenpa Nyima Khamtrul, one of the Khamtrul Rinpoches. Under the guidance of these masters he practised almost as hard as Milarepa and gradually he became realised.

Later he got married and had eleven children and he used to practise in a hermitage in the mountain. But there were many people who were very negative about him and called him a breaker of vows and wouldn't even drink the water that ran down from the mountain close to his hermitage. He remained in meditation on the mountain and obtained something similar to the rainbow body - when a candle was placed in front of him, it could be seen from the back almost like looking through a dirty

piece of glass. He attained this much realisation. Gradually he became very famous throughout Tibet and had a lot of disciples from all through the Himalaya region.

He received a lot of his teachings through pure vision and during his lifetime the teachings on Mahamudra and the Six Yogas of Naropa which were on the point of vanishing underwent a renaissance because of him. He discovered many teachings through his visions even though some of the lineages had been broken. He is a very important person in the Drukpa Kagyu lineage and even in the Nyingmapa lineage. Almost all the lineages use the name of Shakya Shree.

Even the disciples of Shakya Shree were extraordinary people such as my teacher Sonam Zangpo Rinpoche. He once told us how he had walked from Bhutan to Kham for six months to receive teaching from Shakya Shree, walking day and night. He told us that he walked so much that his

shoes they wore out and he had to bind his feet with rags so that he could continue walking. And when he couldn't find any rags he walked barefoot.

I first met Sonam Zangpo at Ciag ri monastery in Bhutan where I did my first *ngondro*. I stayed there about six months. Then someone offered a monastery and land to Rinpoche - I thought it would be a very wonderful place with plenty of rooms. When we got there it was completely the opposite, it was the type of place nobody would want. There was a small broken down temple in a forest and people told us that it had once been a village but that everyone had died from an infectious disease. The house were all broken. Rinpoche had a tent but we disciples had none so we had to make some kind of shelter there. When it rained we had to move our beds from one place to another to keep them dry. I did my second and third *ngondro* there - in fact I've done five *ngondros* all together. Then Sonam Zangpo started to teach *shiné* and *lhagton*.

We stayed there about a year then many people started to come because Sonam Zangpo was very famous. Even the king came there to see him. Everyone admired the way he and his disciples lived. The king ordered the army to build a house for Rinpoche. When Rinpoche introduced me to the king as the great-grandson of his guru the king decided to build a house for me as well. Then the other disciples started to build small hermitages for themselves. But when everything was ready, we only stayed in the houses for three months. Rinpoche said that it wasn't good to stay there any longer because there were too many activities going on.

So we left and again someone offered him land. By this time I knew how it would be. It was a place called rDo ran thag near Phunakan in Bhutan. It was about seven hours walk from the road

to do the Six Yogas of Naropa. It was very hard - we used to do a thousand *bep* every day. I was seventeen or eighteen when I went there and I stayed until I was about twenty. So even if I had never met Shakya Shree I knew what a great master he had been because of his disciples. When I met Sonam Zangpo Rinpoche he was about 80 or 81 years old and he passed away when he was 92. I was with him for about 5 years in Bhutan. He used to tell us stories about Shakya Shree.

**The Mirror:** Can you tell us a little about your training and your experiences while you were in Bhutan?

**Sey Rinpoche:** No, I don't think that it is necessary. Lopon Sonam Zangpo told us not to speak about all our experiences because at some point this can stop the experiences from arising since they are linked to tantric practices and depend very much on one's *damsig* (*samaya*). So if you tell a lot of people, it is very difficult to keep *damsig* with many people and you can have a lot of obstacles. So from that point of view I think... I think that you should practice and you will experience for yourself.

**The Mirror:** You have been teaching on *shiné* this week at Merigar from a *gonter* of Tokden Shakya Shree Rinpoche entitled *Tharpe Gojeed*, that which opens the door of liberation. How does the state of mind one experiences through *shiné* practice differ from the ordinary everyday mind?

**Sey Rinpoche:** The *rigpa* mind which we can experience through practice is the aware mind, calm, not disturbed or influenced or carried away by thoughts. Very profound, clear awareness is very difficult to achieve but awareness is the most important base for any kind of practice from Sutrayana to profound teachings such as the highest tantras. Without awareness you cannot, for example, visualise

## DHARMA BOOKS

Sey Rinpoche has opened a library at the monastery in Manali and is asking for donations of Dharma (or religious) books in English since they are expensive and difficult to get in India. Anyone able to contribute should send the books to: Sey Rinpoche, Monastery of Apho Rinpoche, P.O. Vashist Monali, Distt. Kulu, (H.P.) India.

into the forest. I don't think anyone had ever lived in this place: it was almost jungle. We stayed in bamboo houses which were built above the ground because there are many snakes there. The roofs were made of wild banana leaves. Actually it was a very dangerous place - there were wild elephants and boa constrictors large enough to swallow a deer, according to the local people, although I never saw one as big as that.

It was in this place that I started

yourself as a deity such as Tara or Vajrayogini or Chakrasamvara. Whatever practice you do you have to have a very sharp visualisation and for that undisturbed awareness is very important.

**The Mirror:** You mentioned during your teaching the dangers of falling into a state of fixation in which there is no awareness of the surroundings instead of a calm state in which there is an awareness of the senses and sense perception.

*continued on page 12*



## A.S.I.A.: Current Developments

continued from page 1

A.S.I.A. contribution in the organisation of a charity soccer match: the funds generated by the event will be distributed among the three organisations dealing with sponsorship of children (CIS, MAIS, A.S.I.A.).

The above list is only a partial representation of the many activities that underline the current dynamism of the organisation. It gives, however, the reader the possibility to understand that A.S.I.A. is facing today a growth that, while being extremely challenging, also assumes constancy in commitment and strong sense of responsibility.

Various interpretations on the approval by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Dzam-thog project and on its future management have recently been discussed within the Community, and some of them were not fully correct.

In this respect, it is perhaps useful to remember that public financing of projects undergoes a very strict procedure and actual disbursement occurs on the base of a detailed work plan and of the analytical description of expenses as an essential part of the project document that quantifies the type, the amount and the time frame of the expected costs.

Any variation from the original plan in project implementation is enough to stop disbursement. In other words, the approved financial support to the project can only be used for the activities mentioned in the approved project document.

In order to avoid any possible misunderstanding, a summary of the estimated project costs are reported in the below table (figures in US dollars are approximate since funding is in Italian lire; exchange rate used 1600 Lira = 1 US\$).

Bearing in mind that the project

<b>TOTAL PROJECT COST</b>	<b>\$1,135,818</b>
<b>TIBETAN GOVERNMENT CONTRIBUTION</b>	<b>\$373,465</b>
<b>M.A.E. CONTRIBUTION</b>	<b>\$778,552</b>
<i>Summary of costs:</i>	
Italian staff training	\$7,941
Italian staff employment	\$193,804
Local staff	\$90,917
Consultants	\$83,823
Training of local staff	\$35,705
Technical follow-up onsite missions	\$18,088
Civil works (school, hospital)	\$300,588
Technical equipment (school, hospital)	\$179,183
Rotative fund and microprojects onsite	\$76,470
Onsite Logistics	\$56,942
Feasibility study	\$28,823
Infrastructural organisation and management in Italy	\$63,529

preparation costs have reached approximately \$30,000, it is possible to understand from the above table that A.S.I.A. will not suddenly receive a rich patrimony, but will rather assume the task to ensure, together with COSV, the management of the allocated resources so that they reach the legitimate beneficiaries in the scheduled times and modes.

In particular, the table shows that only \$63,529 (108 million lire) are included in the budget, over a period of three years, for the infrastructural organisation costs of the two organisations in Italy (corresponding to 18 million lire/year for each NGO = approx. \$11,000/year). It is, therefore, easy to understand that A.S.I.A. will not have any availability of additional funds when implementing the Dzam-thog project.

Coming down to the principles followed by A.S.I.A. in the implementation of activities and in the definition of targets, it is well known that A.S.I.A. was created to provide a contribution to the preservation of the Tibetan cultural identity and to offer support to the social and economic development of the Tibetan people. So far, A.S.I.A.'s work

has been exclusively and totally carried out on a non-remunerated voluntary basis. The philosophy behind this choice has always been tuned on saving as much as possible, remaining loyal to the principle that "every and each resource saved in the west will be more productively used, and will generate an higher impact, when invested in Tibet".

To draw the reader's attention to such fundamental aspects seems particularly useful not only to respond to specific comments raised recently in the Community, but mostly to point out the poor results of the 1995 fund raising campaign (carried out with the Xmas "Message of Hope" mailing), so far still significantly below expectations.

A.S.I.A. is certainly aware of the unexpected pressure generated by recent events on people's capacity of contribution. However, this does not affect the fact that A.S.I.A. survives mainly thanks to the financial support of its members and sponsors.

All ongoing A.S.I.A. projects, and those in the pipeline for the future, are only partly financed through public funds (in fact this type of resource is actually being used for the first time with the beginning of the Dzam-thog

project). On the contrary, all initiatives have been mainly executed with the generous support of the sponsors/members and with the promotional initiatives organised by A.S.I.A. so far. Without this type of support the survival of the organisation cannot be ensured and the ongoing projects may run the risk of being interrupted or suspended.

On the other hand, it is certain that the increase of the A.S.I.A. work load and responsibility should result in a balanced growth of the Association's infrastructure. This development must allow the organisation to respond to the new requirements with appropriate professional and economic solutions.

It is with these considerations in mind that A.S.I.A. is now requesting all those interested in participating in the implementation of projects as onsite volunteers or experts, to send us their updated Curriculum Vitae. A.S.I.A. is an equal opportunity organisation but, given the same professional value, it is willing to give preference to Community members to cover the project profile vacancies. As general information, A.S.I.A. can select candidates without restriction in its own directly financed projects. On the contrary, for the projects financed through the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, it is important to point out that some of the positions (e.g.: "volunteer") can only be filled by Italian nationals.

Once again, all interested people are welcome and urged to send their updated C.V. for registration in the A.S.I.A. data bank. Selected candidates will be contacted by A.S.I.A. for follow up.

With regard to the present ongoing projects, the following specific professional profiles are requested and need to be covered without delay.

For the "Development of the emergency health care in Tibet" project, to be executed in cooperation with CISP, the following profiles are vacant:

- Chief Technical Advisor (CTA), with experience in health projects management and in public health care.
- Expert, with experience in health projects management and in public health care, with administrative and logistic/organizational capacities; supportive role to the CTA.
- Expert with experience in social communications techniques
- Expert with experience in emergency surgery
- Expert with experience in health equipment

For the project "Development of health and education conditions in the village of Dzam-thog, Chamdo Prefecture, Tibetan Autonomous Region, People's Republic of China" (COSV/ASIA project), the following profiles are vacant:

- Volunteer, Chief Technical Advisor
- Volunteer, Obstetrician
- Volunteer, Medical doctor
- Expert, Civil engineer
- Expert, responsible for laboratory analysis
- Consultant, expert in Tibetology
- Consultant, Health sector specialist
- Consultant training and extension specialist
- Specific consultants

For more information on academic qualifications and terms of assignment please contact the following address:

A.S.I.A.  
c/o Genesi, via S. Erasmo 12  
00184 Rome - Italy  
Tel/fax: 06/77200880  
Fax: 06/063052537  
E-Mail: Mclink:  
mc8125@mclink.it

## Opening the eye...

continued from page 11

Could you comment on this?

**Sey Rinpoche:** We call this dullness *shiné ting powa*. It can be compared, for example, to a situation in which your mind is very much concentrated on your eye-sight. If you see something interesting then your mind becomes completely occupied by the sight so whatever you hear or smell cannot be absorbed - you will not know whether you are hearing the sound of a human or a dog or the sound of fire or wind. You hear sound but you cannot distinguish it. So in the same way, if you stay like this when you are meditating *shiné*, your mind will be completely occupied by the mind and will not be able to absorb any kind of external senses such as sight, smell, touch, taste. It is very similar to *nepa*, calm mind, because the "eye of *rigpa*" is completely blind, it cannot feel anything, not even whether or not thoughts are arising.

If you remain in this state it is like being knocked out. If you think this is *shiné* and if you practise that, it is very dangerous and becomes an obstacle.

In other words, *shiné* should be very clear, in the Six Yogas we call it clear light, 'ödsel 'ödsel does not mean light from some object such as a flashlight or the sun, but the clarity of awareness which should be present, while at the same time all the senses should be open. Like feeling, for example, you don't have to follow the feelings you have in order to understand that this is a cold wind or a hot wind, but you should just absorb and be aware of these feelings. This is valid not only for the mind but also for one's vision. In that way you can have clear awareness which is the important thing.

**The Mirror:** While you were speaking about Mahamudra one afternoon, you gave a short quotation which remained very

much in my mind, "When you understand one, you understand all".

**Sey Rinpoche:** Ah yes, *gag shes kun grol*. This is an explanation of Mahamudra though I don't know if everyone accepts it. *Gag shes kun grol* means that if you realise one, you realise everything. If you realise your mind as emptiness, that there is no mind, then everything can be understood in the same way because it is mind which absorbs everything as a reality, as something permanent. It is the dualistic mind which considers everything to be good or bad, ugly or beautiful, friendly or unfriendly etc. If you clarify mind then you can clarify everything. Automatically. You don't have to consider that this cup is emptiness because of this and that reason, that this table is emptiness, etc. You don't have to turn to external phenomena when you understand that mind is emptiness, *shunyata*. When you understand the



The Lady Chöd Master, Doljin Khandro, passed away on March 6th, 1995 in Mongolia in her 85th year. Her presence, her knowledge and teaching, her openness and compassion will be sorely missed by her

many students in Mongolia and Buryatia. Glimpses of her life may be seen in Constanzo Allione's video "We will meet again in the Land of the Dakini" filmed last year in Mongolia.

emptiness, *shunyata*, of the mind, you understand the emptiness of everything.

**The Mirror:** Do you feel that there is some danger for the continuation of the teaching in the future because of the current situation in Tibet and the passing away of a generation of great Tibetan spiritual masters?

**Sey Rinpoche:** Yes. Even Guru Rinpoche considered that the Dharma would vanish when the "iron

bird" starts to fly in the sky. Maybe it is the time. Much depends on our effort - as you said before most Westerners don't have much time to practise Dharma, they have to work. About a century ago, Dharma was practised in a different way. To become teachers like the great lamas of the past we should know how they practised, how much time they dedicated to practice, how much they sacrificed to this

continued on page 16



# The Shang Shung Institute in Italy

by Enrico dell'Angelo

At the Italian branch of the Shang Shung Institute the following activities are going ahead:

## ARCHIVES

A convention between the Associazione Culturale Comunita Dzog-chen and the Shang Shung Institute has been drawn up ratifying the assignment of the management of the archives to the Institute. Besides the library which is already run by the Institute, the Institute will manage the tape library and the video library so that the administration of the archives will be unified, while they remain the property of the Associazione. Projects for the archives are aimed on one hand at preservation of the material they contain and on the other at making them accessible to those interested.

There are several factors which emphasise the importance of the archives and projects related to them:

- the tape library contains more than eight thousand cassettes of the teachings of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu from 1976 to today. A large part of them are the only copies and many of them, because of their age, run the risk of being demagnetised. If this material deteriorates, we will lose the only existing recordings of many precious teachings.

- Another aspect worth considering is that up to now there has been no inventory or even a catalogue of the audio material kept in the tape library. This means that even though we have a great treasure we are only able to use a small part of it.

- the library is in a similar condition. It contains hundreds of manuscripts which have not yet been duplicated, many of which are the only copies in the world. The inventory for the section of texts in Western languages has almost been completed but the part for texts in Tibetan has still to be done. Cataloguing has not yet started and requires the contribution of specialised personnel who know not only how to catalogue but who also have a good knowledge of Tibetan.

- the video library contains more than a thousand films, many of them documentaries, on Tibet and Tibetan culture as well as many films of the teachings of Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche and other Tibetan masters. The video cassettes need to be classified and an inventory and a catalogue published.

- the photos library contains several thousand photos which have not yet been catalogued or classified. The generosity of the American branch of the Institute has allowed us to buy a colour scanner and we have started

digitalised cataloguing of the photographic material. Thanks to the collaboration of photographer Gianni Baggi who has photographed a third of the paintings in the Merigar Gonpa, we have been able to insert these images into the digital catalogue. (Those who have personal photo archives regarding Tibetan culture or the history of the Dzog-chen Community and who are interested in including them in the digital archive can contact Alex Siedlecki at the Institute.)

All these projects require a notable commitment both financially and workwise. Up to the present the archives have been run thanks to the voluntary work of several people but the dimension that the archives have reached now requires continual organisational work by qualified people.

The Institute intends to reach the following objectives regarding the archives:

### 1) TAPE LIBRARY

- completing the organisation of the premises and setting up the audio material by the end of May 1995.

- completing the inventory of the eight thousand cassettes by September 1995.

- publishing the inventory by January 1996.

- beginning the cataloguing by June/July 1995.

- beginning the work of copying the 400 oldest cassettes which risk deteriorating by June 1995.

### 2) VIDEO LIBRARY

- completing setting up the material on their shelves by May 1995.

- publishing the inventory by December 1995.

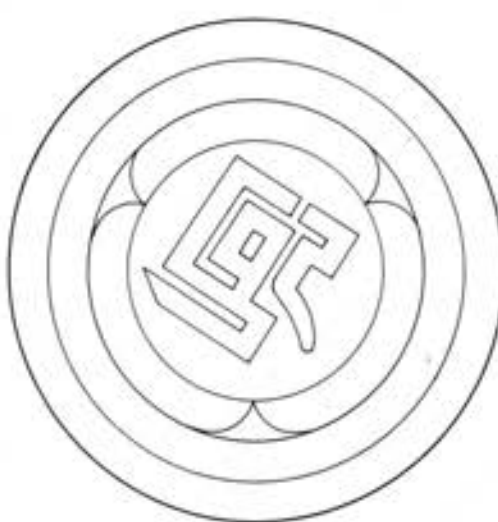
### 3) LIBRARY

- completing the inventory by autumn 1995.

- starting to catalogue the Tibetan texts by September 1995.

## TIBETAN DIGITAL ARCHIVE

In order to make the archives more accessible and easier to consult it is necessary that the respective catalogues are unified and made uniform. In this way, using the same terminal, one should be able to consult the library catalogue, screen brief extracts of the video material or photos related to the subject of interest. To this end the Institute has recently acquired the basic equipment which is necessary to realise digital cataloguing. By the end of 1996 we should be able to make the inventories of the archives



available to members of the Institute who have access to Internet.

## CD-ROM THANGKA PROJECT

With the collaboration of a group of experts, the Shang Shung Institute has started a project to create the first digital archives of photographic reproductions of Tibetan thangka. The creation of this archive should make the Tibetan artistic patrimony spread throughout the world more accessible to Tibetans. The Institute intends to contribute to the work of guaranteeing vitality and continuity to this artistic tradition by making its preservation and study easier. The project plans to create a series of CD ROM that put together images of thangka from the collections of the most important museums with texts which comment on and describe each work, edited by Tibetan experts. Copies of the series will be distributed to the museums and collectors who have participated in the project, to a limited number of centres for research on Tibetan art and culture and to schools, universities, and Tibetan institutes of culture both in Tibet and outside.

The Avery Brundage collection, Asian Art Museum of San Francisco is concluding the work of archiving. The pictures in the collection have been digitalised. With the help of painters Tsering Wanchuk and Sonam Palmo, who are at the moment guests at Merigar, the work of describing the images is at a good point.

In spring 1994 Chögyal Namkhai Norbu was in contact with Daboom Tulku, director of Tibet House in New Delhi who expressed interest in collaborating with this project. This collaboration with Tibet House in Delhi, cultural centre of H.H. the Dalai Lama, has particular interest for the Shang Shung Institute.

## TIBETAN MEDICINE PROJECT

The aim of the project is the diffusion and preservation of traditional Tibetan medicine. In

collaboration with centres, institutes, universities of Tibetan medicine in India and in Tibet and Italian and European universities, the project plans to create a school of medicine which will be able to give qualified training in the field of Tibetan medicine. To this end a project of translation of texts used in the course of study of traditional medicine in Lhasa has been started. The first text has been recently completed by

translator Elio Guarisco and Dr. Phuntsog Wangmo. By the end of 1995 we hope to sign an agreement with the University of Lhasa to establish the conditions of collaboration.

Projects regarding Tibetan medicine are co-ordinated by "The Study Centre on Traditional Tibetan Medicine" of the Shang Shung Institute. With the scope of deepening study of this medical system, some qualified Italian doctors from the Study Centre are developing their clinical activities making use of consultation with Tibetan doctors.

Those who would like to make use of this type of medical consultation should register with the Study Centre on Traditional Tibetan Medicine at the Shang Shung Institute and pay an annual quota of sixty thousand lire.

## GRANTS

- Two grants of three million lire each have been given by the Institute to two scholars who will collaborate with the inventory and cataloguing of the library and the tape library.

- Dr. Phuntsog Wangmo, scientific consultant to the Institute and one of the people in charge of the Tibetan medicine project, is continuing her stay in Europe.

- The Institute is trying to find funds for a grant to another Tibetan doctor, Dr. Tenzin Dargye, professor at the University of Medicine in Lhasa, who will collaborate with the Institute on the medicine project.

## COURSES

- The four year course on Tibetan Medicine held by Dr. Pasang Yonten is continuing.

## TRANSLATION PROJECT

The importance of translation for the continuation of the transmission of the teachings and for safeguarding Tibetan culture has been emphasised innumerable times and in different ways by Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche. An important project of translating the

most important Dzog-chen texts has already been started at the American branch of the Institute by Jim Valby. In Italy the only continual work of translation of Tibetan texts has been carried forward thanks to the work of Dr. Adriano Clemente.

In order to carry out important projects of translation in acceptable periods of time it is fundamentally important to involve as many translators as possible organising work groups under the supervision and with the consultation of Tibetans who are experts in the material being dealt with. At the moment the Institute is trying to create an international network of translators who would be available to participate in this type of project.

For years the projects of the Shang Shung Institute have been carried ahead by voluntary work, thanks to the inspiration of Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche and to the collaboration of many people. Some of the Institute's initiatives have been of notable importance for safe-guarding Tibetan culture and have had great impact both at the national and international levels especially among the Tibetans in and outside Tibet. UNESCO, UNICEF, the European Parliament, the Italian Ministry for Foreign Affairs have given their patronage to some of the Shang-Shung Institute's initiatives.

But apart from the amount which comes from the membership quotas and occasional donations, the Institute has no other type of income. If you are interested and consider the initiatives of the Institute to be useful, please support it with a financial contribution or offer your collaboration, ideas and suggestions.

## JOIN SHANG SHUNG INSTITUTE!

You can become a member of the Institute by paying the annual quota of Lit.100.000 to account no.4122.96 at the Arcidosso branch of the Monte dei Paschi di Siena in the name of the Istituto Shang Shung (please specify what payment is for).

You can become a sustaining member of the Institute, paying an annual quota of Lit.1.000.000 or more for at least two years.

Another way of supporting the activities of the Institute is by becoming a "Friend of the Shang Shung Institute", paying an annual contribution of Lit.30.000 or more.

To send suggestions or receive information you can contact us at:

Istituto Shang Shung  
c/o Podere Nuovissimo  
58031 Arcidosso GR, Italy  
tel. 0564-966941,  
fax 0564-966846  
E-mail: 100043.1433@compuserve.com



# REFLECTIONS

## A Gekod Goes To School

by Ernie Renner

Halloween evening in Conway Massachusetts, Namkhair Norbu Rinpoche and the new Tsegvalgar Gakyil are presenting themselves for a photo masked and armed with smiles and twinkling eyes. Sitting on the floor with a red eyed plastic Ginkgo lizard hanging from my neck, I am enjoying this scene and reflecting on my new role as Gekod in the community. Moments earlier Rinpoche had written two names on scraps of paper, Naomi Zeitz and myself, scrunched them into little balls and laughing, tossed both on the floor of the Gompa. Naomi was instructed to choose one. After a few seconds of wondering whether she would be moving from Sante Fe, Naomi picked. Opening the wadded piece of paper she smiled, Ernie Renner was the name she spoke.

When I entered my name on the list of volunteers for Gakyil or Gekod, I did not know the Gekod would be required to live in the building. Two weeks previous with great emotional and physical baggage stuffed into my car repeatedly, I had moved from my apartment of five years into a new apartment in Conway. Now as I sat rather happily on the floor in front of Rinpoche, I'm wondering how to break the news to my landlord. With the energy of the newly elected Gakyil invisibly filling the room, it comes to me; there is no place to live in the building. Save for the former principal's office and an equally small room next to the kitchen, there is no private space.

With optimism, confidence, and casual under estimate, I announce to the new Gakyil it will be easy to construct a space for Jim Valby, the secretary, and myself to live. It's almost always the case with me: I'm surprised by the complexity of even the simplest building project, this one will be no exception. After a little planning and drawing, a plan was developed and submitted to the Gakyil. The plan was simple, straight forward, and approved. The materials were ordered and scheduled for delivery. Now all that was left was to build this simple plan and Jim and I could move right in. "Move right in" does not characterize the way it turned out, but eventually that's what happened.

On December 1st I moved into the little room that had been the principal's office. There was an electric baseboard heater, the only heat on the second floor, a bed, and a door, everything was perfect. At various times during my children's grammar school careers, I had sat in this small room feeling mildly



Rebuilding at the Conway School

(photo L. Marder)

guilty or somehow responsible while Mr. Dacey sat behind his desk, right where my bed is now, and called me Mr. Renner. In all the years my kids attended this school, with all the requested and chance meetings I had with the principal, he always addressed me as Mr. Renner. Now I'm living in his office and sleeping on his desk.

The underestimate of the time and energy needed to build the apartments came to me slowly like waking from a dream, and developed into a reality of which I was very much a part. Although at times it seemed that the spaces would never be finished, the time arrived when Jim and I were doing final sanding of the sheetrock in his apartment. Standing mirror image on scaffolding, sanding blocks in one hand and floor lamps in the other, we presented a laughable sight. The lamps shone great moving ellipses across the walls to highlight any bumps or roughness in the joint compound. As we moved our sanding blocks on the walls great avalanches of dry white dust crashed silently to the floor. We looked as if we had been the joint recipients of a flour bomb. By the next afternoon paint was rolling onto the smooth white walls and with absence of malice, Tom Sawyer style, Jim and I had vanished while the painting continued; happy souls enjoying their work. The next day Jim moved into his space and in a couple more weeks I was lying on my couch with the smell of fresh paint adrift in my nostrils, happy to be done at last and feeling good.

My experiences and memories of this school cover more than a decade. This is where my children received their grammar school education. I attended two graduations here seated on folding chairs in the map of the United States parking lot, while my current housemate Jim, and my brother provided the musical interlude. Not once did the thought that our community would own this building and I'd

be living here come to mind. Before the inauguration of the Shang Shung Institute in October 1994, I worked on the remodelling of the school with other community members. This was a place where there was a plan, where walls were torn down and new ones erected, old systems were razed and piled in the brown steel dumpster by my son and other Conway Grammar alumni. Now, this is where I live.

When I first moved into the school there were so many things going on that I didn't notice too much about the space. Everything was new and I was still seeing things from a builder's point of view. I hadn't noticed how the ceilings soar overhead and the giant doors make you feel small. People were still around after the retreats and I was busy working on the apartments, and trying to get a feeling for the Gekod's responsibilities. Inevitably the time came when everyone had left to go back to their homes or the next destination, and for the first time since I'd moved in I was here alone. Now I start to notice things. It's bigger at night and coming in with everything in darkness childhood images of bogey men flash like dark lighting. The expanding and popping of the heating system rebound from the plaster walls like some great thrashing. There are times I can feel a presence, something in the air that fills the rooms. In the darkness I come down the stairs and the hallway seems heavy with invisible movement, I almost feel afraid at times, like when I was a kid. I think this is just my imagination, but it is not and I know it. I felt this same presence on the land in Buckland after dancing alone one summer evening. There is nothing to fear, everything is perfect.

I wonder as I look at the black coat rack numbers on the wall, which was Gairta's, which Tilman's? I wonder what history will recall about the beginning of the Shang Shung Institute?

## Back then

by Gairta Renner

Standing on the edge of the blacktop I looked up at the bright yellow building. It seemed so calm and so much different than I remember it. I looked down and saw the old hopscotch that had been painted on the sidewalk. It looked a little faded but still visible. I walked towards the building and to the right I could see the field where I spent numerous recesses playing kick ball and capture the flag. I started up the steps and opened the door. I pushed the door open and leaned against it with my body, holding it open. I imagined all of the grades lined up in single file waiting quietly to be called inside. Everyone was looking up at me in admiration, for I held the highest honor. I was the door holder. Everyone wanted to be the door holder, but only a select few got the privilege. I remember holding our hands up to the sky, thinking the higher we held them and the harder we shook them, the more likely we would be picked to hold the door.

I hopped up the stairs and saw the long lines of coat hangers that used to cause such a disturbance in the early morning. The numbers that used to distinguish Pete's coat from Sara's coat had been pulled off and all that was left was the faded wood. I wandered in and out of the rooms that used to have little desks in perfectly straight rows. I could remember where I sat each year. I crept downstairs to the bathrooms and all of the toilets and sinks were like miniatures, everything was so much smaller but it never seemed that way then. I pulled open the door where the monsters used to live but there was nothing there, nothing at all, just a small dark room. As I walked up the stairs I remember the race to get in line first for lunch, only to be reprimanded every time and sent to the back of the line. It didn't seem worth it now, but it was like a tradition to see if we could make it just once without being caught.

Everything was so easy back then. This place is where my innocence was left behind and the adult experiences began. There were so many good times in that yellow building, but it's all changed. The rooms that used to hold classes, little desks, and crayon drawings are no longer. They are now offices with computers, file cabinets, big desks, and big chairs. The cafeteria and principal's office are now apartments. The kitchen that I got lunch from every day is now a kitchen for someone's home. All of my forever friends are now just memories. Everything is completely different, not just because of the physical differences

but because my perceptions are different than they were in my childhood. Life no longer consists of playing, happiness, and good times. There is no longer a snack and nap time. There is so much more to life than any of us would have expected.

My parents' community owns the building now and the apartment belongs to my dad. The day I graduated from grammar school I thought that my life would go on and I would never see the sign that read Conway Elementary School again. On the day my father moved in I saw the sign again and I thought to myself, "If we only knew then what we know now we would have never wished so hard to grow up."



### THE MIRROR NEWSPAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL DZOGCHEN COMMUNITY

founded by  
Chögyal Namkhair Norbu

U.S. Office  
The Mirror  
PO Box 277  
Conway Mass 01341 U.S.A.  
Tel. 413-369-4208  
Fax 413-369-4165  
E-mail address:  
74404.1141compuserve.com

European Office  
The Mirror Merigar  
58031 Arcidosso GR  
Italy  
Tel. & fax 564-966608  
E-mail address:  
100530.527compuserve.com

EDITOR  
Liz Granger (Merigar)

CONSULTANT EDITOR  
John Shane

COMMUNITY ADVISORS  
Anna Eid, Giovanni Arca, Barbara Paparazzo, Jim Valby

LAYOUT  
Tiziana Gottardi

DRAWINGS  
Tsering Wanchuk, p. 4  
Paola Minelli, p. 16

PRINTER  
Centro 2A  
Arcidosso, GR Italy

All material ©1995 by The Mirror.  
Reprint by permission only



Ultimately our community is not to be found in the land, in the buildings, in the books, newspapers, and properties that seem to define it. In and of themselves these are only material things.

Nor even is our community to be found in the stories of Rinpoche that I so love to tell and to hear from others. They are no more than the proverbial fingers pointing at the moon. Our community only truly arises when we enter the state of contemplation individually and relate to each other through the transmission. Our community is born from the state of contemplation, as the fruit of the union of our receptivity and the transmission from the master.

The receptivity that we need to cultivate in order to open to the transmission is not passive. It is an active attention brought to the moment by moment relationship with the master, with each other, and ultimately with ourselves. It is a quality of attention lovingly cherished and maintained, developed in every circumstance: a quality of attention I try to bring to this writing.

Creativity is a subtle balance of relaxed receptivity and action.

Receiving transmission from a master is a creative act.

Out of the same receptivity that opens to the transmission these words have arisen in me, in deep and humble gratitude to Rinpoche for the many blessings with which he has showered us throughout these long years, and in gratitude to you too, for the companionship you have offered me on our journey together through the light and the shadows of so many days and nights.

The history of the Dzogchen Community depends on you.

It begins for each of us when we first encounter the teachings and it is renewed each time we enter the state of contemplation. In contemplation there is no separation between us. In contemplation our own story merges with that of the community. In that sense there is no community other than you, and it is up to you whether the community continues or ceases to be.

I never cease to marvel at the way that the meaning of our individual lives is somehow illuminated, lit up - in fact enlightened - by the resonance of our own story with the stories of others that share our frame of reference.

I love to tell stories about my travels and my relationship with Rinpoche, and this newspaper has provided me with a wonderful way of reflecting on those stories as well as a means of sharing them with others. I am very grateful for that opportunity, and have tried to keep that same opportunity open to others, valuing and honouring as I do other people's stories as much as my own. Our stories are a resource that will nourish a hunger that no food will satisfy.

Over the years, as one of the editors of this paper, I have tried to encourage others to write in these pages, often interviewing those who could not or did not themselves wish to write an account of their experience. It is my genuine belief that, situated as we are in so many distant places around the world, sharing our stories in these pages has helped us to build a sense of community. If, as a result of his illness, we can no longer expect Rinpoche to travel around the world

words that Rinpoche had actually said, but of course the words on the page were being written in my English, and this made me uncomfortable. Who was I to presume to interpret the words Rinpoche had said? The Dzogchen teachings are very profound, and it is not at all easy to say you have understood them. I was very aware of my limitations as a student. I was a poet and not a Tibetologist. But I had been asked to do a job, and I meant to do it as well as I could.

welcome interruption by barking at me. I got up to let her out onto the balcony.

I stepped out through the big sliding glass window onto the balcony and sat on a rickety wicker chair looking out over the rooftops at the blue blaze of the ocean in the distance where the sky met the sea. I tried to meditate, but was too preoccupied. I had been away from home a long time, and I missed my family and friends.

When I walked back into the

with great concentration he gripped the lino with one hand and the knife with the other. He pressed the knife carefully down into the hard surface of the material, digging out lines and shapes, scooping out little curlicues of lino that wrinkled up from the end of his blade and which he then blew lovingly away onto the floor as he worked.

His sharp blade cut deep into the fabric of time and there welled up under his hands an image of Tibet in just the same way that now, as I press down on the keys of my computer keyboard an image of Rinpoche at work all those years ago arises for you to read in these words that will reach you somewhere across the world in a place where I can't see you, although your presence reaches me now as intuition and guides my hands and mind.

We are linked in this story as it passes from my mind to yours, part of my story becoming part of you. Our lives as individuals are defined by so many stories. And communities are individuals writ large: our stories shape our identity, link us together. Whether those stories free or enslave us is a matter of what level of awareness we can bring to the process.

Just as I will not know the shape of this story until I have finished writing it, I couldn't make out the form of the image that Rinpoche cut into the lino until we rolled ink onto it and pressed it onto the clean white of a blank page of paper. Then, as we peeled the lino away, the form of a stupa and a yak and the Tibetan letters 'Bod', meaning Tibet, emerged in a mysterious primordial landscape of black ink.

I had a brief wild flash of understanding of what it must have meant for Rinpoche to leave Tibet when he was so young and to arrive in Italy without speaking a word of Italian. I felt sure that my own loneliness that afternoon in Italy could not compare to what he must have experienced when he first came to Europe, a practitioner of Dzogchen alone in a strange country with the whole future of his lineage and culture resting on his young shoulders.

But what I sensed from Rinpoche's lino-cut was not a loneliness, not a hankering after a Tibet somehow lost to him. What I saw in his work was a deep inner certainty about himself, a certainty that must have sustained him in moments of difficulty such as the one I was going through.

He had dug deep down into himself to reveal in his carving an image of the essence of his identity as a Tibetan, the carrier of the living tradition of the culture of his native country. And I recognized that my work on his book was an attempt to define myself in some similar way, though I did not yet know what that way was.

I was still struggling to understand what identity could be forged out of the interaction of the disparate elements of my own

*continued on page 16*

## The History of the Dzogchen Community Depends on You

by John Shane

as he has done so generously in the past, I am convinced that we must try to keep up the contacts between us that were in large measure created by the connections Rinpoche made as he moved from one retreat to the next. And *The Mirror* can help us do this.

*The Mirror* now seems such an important part of our community that it is hard to imagine the community without it. But I can remember when we didn't even have a single newsletter.

I was sitting on the balcony of Rinpoche's apartment at Formia, two hours drive south of Rome, looking out over the sea when the idea for the very first newsletter came to me.

It was the spring of 1980 and the international Community was not yet very big. But Rinpoche was beginning to travel more and more to teach Dzogchen in the vacations he enjoyed from his job as a professor at the Oriental Institute of the University of Naples, and I felt that it was important that there should be more communication between students in the many parts of the world Rinpoche had visited or to which students returned after meeting him.

I had been collaborating with Rinpoche for some months on the project that would eventually become his first book to be published with a major publisher, and the work had been intense. The project seemed to involve as much work on myself as on the book. I had already published some poetry and stories of my own and I had been hired by the Arts Council of Great Britain as a teacher of creative writing. I had also studied Buddhism for many years with many different teachers.

But despite the fact that I was apparently quite well prepared by my background and experience to collaborate with Rinpoche in the production of a book of his teachings, it seemed much more difficult than I had expected to capture the essence of his teachings in words.

When I first began the project I wanted the book to include only

I returned again and again to Rinpoche for advice and explanations and he was more than generous with his help. But the publishers kept insisting that I edit the text more and more heavily to make it both shorter and to seem more as if it had originated in English rather than as words spoken in Italian by a Tibetan. So I was often forced to rewrite what Rinpoche had said.

On the day I thought of producing the Community's first newsletter I sat at the table in Rinpoche's apartment and told him my problem.

"I don't want to change a word that you said," I complained. "But the publisher wants me to rewrite this paragraph. And this one. And this whole page here. And this whole section. They say it doesn't make sense. I would like you to explain this again."

Rinpoche sighed. He had heard this lament from me before. He was working on another project at the same time, writing a book in Tibetan, as well as teaching at the University at Naples, and I was fitting my sessions of work with him around his schedule.

He put his pen down carefully on the circular dining room table and looked at me with his usual penetrating gaze. Though I thought I could detect a certain fondness in his eyes I was alert for signs of thunder in his brows. I knew I was bothering him.

"Do you understand the meaning of these paragraphs, these pages that the publishers want you to change?" he asked.

I replied that I did.

"Well then, don't play the child with me," he snapped. "If you know what it means, you can write what it means. Just do it."

And he returned to his work, leaving me to mine.

We both sat at the dining table, he writing away in Tibetan, me shuffling through my papers, marking this page and that with a pencil, editing a line here, rewriting a sentence there.

Just then the Namkhai family Tibetan terrier, Mune, provided a

dining room, I found that Rinpoche had sensed my loneliness. He had put away his work, and made a pot of tea. I was a guest in his house and he was cooking for me, which made me a little uncomfortable, since as I understood it, a student should prepare food for the master. But he was cooking dinner for me. I felt confused, full of gratitude and devotion, and at the same time full of a need to be doing something other than working on that book. The responsibility of it was weighing heavily on me.

Rinpoche poured me a cup of tea, and said: "What are you thinking?"

"I need to do something different," I replied. "I need some space from writing this book. Why don't we make a newsletter? A newsletter for the community. We can send it out to all the people in all the countries you have visited. You have a lot of addresses in your address book, but no one knows each other's address. Why don't we write a letter to everyone with all the addresses so that they can get in touch with each other?"

"Good idea!" said Rinpoche.

And we didn't work on our books again that day or the next.

When we weren't working we often played games of various kinds. Rinpoche's son Yeshe had a toy printing set that among other things contained a lino-cut outfit. Rinpoche took the big flat red cardboard box containing this game down from a shelf above the little tv on which Yeshe and Yuchen used to watch cartoons and on which he used to watch the news, and he began carving a piece of lino to make illustrations for the newsletter, which we had decided to call 'Open Letter'.

We sat once again at the circular dining room table, and while I wrote the pages of the newsletter by hand in my best calligraphy, Rinpoche carved away at a brown rectangle of lino.

The whole composition was in his mind. He didn't make any sketches or draw anything on the lino first. Completely relaxed but



# The Liberation of the Fish

by Michel Bricaire

The practice of liberating animals destined to be slaughtered is widely practised in Tibet and is considered to be an important method for accumulating merit which derives from virtuous actions. It is useful

for overcoming particularly difficult moments during which one is threatened by serious illness or the danger of death. It is believed that the great benefit which one renders to other beings by saving their lives is reflected in the person carrying out the action or on those to whom it is dedicated.

This practice is described in Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche's book *Viaggio nella cultura dei nomadi tibetani* (A Journey into the Culture of the Tibetan Nomads):

"Many yak, dri and sheep belonging to the nomads wear a wool ring in their ears. These animals are called *she thar* and are ritually liberated from the butcher. This custom arose from the fact that by doing this the nomads believe that they will prolong their own lives. When a member of the family becomes seriously ill, many animals are freed from slaughtering with the aim of guaranteeing the ill person's survival. The animals which are chosen are led before a lama from whom their freedom is requested. Then in the ear of each animal the lama pronounces the *mantra* of Amitayus, the Buddha of Long Life, and expresses the



to save a colt and more than six hundred trout from slaughtering. The trout were freed in a river on three occasions.

Here is the report of the first expedition to free the fish:

"... The laborious preparation involved finding a trailer with a tank and oxygen bottles (necessary for the survival of the trout during transport), finding a suitable place to free them and preparing the necessary documents to transport them plus permission from the province (which in the end was not asked for).

The rescue operation finally went into action, with great difficulty, when the fish were loaded in their tanks onto the trailer. Their destination was the Fiora River, not overly polluted and suitable for trout. The river, about 20 km away had to be reached in less than half an hour before the oxygen bottles ran out and the fish asphyxiated. Everything seemed to be going well when we were interrupted by the law!...

A Frenchman and a Neapolitan in the woods with a tank full of fish had made the moustachioed defender of the law suspicious. He was afraid of becoming a fainthearted spectator to the possibility of serious pollution and the creation of havoc.

But, in the end, even this final obstacle was overcome."

wish that from that moment on the animals may be liberated from the fear of being killed, that, thanks to the power of the truth of this act, all circumstances dangerous for the life of their owner may dissolve and that both the owner and the animals may obtain rebirth in the higher states of existence until complete realisation of Buddhahood.

After the lama has recited many invocations and words of good omen he gives the owner some earrings made of coloured material or red wool to hang from the ears of each animal. From that moment on that animal cannot be killed for any reason whatsoever; not even if its owner should find himself in such poverty that his survival is threatened. The yak of burden which are saved in this way, are not made to work any more when they reach old age and are cared for and fed until their death. This is called *she yok*, help for a long life."

Many people of the Italian Dzogchen Community have expressed their wish to free animals in order to favour the long life of the Master. Altogether more than three million lire (approx. \$2,000) has been collected which was used

## The History of the....

continued from page 15

history and culture as they resonated within the space completely beyond culture that is at the heart of the teachings I was receiving. That the teachings came to me through the vehicle of the culture of Tibet was both a source of fascination and of difficulty. There are issues involved in integrating influences from a foreign culture that it takes time to work through for oneself. If Rinpoche had built one half of the bridge the other half was up to me.

In so many ways I was just another child of my time, educated in every sense except in the essential one of really knowing myself, looking for knowledge and seeking a sense of community, a sense of belonging that was lacking in the fragmented craziness of our modern society. And I found that identity in my work, and in my association with Rinpoche and the Community. But it still remained for me to resolve deep conflicts within myself connected with the relationship between my own background and personal history and the teachings I was receiving.

The teachings do not seek to work at the level of the personal

story, the level which Carlos Castaneda's Don Juan called the 'personal inventory'. Work on one's personal history is more the province of certain kinds of western therapy, where a dialogue involving the individuals 'case history' is engaged between the analyst and the person in analysis. But the practice of an art also helps in this respect: it enables one to reflect to oneself the various aspects of one's life and nature.

The teachings, on the other hand, require of us a leap: a leap into the state of pure presence. They do not seek to analyze or interpret mental content, searching for the meaning of this or that event. Rather they point us towards recognizing the continuity of the unborn and undying awareness as part of which the endless stream of mental events arise and disappear like the waves in an endless ocean that are not separate from the ocean itself.

But when we do not succeed in making the leap into the state of presence, when we are so troubled that mental events do not self-liberate of their own accord, stifling us instead in the suffocating embrace of endlessly repeating loops of one layer after another of internal comment until reality is completely obscured, then we need to practice self-observation to help us

determine the nature of our obstacle. When our complexes so completely have us in their grip that Samsara seems to be our middle name, the practice of an art or working on oneself in therapy can help enormously to get to grips with discovering the nature of our problem.

Many westerners are troubled by a poor sense of self and a lack of identity. They cannot free themselves from their personal story until they are at least aware of having one. Whether a story imprisons or frees us depends more on our awareness than on the nature of the story, but if we have no consistent sense of self, no identity, we have no sense of who we are or what we may mean in the world. To be free from ego is to be free from attachment and aversion. It does not mean having no sense of identity. On the contrary one's sense of identity as an individual and one's ability to operate in the world are strengthened by freedom from clinging to anything at all.

By the time I had finished writing out our greetings and all the names and addresses of Community members for our first newsletter I felt more relaxed than I had for days. There was something soothing about writing all those names and addresses of so many

## Opening the eye

continued from page 12

purpose. If we perhaps do it in the same way then I don't think that there will be a lack of good teachers.

**The Mirror:** What do you consider to be the best way in which we disciples of Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche can behave and practice for the long life and health of our Master?

**Sey Rinpoche:** His physical health very much depends on the physicians. But in regard to his mind I think Rinpoche's wish might be to keep the profound teaching alive. It is for this purpose that he has really sacrificed his life. And since he has given profound teachings such as Dzogchen, then it is very important to maintain the *damsig* (*samaya*) between Dharma brothers and sisters. This *damsig* can be a very good cause or a very bad one for the link between lama and disciple. I'm sure you all have a very good *damsig* but it's important to improve this even more.

And the teachings that you have received from Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche should not just be kept as intellectual knowledge but put into practice. So it is said that when the mind of a high lama is more satisfied, even his physical aspect will recover. Or he will understand the importance of remaining alive. So maybe if it is possible, his life can be prolonged. I think so.

**The Mirror:** Thank you Rinpoche.

Merigar, March 8th, 1995

## Rejuvenation

continued from page 4

the powder of each of the other essences and herbs, a third of a handful of honey and 150 grams of sugar cane molasses. Boil for a long time then place the preparation in a clean container.

Take the amount sufficient to coat the tip of a spoon each morning on an empty stomach. The therapy should be undertaken for at least three months, six months or at the best one year to obtain the benefits mentioned above.

If the therapy is carried out, but in normal daily life without the conditions of tranquillity and so forth, one can still acquire the same benefits as with a strict therapy.

If one is affected by a particular illness while doing the therapy, one should temporarily stop taking the *bcud len* pills and cure the disease first. Once one has regained his or her health, he or she may start the rejuvenation therapy again.

*Translator's note: I would like to make clear that readers should not attempt to make the bcud len preparations themselves, especially the complex preparation and those which involve the use of minerals without having experience or without the assistance of a competent person who knows the ingredients and how to prepare them. Once one has seen the ingredients and has assisted actively in the preparation, then it is not difficult to do it oneself.*

Translated by Elio Guarisco

friends by hand after so many days working at Rinpoche's ancient electric typewriter, wrestling with one sentence after another until there seemed to be no meaning left in the words. Making the newsletter my relationship with Rinpoche returned to being fun again, as we played rather than worked, and a sense of delight replaced the feeling of heavy responsibility that had so burdened me.

As Rinpoche and I took my handwritten pages together with his drawings to the local Xerox shop to make copies of them, I felt both closer to him and to the people we were going to send the newsletter to. Watching him work patiently and joyously at his carving I had also learned something about myself and my work.

As we walked through the warm evening streets to the post office to post the newsletter, completing one act among the many that have defined and shaped the evolution of our spiritual community as it has grown over the years, I felt again the sense of wonder and excitement that I always feel when something I have written is finished and is ready to go out into the world where it may touch others, both those I know and those I don't know.

I thought about how wonderful

it would be when the book I was working on would be finished. And the thought that it might help others who had never heard of the Dzogchen teachings to understand those teachings re-focused my energy.

The next day I was ready to continue with my work. Making the newsletter had been a small task and finishing it renewed my sense of commitment and connection to the greater tasks I had undertaken, as has finishing this story now.

Each of us has a particular story to tell. Our collective history is woven from the strands of our individual stories. In this sense too, the history of the Dzogchen Community, and its future, depend on you.

If stories bind us together as a community, as individuals they can also set us free.

Through sharing our stories we can discover things about ourselves that we might never stumble on alone. Sometimes we can only discover our own meaning as it is reflected in the eyes of others; separation is an illusion after all.

Stories are meant to be shared. And *The Mirror* is a good place to share them.

(This article has been shortened for reasons of space.)