

THE MIRROR

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Tibetan nomads

Michael J. McCormick

Tibetan Emergency

The Office of Tibet in New York City has confirmed that a disaster in Kham and Amdo has occurred, as reported on February 27th, 1996 in the London Guardian. There has been an early snow storm, the most severe in one hundred years, that has killed over seven hundred thousand yaks and sheep which is the basic means of livelihood of the nomadic people. Sixteen thousand nomads are suffering from frostbite and twelve thousand from snowblindness. Forty-two people have died and more casualties are expected. The temperatures are sometimes as low as minus forty-seven Celsius, which is why so many livestock have died. Tens of thousands of nomads' lives are endangered. The blizzard will last until May.

The region of this natural disaster is the Jyekundo area which the Chinese call the Yushu district of Kham and Amdo; a region inhabited by two hundred thousand Tibetan Nomads.

Understanding the gravity of the situation, His Holiness the Dalai Lama has donated US

\$15,000. This fund has already reached the Tibetan people in Amdo and has proved beneficial. The Tibet Fund has also made a contribution of US \$5,000 which, too, has reached Tibetan hands.

The group Medecins Sans Frontieres is sending emergency aid and supplies to the area, already hit by an earthquake earlier this year. The financial and material aid supports local efforts to deter more deaths, providing essential food clothing and fuel, and reestablishing transport and communication. Tax deductible contributions can be sent to:

The Tibet Fund
241 E. 32 St.
New York, NY 10016 USA

Aid to Tibet Emergency Appeal
Tibet Foundation
10 Bloomsbury Way
London WC1A 2SH UK

Checks can be made payable to:
The Tibet Fund.

For further information, the telephone number is: 212-213-5010 in New York City, USA or contact your nearest Office of Tibet.

Lighting the Dark Easter Retreat at Namgyalgar

by Jenny O'Donnell

During March, Rinpoche and Rosa were invited to travel to the warmer north coast of New South Wales for a months holiday near Byron Bay. Having rested, they returned to Namgyalgar at the end of March in time for the retreat.

Through the sunny autumn freshness, Rinpoche's teachings at Namgyalgar covered the text "rtog ladan ryan poi dzub lugs kyi gdams pa mun sel sgron-me" by Ju Mipham which translates as "The instructions of a simple old yogi pointing directly to the methods which are like a lamp, clarifying the darkness of ignorance". Ju Mipham's text gives us the method which is a lamp which clears the

darkness of ignorance and points directly at how to live simply in the state of knowledge. This is an Upadesha teaching, the essence of which is realization of the nature of the mind.

Catherine Simmonds and Jeannie, having attended an instructors course at Merigar, taught Yantra Yoga under the guidance of Fabio Andrico. Adriana Dal Borgo taught the Dance of the Six Spaces (formerly known as the Dance of the Six Lokas).

A local Aboriginal troupe "Doonooch Aboriginal Dancers" gave a dance performance based on their legends and animal totems, accompanied on the didgeridoo.

A hilarious auction, enlivened

by musical interludes, was held on the last evening of the retreat, raising some \$5000. Among the high points were Laurence Mills' swordless sword-dance; Bronwyn Calcutts' witty performance on the accordion; Jan Cornell's cabaret songs; and Kavisha's exquisite compositions for guitar and voice.

After the last teaching, Rinpoche took a walk with the Community around the land, and found desirable sites for a Vajra

Ransom. Michel Bricaire, Jim Smith, Peter Harley-Davidson, Phil Brown, Sean Jamieson, Damon, Steve and Steff. During this time the roof, walls, floorboards were added, and windows and outside sliding doors were hung. Work has recently commenced on the internal gyprock walls. Rinpoche nailed in the decking of the veranda and, with the help of a group of people, cleared away the surrounding bush to prevent snakes and spiders from



Namgyalgar

C. Braud

Hall for the Dances and Yantra Yoga, sites for a chorten and retreat huts, and also a new route for the access road.

During the retreat, some people spent their afternoons on Karma Yoga practice, clearing the vine-smothered bush surrounding Rinpoche's house. Between January and April, many people contributed to the on-going construction of the house including Robert

entering the house, and to create a bushfire break. Many of the internal features have still be to completed, such as, the internal walls, doors, kitchen, bathroom, stove, architraves, plastering and painting. The electrical wiring is in place, but the plugs and lights have yet to be installed. Tony Laurent has designed the stairs which will lead to the house. A spring has been discovered about two hundred meters uphill from the house and a pipe will be laid to supply water for the house.

Many people from the international Dzogchen Community have joined us in supporting Rinpoche's

stay in Australia, as well as in financing and constructing his house. It has been wonderful to see such an enthusiastic response from the Community within and outside Australia. Thank you, everyone; and thank you, Rinpoche for the precious teachings.

Tulku Urgyen Rinpoche

The Passing of a Great Master

by the Dzogchen Community of Nepal

In the early morning of February 13th, 1996, Tulku Urgyen Rinpoche left his present bodily form in Nagi Gampa, the hermitage in the outskirts of the Kathmandu Valley where he had lived in the later part of his life.

In the same morning, as soon as we heard the sad news, we climbed through the thick forest to the road that leads to Nagi Gampa. A huge gathering of monks, nuns and practitioners were already there performing pujas on the terrace around the room where the body was in Samadhi in the meditation posture. These pujas went on continuously for the next two days and many people went to offer a kata. After the second day when the signs manifested, the body was moved downstairs to the main hall of the Gampa where a formal puja was performed. On Friday, February 16, the body was taken to the great monastery of Ka-Nying Shedrup Ling in Boudhanath founded many years ago by Rinpoche himself. The procession came down slowly from the hill of Shivapuri where Nagi Gampa is situated and thousands of people lined up along the road burning incense and offering kata.

The body is now in the main hall of the monastery in Boudha, and after the necessary pujas, a funeral ceremony will be held.

Tulku Urgyen Rinpoche was one of the last of the generation of great Lamas who completed their education and training in Tibet. Dilgo Kyentse Rinpoche considered him the foremost Maha Ati practitioner in these days.



Tulku Urgyen Rinpoche Courtesy of Dawn Boland

Tulku Urgyen Rinpoche was born in Eastern Tibet on the tenth day of the fourth Tibetan month in 1920. He was recognized by H. H. Khakyab Dorje, the 15th Karmapa, as the reincarnation of the Guru Chowang Tulku, as well as the emanation of Nubchen Sangye Yeshe, one of the chief disciples of Guru Padmasambhava.

CONTENTS

Integrating the Teachings into Daily Life.....	2
Chögyal Namkhai Norbu	
Interview with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu.....	3
Rinpoche's Revised Schedule...	3
Interview with H.E. Tai Situpa	4
Lives of the Great Masters	5
Nyarong Padma Dendul by Tsaltrim Allione	
Book Review	5
ASIA Project in Amdo.....	6
Shang Shung Institute	7
International Community News.....	8-9
Special Practices	10-11
Fire Mouse Prediction	12
Australian Section	13-18
Interview with Gaboo Thomas and Ann Thomas	17
Reflections	18-19
Tara Mandala Schedule	19
On Reflection.....	20
John Shane	

Once again we have arrived at the end of a retreat. Through self observation, we can see if we have actually learned something. The new people have learned how do certain practices, but learning them is not the main point of the teaching. The main point is that we have some understanding of what the teaching means, why we need the teaching, and how to apply and integrate it. There are many new things to learn and explain, but we must also have some idea of what to do concretely after the retreat. We need to know what we can do tomorrow, after tomorrow and in the next days when we find ourselves again in ordinary samsara. It is not always possible to practice as we have done here; it is not always possible to apply the rituals we have learned to our daily lives. In this case, it is very important that we know how to integrate knowledge, understanding and the teaching in daily life. The teaching is not only for going off to a quiet, secluded place and doing meditation. We must understand the principle. We do meditation and need different kinds of practices for living peacefully in samsara, and finally for having realization. There are always the consequences of action and the problems of samsara, therefore we must make the teaching concrete in our lifetime.

In the Buddhist teachings Buddha explained the four important moments. These are the moments that we must be aware of and remember: eating, standing and walking, sitting, and sleeping. If we can remember these four moments and integrate the practice and teaching into them, then everything is perfect. First of all, we need to examine these four moments and how they govern our lives. For example, in the morning when we wake up, go to the toilet, wash, make coffee and run to the office. We arrive in the office, maybe sit a little, work, or walk. We feel hungry, go to the tea shop, get something to eat and drink. We come home, feel very tired and go to sleep. We repeat it, day after day. Repeat, repeating, continuation; that is called samsara. This is how we are living. It is good to have some practice to do when we are engaged in all these activities. We can't always sing the Song of the Vajra, or do a rite like a Short, Medium, or Longer Tun. It can be dangerous if you are doing practices or a visualization while driving; you could have a car accident. It's not a good idea and it's not necessary to practice in that way.

When there is the circumstance, we can do a practice like the Tun or other practices. When we get together for a few hours, instead of wasting time in senseless activity, we can do a collective practice. This is called circumstance: when there is the circumstance we practice together, as well as creating the circumstance in our lives. It is important to do collective practice because when practitioners meet together they can develop spiritual feeling and

knowledge. Everything is developed more strongly than if we live in an isolated way. It's fine if you want to live and practice alone, but sometimes your spiritual feeling diminishes after some time. That is why it is so important for practitioners to collaborate and why there is the Sangha. The Sangha is important for collaborating and helping each other. It is very rare we have this circumstance in our daily lives, so it is important to create the circumstance and possibility to practice. There are four days that are important and good for collective practice and if we practice on these days it is more effective. The days are the day of

al, and for a period of time you have the possibility to sacrifice, but your circumstances may change. You may have many problems and situations and your circumstances are interrupted and change. Interrupting Guru Yoga is not good. Even if you do another type of Guru Yoga, but are following the Dzogchen teaching, when you do a visualization of Tsong Khapa, for example, you can unify all your teachers in Tsong Khapa. There is no difference in the teachers from Sakyapa, Nyingmapa, Gelugpa, Bonpo, or Kagyu.

If you have a teacher called a Vajra Guru, you can recite the mantra of Padmasambhava. The

problem. They don't engage in that kind of conflict or problem. The problem is arising in you.

It is not necessary that schools and traditions are created like political parties. It doesn't make any sense. When people are acting in this manner it means they are interested in the Dharma as business; for power and position. They are hiding behind something. If you have received some teachings with a teacher and you feel that that he or she was not serious and that you are not developing with this kind of teacher, it is best not to go against or create a problem for this teacher. It is best to unify in Guru Yoga. There is no

When Dzogchen practitioners wake up in early morning, they should immediately remember and sound A, and remain a little in that state. With the daylight we can start with Guru Yoga. Later, when you have any moment where you remember, you try to remain in that state as often as possible. This is Guru Yoga. The most important thing is not to interrupt this awareness. It is an easy practice, but very, very important.

As well as Guru Yoga, you can do the Vajra recitation like in the Medium Tun. The Vajra recitation is done with the breath; you are combining breathing with sound. If you remember while you are walking or engaged in activity, you can do this practice. It is also a very, very important practice because Om A Hum is a most essential mantra representing the free state of the body, speech and mind of all enlightened beings. With this practice we are integrating our prana energy with breathing and sound. In this way we co-ordinate our energy and eliminate negativities. If we co-ordinate and strengthen our energy, then we are automatically protected and have less problems because we are no longer passive. If we have something wrong with our energy, we become passive. We receive all negativities and negative circumstances and always have problems. For that reason it is important that we strengthen and co-ordinate our energy with Om A Hum.

One of the most important aspects of a practice is purification; purifying our karma. We have infinite accumulations of negative karma, have lost our clarity, and are continuing in samsara. There are many methods of practice for purification. In daily life we can do the Vajra recitation, and through this practice purify negative karma. When you become more familiar with this practice, you use it more in daily life and after some time it becomes automatic with your breathing. The Vajra recitation is a mantra and has power for purifying, but it also functions to help maintain presence and overcome distraction. If you are distracted you won't remember to do this practice. It helps very much for having continuous awareness.

You can try to do these practices -like the Vajra recitation and Guru Yoga- in your daily life in any circumstance, or at any moment. These practices are not related to any particular tradition, school, or system. They are combining your breathing and sound. When you do practice and have particular visualizations to do with figures etc., then traditions and schools automatically follow. For example, if I do a visualization of Garab Dorje, people think it is a Nyingmapa or Bonpo practice. If I do a visualization of Padmasambhava, immediately people think it is Nyingmapa. If I do Tsong Khapa, they think Gelugpa. Sounding A has no lineage. There are reasons why sometimes it's better not to do too much external ritual, but use more symbolic or essential practice. Less problems are created. Even when we are not

continued on next page

Integrating the Teachings into Daily Life

by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

Transcribed by Jill Stanton. Edited by Naomi Zeitz

Padmasambhava (the tenth day during the increasing moon, or the tenth day during new moon), the day of the Dakini, or days of the new and full moon.

In daily life it's not always possible to do these things. We can't sing and chant mantras like a monk or someone who is living in a sangha of practitioners. It's not so easy when we live in an ordinary way, working, etc. In this case, the first thing you should remember is Guru Yoga. If you follow the Dzogchen teachings, Guru Yoga is indispensable. Guru Yoga means that you are being in real your nature. You have this possibility of being in your real nature through the transmission that you receive from a teacher; a teacher who has received it from his or her teacher. The transmission is connected with the lineage of Garab Dorje through to Samantabhadra. We are in the state of our real nature through this transmission, so it is for that reason that we do Guru Yoga. Being in a state of Guru Yoga, or contemplation, means being in the state of the teacher or Samantabhadra, all Rigdzins or all realized beings. There is no difference, and all of these are connected with transmission. For this reason it is important.

Perhaps you are accustomed to do a Guru Yoga that you have learned through a different tradition. You might practice the Guru Yoga from the Gelugpa tradition, in which case they give you a transmission of Lama Chodpa and the Guru Yoga of Tsong Khapa. In the Kagyupa tradition there is the Karmapa, Marpa, or Milarepa forms. With the Sakyapas, you use Sakyapandita, etc. If you are using these forms of Guru Yoga it is fine, but they require more time. In these forms many words are used, and there are many complicated visualizations. I know this very well, because I have followed different kinds of traditions for many years. In the daily life of normal people this is not so easy. It's easy when you are feeling very spiritu-



N. Zeitz

Vajra Guru is not an ordinary guru or teacher, but a teacher of Vajra. The Vajra Guru is someone who can, directly or indirectly, wake you up and show you your real nature. It doesn't matter what school the teacher belongs to; you can unify all in Guru Yoga. If you have received a Guru Yoga teaching from another lineage, when you do Guru Yoga you can unify in that form. It could be Tsong Khapa, Padmasambhava, Garab Dorje, or Milarepa. It doesn't matter; you unify. People think they have a problem in mixing the teachings and traditions. It's important not to worry. You do your practice and your best for having realization. You are not doing Guru Yoga to support a position or tradition. You do Guru Yoga for your realization. Many people think there could be some conflicts because of the mixing of these different traditions or different schools, and that there could be a kind of accident. For example, if you unify the Bonpo tradition with Tsong Khapa, there will be a conflict of lineages. That is your conflict, not the Teacher's. Guru Padmasambhava and Tsong Khapa and all the masters we use in Guru Yoga are enlightened beings, otherwise there isn't any value in doing Guru Yoga. If you consider that these beings are enlightened then they are beyond this kind of

problem, because all sentient beings have the self perfected nature like Samantabhadra. Even if some of your teachers are doing incorrect things, it doesn't matter. You can do Guru Yoga with pure vision, purifying and unifying, and in that way you can have realization.

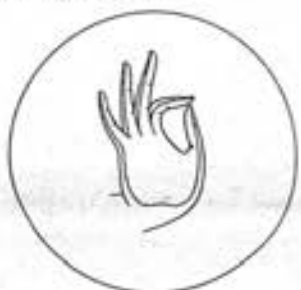
The most important aspect of Guru Yoga is to be consistent. You can do it in a very simple way, for example with the Guru Yoga with the White A. You pronounce A, manifest the White A and thigle at the center of the body. You know that sound and light and rays make up your potentiality. That is your real nature, your real state, and the state of Samantabhadra. You have received that knowledge and understanding through transmission from the teacher, therefore that is also the state of teacher. The state of teacher, you and Samantabhadra are inseparable. If you are being in that state, in a presence with that clarity, without judging, and you remain in that instant presence for even a few seconds, that is Guru Yoga. It's really very easy. If you have a little presence or are willing, then Guru Yoga can do all this. If you do Guru Yoga one hundred times a day it's even better; it can never become too much. You are really an Atiyogi or Atiyogini practitioner if you are being in a state of Guru Yoga all the time- twenty-four hours a day. That means you have integrated beyond meditation and after meditation. We say "Ting dzing khor yug chen po". Ting dzing khor yug chen po means the all pervasive state of contemplation. That is our final goal and we try to be in that state. Even if we are not in this state, we can remember in any circumstance, any moment, and remain a little in that presence. That is Guru Yoga, and if you want to develop this a little more, you can do a short Tun with three A's and sing the Song of the Vajra. That is a richer way of doing Guru Yoga.

trying to create problems, our society is formed with a dualistic vision and therefore has limitations. Everything is limited. It's really very complicated.

Sometimes we do a sitting practice and a practice of the mind; perhaps working with the experience of energy (*rolpa*), or visualizations. Someone may be sitting and doing a tantric practice like the Kalachakra, transforming into Kalachakra, or transforming into Samantabhadra. We don't know what that person is really transforming into. If he is singing and reciting something related to the Kalachakra, for example, then we can understand what practice he or she is doing. In the Dzogchen teaching we say that a good practitioner doesn't need to show too much externally. What is important is that you really practice and are being in the state of knowledge. Try to integrate as much as possible in Om A Hum and in a state of contemplation using Guru Yoga and non distraction in daily life. As much as possible, try to be aware and do the practice of Om A Hum.

One of the most important practices in daily life is relaxation; it is very valuable to loosen, liberate, free, and relax tension. Sometimes tensions develop when you give something too much attention and you might think "Oh, I should do this" and you become very hard. So you observe. The practice of real contemplation means total relaxation. This is what we call *trecho* in Tibetan; *trecho* means total relaxation in the Dzogchen teaching. *Tre* means *trepo* in Tibetan and *trepo* means something bound, with cord or some kind of binding. *Chod*

means cutting through; cutting through the binding. What remains when we cut this binding is relaxation. There is no more conditioning or binding and we are free. In the Dzogchen teaching we say *lugpa, lugpa* has the same meaning as *trecho*. It means relaxing in instant presence which is real relaxation. In general, we don't really know how to relax. For example when you go to a doctor, the doctor says "Lay down!" and you lay down, then he says "Relax!". But we don't have a good idea of what it means to relax. We try to relax, and really it is more important to relax our energy than our physical body. We must relax our energy, and then the mind. It's very difficult because we don't know how. There is total relaxation when we are in the state of instant presence; relaxed in that state. For that reason in daily life it's very, very important. Even when you are doing practice like singing the Song of Vajra with Guru Yoga, doing the visualization of White A, a Short Tun, or transformation, you observe frequently and relax. It is important to do these practices in a relaxed way. Otherwise, instead of realizing deities or realizing some wisdom, one realizes nervousness and agitation and there is no benefit. So, relax, relax, relax. This is a very important practice.



NAMKHAIR NORBU RINPOCHE REVISED 1996 SCHEDULE

SINGAPORE

Singapore Seminar
April 19th - April 21st
Contact: Daniel BK Suen
BLK 408, Fajar Rd. #08-343
Singapore 2367
Telephone: 65- 76249515
Fax: 65- 7361608

JAPAN

Japan Seminar
May 3rd - May 5th
Contact: Tsugiko Kiyohashi
5-11-23 Shimomeguro
Meguro-Ku Tokyo, Japan
Office Telephone:
81-3-3712 7507
Fax: 81- 3- 3716 7248

RUSSIA

Moscow Retreat
May 17th - May 21st
Contact: Lynda - phone/fax
007-095-3251378 or
Misha - 007-095-3120546.
We can send complete travel
information (or information on
how to survive in Russia) by
fax to those who wish to have
it. For any special help or assistance contact us:
Misha - 007-095-3120546 or
Anna - 007-095-3913714.

Santi Maha Sangha Base Level Exam

May 25th - May 28th
Santi Maha Sangha Level I
Training
May 31st - June 4th

MERIGAR, ITALY

Santi Maha Sangha Base Level
Exam
June 21st - June 23rd
Santi Maha Sangha Level I
Training
June 24th - June 28th
Contact: Merigar, Arcidosso
58031 (GR) Italy
Telephone: 0564 966837
Fax: 0564 968110
Email: 101572.3265 @
compuserve.com

Santi Maha Sangha Level I Exam

July 5th - July 7th
Santi Maha Sangha Level II
Training
July 8th - July 12th

Teaching and Practice Retreat July 19th - July 28th

Teaching and Practice Retreat August 14th - August 18th

Santi Maha Sangha Level II Exam

August 23rd - August 25th
Santi Maha Sangha Level III
Training
August 26th - August 30th

The Kookaburra's Laugh

An interview with Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche on holiday
in Byron Bay, Australia, March, 1996.

by The Mirror



On the beach at Byron Bay

C. Braud

The Mirror: Good Morning, Rinpoche.

Rinpoche: Good evening. (because Rinpoche is in Australia and The Mirror is in America)

M: Could we do a short interview for the Mirror?

R: Why not?

M: Rinpoche, what are you writing now?

R: An answer to a ten page letter from one of my students that is written so subtly it's like an insect walking on sand.

M: Why don't they use a typewriter?

R: Maybe typewriters haven't reached there yet.

M: Rinpoche, what are you doing in general?

R: I write.

M: What do you write?

R: Whatever comes along.

M: Besides that what do you do?

R: Depends.

M: On what does it depend?

R: On my mood.

M: For example, if you're in a good mood?

R: I look in the sky.

TSEGYALGAR, UNITED STATES

Teaching and Practice Retreat
September 19th - September 29th
Contact:
Tsegyalgar
PO Box 277
Conway, MA 01341
USA
Telephone: 413 369 4153
Fax: 413 369 4165
Email: 74404.1141 @
compuserve.com

Santi Maha Sangha Base Level Exam

October 4th - October 6th
Santi Maha Sangha Level I
Training
October 8th - October 12th

Santi Maha Sangha Level I Exam

October 18th - October 20th
Santi Maha Sangha Level II
Training
October 21st - October 25th

M: Why?

R: One never knows if there might be something there.

M: And if you are in a bad mood?

R: I stretch out on my bed.

M: Rinpoche, in these days there is a lot of talk about Taiwan, that the Chinese army may be releasing missiles. What do you think about that? Does it worry you?

R: Poor fishes.

M: Rinpoche, what do you think about the Fire Mouse year?

R: If the mouse doesn't burn...

M: Rinpoche, how do you feel Namgyalgar is going?

R: Perfectly.

M: And how will Namgyalgar develop?

R: Like Merigar.

M: Rinpoche, how does a Rinpoche spend his life?

R: It depends on what kind of Rinpoche he or she is.

M: Which kind of Rinpoche are you?

R: So...so...so....

M: For example, a Rinpoche who is very seriously committed to the Dharma, how does he or she spend the day?

R: They don't even sleep in the night in a normal way.

M: One less serious, how does he spend his time?

R: Laughing!

M: Rinpoche, where do you spend your holidays?

R: In Byron Bay.

M: And how do you like it here?

R: No words!

M: How is Byron Bay?

R: Not comparable with Ballina.

M: Rinpoche, are you enjoying yourself in these days?

R: Oeh!

M: Excuse me, but I don't understand what Oeh means.

R: It doesn't mean either "i" or "u".

M: Rinpoche, what do you eat in these days?

R: Tsampa.

M: Is it possible to find tsampa here?

R: Oeh!

M: What do you eat when you're not eating tsampa?

R: Rice cakes.

M: And what do you drink?

R: Water.

M: What kind of water?

R: Any kind.

M: And how do you feel on this kind of diet?

R: Good.

M: Rinpoche, do you feel cold?

R: No.

M: Why do you always wear two blankets?

R: So as not to feel cold.

M: Rinpoche, is life tiring for you?

R: Why?

M: For example, to create good students?

R: What's to be tired of?

M: Rinpoche, do you like music?

R: YEEES!

M: Which kind of music?

R: The bird's song.

M: Do you like New Age music?

R: I prefer middle age.

M: Why?

R: Because I am.

M: Rinpoche, what is your day like in general in Byron Bay?

R: The only exception is swimming (the rest of the day is as usual).

M: Rinpoche, how do you like the water?

R: I imitate a bit a fish.

M: Are you successful?

R: Partially.

M: How do you feel when you imitate a fish?

R: Like a turtle.

M: When you come out of the water what do you do?

R: I run a marathon.

M: How long does it take?

R: Depends.

M: On what?

R: If I am satisfied by imitating a fish or not.

M: Rinpoche, after the marathon, what do you do?

R: Depends, for example, if it's raining or not.

M: Rinpoche, how does one receive a long answer from you?

R: You must ask a very short question.

M: Rinpoche, what did you like very much in Byron Bay?

R: The kookaburra's laugh.

An Interview with H.E. Tai Situpa

By Andy Lukianowicz and Liz Granger for *The Mirror*

December 17th, 1995, Merigar

Tai Situpa and the Situ Lineage

Tai Situpa Rinpoche, Pema Donyo Nyinje, is the twelfth in a line of incarnate lamas spanning over a thousand years. Its history goes back to before the title of Tai Situpa was bestowed upon this line of tulkus, to the time of the mahasiddhas of India. Tai Situpa is an emanation of the bodhisattva Maitreya, the future Buddha, who has incarnated as several Indian and Tibetan yogis, including the mahasiddha Dombipa, a disciple of Virupa; Denma Tsemang, one of the twenty-five main disciples of Guru Padmasambhava; and Marpa (1012-97), the famous Tibetan translator and master of Milarepa. A subsequent incarnation, Drogon Rechen (1148-1218), one of the principal disciples of the first Karmapa, Dusum Khyenpa, established the close guru-disciple link between the Karmapas and Situpas that has continued to the present day within the Karma Kagyu tradition.

It was another Situpa incarnation, the Chinese emperor Tai Tsu, whose clairvoyance enabled him to see the 'vajra crown', made from the hair of a thousand dakinis, on the head of the fifth Karmapa, Karma Pakshi, who offered the material crown to the Karmapa that was to become the origin of the famous Black Crown Ceremony, so that those with ordinary sight too could benefit from such a vision.

It was not until 1407 that the Situpa incarnation Chokyi Gyaltsen (1377-1448) received the title Kuang Ting Tai Situ, abbreviated to Tai Situ, from the Chinese Ming emperor Yung Lo. Successive Situpas have been disciples, masters and discoverers of Karmapas, and it was the ninth Karmapa, Wangchuk Dorje, who conferred the Red Crown on the fifth Situpa, Chokyi Gyaltsen Palsang (1586-1657), in acknowledgment of his spiritual accomplishment. The Situpas have continued performing the Red Crown Ceremony to the present day. The eighth Situpa, Situ Panchen Tenpai Nyinje Chokyi Jungne (1700-1774) was a marvellous sage, prophet, poet, social critic, artist, doctor and scholar, and author of the definitive commentary to the third Gyalwa Karmapa Rangjung Dorje's 'Aspiration Prayer of Mahamudra', some stanzas of which the twelfth Situpa graciously imparted to us during his teaching retreat at Merigar in December 1995. His successor, the ninth Situpa Pema Nyinje Wangpo (1774-1853), was a close associate of the great Jamgon Kongtrul Lodro Thaye, Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo and Chogyur Lingpa, three of the major protagonists of the nineteenth century non-sectarian Rime movement.

Without seeing the fifteenth Karmapa's predictive letter (which moreover confirmed his choice) the eleventh Situpa, Pema Wangchuk Gyalpo (1886-1952) recognized the sixteenth Gyalwa Karmapa and became his main teacher. Likewise the current twelfth Situpa recognized the seventeenth Gyalwa Karmapa, Urgyen Trinley Dorje.

The twelfth Situpa who taught at Merigar in December 1995, was born amid auspicious signs in 1954 (the same year as the late third Jamgon Kongtrul) in the Palyul district of Derge, in east Tibet, and was recognized by the sixteenth Karmapa, who took responsibility for his formal religious training at his monastery in Rumtek (Sikkim) after fleeing Tibet in 1959. In 1976 Situpa founded his own monastic seat, Sherab Ling, in a forest near Palampur in Himachal Pradesh (in the north Indian Himalayas).

Since 1981 Situ Rinpoche has regularly toured to teach the dharma in Europe, USA, Southeast Asia and Africa, and in 1983 he founded the Maitreya Institute, a non-sectarian forum for sharing the principles and insights of Buddhism with other approaches to spiritual development in the fields of the arts, philosophy, psychology and healing. Also involved in the world peace movement, in 1989 he set up a Pilgrimage for Active Peace together with religious teachers and humanitarians from all countries.

Andy Lukianowicz

The Interview

The Mirror: Rinpoche, could you say a few words about how you first met Choegyal Namkhai Norbu and how your friendship developed?

H.E. Tai Situpa: Actually the previous Tai Situ Rinpoche was very close in a certain way with Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche because he considered him to be a very important Rinpoche for Vajrayana Buddhism in general. Also Kangkar Rinpoche who was one of the main disciples of the 11th Tai Situ who appointed him as the tutor of the 16th Gyalwa Karmapa, was very close to Norbu Rinpoche. (Note: While teaching Tibetan language in China in 1954, Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche met the famous Kangkar Rinpoche from whom he received teachings on the Six Doctrines of Naropa, Mahamudra and the dKon mchog spyi 'dus.) And then H. H. the Gyalwa Karmapa considers him to be of benefit to Vajrayana Buddhism and so we all have a very strong connection.



Liz, Andy and H.E. Tai Situpa

L. Graf

And then when I was little and living in Sikkim, I had one old lama who was the personal attendant of the previous Tai Situ Rinpoche taking care of me at that time along with other lamas of course. He was the most senior. Norbu Rinpoche used to visit him and me almost every week and I remember these visits very very clearly.

Anyway Rinpoche wanted me to come here but I couldn't manage to do it until this year.

The Mirror: Today you quoted a stanza from "The Aspiration Prayer of Mahamudra" where it said,

"Free from mental creation is Mahamudra,
Free from extremes is the great Madhyamaka
and being all inclusive is also called Dzogchen
or the Great Perfection".

Could you say some more about this connection between Mahamudra and Dzogchen?

H.E. Tai Situpa: These kind of particulars are very general and quite simple kinds of definitions. But of course what is Mahamudra and what is Dzogchen, what is great Madhyamaka – in essence they are all the same. Of course, the lineage, the historical background of each practice has its own line of masters and disciples. Also terminologies and texts are quite distinctive. Besides that, with my knowledge I really don't see any difference between the three because it is all the same. By practising Dzogchen one will be enlightened, by practising Mahamudra one will be enlightened, by practicing Madhyamaka one will be enlightened. And that is what really matters.

The Mirror: Today at the end in your dedication you mentioned problems with ecology, with the environment. In 1989 you led a pilgrimage for active peace as part of your

commitment for world peace. Could you say some more about that? What exactly did you do?

H.E. Tai Situpa: I went to different places around the world and did functions together with other individuals and organizations. We prayed for world peace and we discussed it, but in a most simple way, in an absolutely non-political way. I was with the Pope here in different places. We had interfaith programs. I feel this kind of activity is necessary because we all live in such a small planet with all the means that we now have to communicate and transport us around to meet each other. In some way it's almost like everybody is living in a dormitory, a global dormitory. And we learn not to snore too much. So I think learning to respect, learning to appreciate each other is very very important.

Of course sometimes we can't do certain things in a certain way. But this doesn't mean we shouldn't do other things. We should just do our best with every possible way. What we can't do now we pray that we will be able to do in the future. What we can do now we don't neglect and just do it. Even if it is a small thing, we just do it. And that was just my small contribution.

The Mirror: One other question was about the Maitreya Institute which you founded. I myself am very interested in the psychology dharma interface aspect of it. What exactly is the Maitreya Institute?

H.E. Tai Situpa: The Maitreya Institute is actually not a big thing. It is a simple small thing but it is based on maitreya which means loving kindness. I believe that every religion, regardless of whether its aim is enlightenment or not, is based on doing something for the benefit of others so that, I think, is

maitreya. So the Maitreya Institute is any kind of discipline, any kind of ways and means – it could be art, or religion, or anything – that is dedicated to maitreya. The Institute is open for all of that and is nondenominational. It will have programs from time to time in order to do something together and sometimes even present one particular thing at a time. But in many cases it will be doing many things together. Different religions come together and discuss certain issues and things like that.

The Mirror: So it's kind of peripatetic? It's not based in one place?

H.E. Tai Situpa: Well, it started in Hawaii and also in San Francisco and it also happened in France but it really doesn't have a headquarters or anything as such which I feel, at this stage, is really not necessary. It is not a big thing but, I think, sincerely substantial. Yes. At least I wish it to be. Yes, yes.

The Mirror: There were two final questions. One is up to you if you want to say anything about the current situation with the Karmapa Tulku.

H.E. Tai Situpa: I can talk about this, there is no problem. His Holiness is doing very very well as far as his spiritual activities are concerned. He is living in Tsurphu and he is now 11 according to the Tibetan calendar, 10 according to the western calendar. He has already completed all the basic

Buddhist studies and now he is going into higher study. Every day he blesses hundreds of people. Tsurphu monastery is, at the moment, functioning with almost 500 hundred monks and all the retreats around Tsurphu are filled with nuns. So His Holiness' activity is really really good.

As far as our wish for him to travel to India and to visit his seat in Sikkim, there are difficulties because we don't have any travel document for His Holiness yet. We have been pursuing this, doing everything within our reach, since 1992 up to now but it hasn't happened yet. So that is the situation.

The Mirror: To conclude, you know that The Mirror is the official newspaper of the Dzogchen Community. It is read all over the world on all continents. We were wondering if you had any words of advice or any message to give us practitioners of the Community.

H.E. Tai Situpa: I think yes. Do your best. The real mirror is your mind. The picture in that mirror is your thought. So just do your best to improve your personality, your good aspects. Develop your strong aspects and try to transform your weaker and negative aspects. And always use "the mirror" which is your mind.

The Mirror: Thank you very much.

(Gleaned mainly from editor Lea Terhune's Introduction to "Relative World, Ultimate Mind" by the Twelfth Situpa (Shambala, 1992) and other sources.)

Lives of the Great Masters



A Short Biography of Nyarong Padma Duddul

by Tsultrim Allione

From the Italian translation of II Canto dell'Energia, by Choegyal Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche with the assistance of Enrico Dell'Angelo.

The Dzogchen teachings have been present in Tibet since ancient times. The teachings are transmitted through uninterrupted lineages by masters in the ancient Nyingmapa and Bonpo traditions. Among the Tibetan traditions Dzogchen is considered to be the supreme teaching, the summit and ultimate goal of all doctrines. The characteristic of Dzogchen is that it goes beyond all the exterior forms and structures that all other doctrines, for better or worse, are organized around. The practitioners of Dzogchen are found in all the Tibetan schools.

The final realization of Dzogchen is the rainbow body ('ja lus), which enacts the overcoming of all dualistic concepts of subject and object, internal and external and the reabsorption of the elements of the body into their luminous essence.

There are two levels of realization of the rainbow body. The highest, if one could say such a thing, is called 'The Great Transference' or the 'Rainbow Body': reaching this level death no longer exists and the practitioner vanishes completely into light. The masters in the Buddhist lineage who have realized this level are Padma Sambhava and Vimalamitra and Tapihritsa in the Bonpo. The second level is simply the "Rainbow Body," in which the physical body is reabsorbed into light in the moment that the consciousness finds itself in a state of self liberation (lhundrub).

At the moment of death practitioners who have reached this level close themselves in isolation for a period, usually for one week. At the end of this time there remains no trace of their physical body except the fingernails and hair, that are the impurity of the body.

Many masters, even in modern times, have manifested this sign of realization. One of the latest is Padma Duddul (Lotus Demon Subduer), also called Pema Duddul, who had the nickname Do Khampa (mDo Khams pa), referring to his birth in his country of origin, Khams, Eastern Tibet. Other names that he often used were Lhang Ragpa, "The One from Lhang

rock," and Jing Thulcan, "He Who Wears the Woolen Robe," (this name means that he dressed as a common person). Another name that he used was Pranggan (Poor Old Man). He was known as the lama of Nyag rong, Padma Duddul. His name as a discoverer of treasures (terton) was Chang Chub Lingpa, and his Maha Siddha name was Nyida Kundze.

He was born on the tenth day of the ninth month in the year of the Fire Mouse, 1816, in a place called Gyalnya Than in the area on Delong, in the part of Eastern Tibet called Nyarong. His father was called Khang Tsegs Gonpo. He apparently descended from the family Tagla that was considered fairly important in their area. His mother came from the Serzang family and her name was Sonamkyi.

Immediately after his birth his paternal uncle, Lama Kunzang, gave him the name Tashi Tondrub. He began to learn reading and writing with a lama called Padma at the age of seven. He became known by all those around him as a particularly intelligent child. At the age of nine he received various teachings and initiations from Gyaltra Dorje Chowang, an important lama who had been invited by his uncle. This lama prophesied that the child would spread the teachings and be of great benefit to sentient beings.

The father of Tashi Tondrub died around that time. According to Tibetan custom the family made large donations on the part of his father to guarantee a good rebirth for him. This completely depleted the family's wealth.

After that his father's sister, Podzog, threw Tashi Tondrub, his mother and two younger brothers out of their house. They were forced to live in the stable. A few head of livestock were all they had left of their paternal inheritance, and even these were taken away by thieves, one by one. So suddenly their lives became extremely miserable.

The middle brother was unable to survive in these conditions and soon died. Tashi Tondrub tried to support his mother and brother by working occasionally as an assistant to a local shepherd. In spite of his efforts his younger brother also died of starvation after a few years. So his childhood passed in deprivation and a series of tragedies, until he was fifteen years old.

Around that time his paternal

uncle, the great tertön Rigdzin Drodul Osal Dorje gave a series of Tara teachings that he had discovered himself. He designated Tashi Tondrub as the caretaker of those teachings.

At that time Tashi Tondrub experienced a reawakening, and he was suddenly able to do many things that he had previously been unable to do and that no one had taught him. He was spontaneously able to perform rituals and knew all the proper preparations connected to them. He knew how to play instruments, paint, and carve mantras on rocks. He also knew the crafts of metallurgy and carpentry. With all these abilities he was able to resolve his economic problems in a short time and secure a better life for his mother.

At the age of eighteen he had a dream that profoundly affected the rest of his life. Dreaming of the hell realms and seeing the suffering of beings, with a heart full of pain, he made a prayer for their salvation. In that moment his uncle, Drodul Osal Dorje, appeared in the form of Avalokitesvara and prophesied that if he would do the practice of Jo'khor, he would benefit innumerable beings. Following his dream, Pema Duddul constructed a wheel, and with his friend Tendzin he began to travel from town to town.

At the age of twenty one, he met his master Do Kyentse Yeshe Dorje and received from him the highest teachings of Dzogchen series called Longchen Nyingthig. A little later, he received teachings from his uncle, the tertön, and also from the masters Tro Zur Gyaltra Kalzang Chubtsan, Daka Lama Wangchen Rabtan and Lama Gyurmed Gyamtso. He also had contact with masters from the monasteries of Sakya Ngorpa, Kathog, and Dzogchen.

At the age of twenty-five he received teachings on the Longchen Nyingthig from the great enlightened one, Padma Gyurme Sangye. It was this master who gave him the name Padma Duddul, pronounced "Pema Duddul."

In the Year of the Iron Mouse (1840), he had an important vision: five Dakinis offered him piece of paper in their respective colors: blue, white, green, red and yellow. There were symbolic letters on them through which the tertön could decipher the termas.

In the year of the Fire Horse (1846), he went to see the Maha Siddha of Tso Phu, Gyurme Choying Rangdrol and received many teachings on Dzogchen both from oral transmissions and termas. Through this he entered the true sense of the practice.

In the Year of the Water Mouse (1852), when he was at the foot of a rock called Lhang-Lhang, he received the list of the termas of Padma Sambhava that he would receive.

In the year of the Water Bull (1853), the people of Nyag Khog, both monks and lay people, gathered at a quiet and tranquil place called Balchag. They invited the reincarnation of Khromge Kuldun, Namgyal Donag Tandzin, to teach. Padma Duddul also went there, and he received essential Dzogchen teachings known as Yangti Nagpo Ser gyi Bru Cigpa (the Single Golden Word of the Supreme Yoga of the Dark). He also imparted the teachings of Mahamudra and the Long gSal teachings of Dzogchen.

continued on page 15

Book Reviews

Rainbow Painting A Collection of Miscellaneous Aspects of Development and Completion

by Tulku Ugyen Rinpoche
Rangjung Yeshe Publications
1995

"In Kham, there is a saying, 'When you want to boil water, you can blow on the flames or pump the bellows, as long as the water boils.' In the same way, if all the different practices we do benefit our stream-of-being, then that's fine. If you can remain in nondual awareness without meditating and without being distracted, everything is fine. But if your nondual awareness is merely imagined, or if you try to construct it in meditation, it will remain merely a concept. If awareness becomes carried away, then you are in delusion. The key word here is undistracted nonmeditation. When nondual awareness is totally free of confusion and distraction, then your water has really boiled."

I suppose the only way to do justice to this book, so full of priceless gems, would be to quote it in full. "Rainbow Painting," by Tulku Ugyen Rinpoche, who died just before the Tibetan new year, is a compilation of talks on all aspects of the Vajrayana teachings given between 1991 and 1994 in Rinpoche's various monasteries in Nepal. It is somewhat of a sequel to his "Repeating the Words of the Buddha," his book of advice for beginners, and the contents were selected after consulting Rinpoche as teachings that would benefit dharma students "who may have become jaded and unenthusiastic" and would serve "to dispel obstacles" and as "an enhancement for practice". As his son Choekyi Nyima Rinpoche says, "The tradition of Tulku Ugyen Rinpoche and other masters of his calibre is to focus on the simple approach of a meditator, an approach that is saturated with direct, pithy instructions. This is a tradition of plainly and simply stating things as they are, while allowing the student to gain personal experience by alternating questions with advice. Tulku Ugyen Rinpoche teaches in a style called 'instruction through personal experience'. Such teachings are unique and at times his way of phrasing instructions is amazing. I find that just half an hour of Rinpoche's teachings is more beneficial than reading through volumes of books. That is the effect of instruction through personal experience."

The chapters, based on discourses and seminar lectures, address different topics. The "Background" chapter contains advice that demonstrates Rinpoche's insight into the mind, for instance where he recommends the tantric value, in our "Age of Strife", of despair and the emotions: "At the very moment we are strongly caught up in thought forms or in the surging waves of an emotion, of anger for instance, it is

much easier to recognize the naked state of awareness", and warns against the danger of training solely in serenity: "We may end up in the realm of the Conceptionless Gods ... this repose as a Conceptionless God does not help you one iota in approaching the awakened state. Among the traditional eight states in which one is free to pursue a spiritual path, taking rebirth among Conceptionless Gods is the worst circumstance because it is the ultimate side-track."

The chapter on the "View and the Nine Vehicles" includes an interesting metaphor of the Vajrayana teachings as the exquisite representations of the Buddha's body, speech and mind in a beautiful but otherwise empty house. The following chapter elucidating Atisha's "three vajras": 1) keeping the vajra of no dissuasion before you; 2) keeping of vajra of no shame behind you; and 3) keeping company with the vajra of pure wisdom or self-existing wakefulness, rangjung yeshe. In the chapter called "The Vital Point" Rinpoche gives a profound teaching on Garab Dorje's "three words that strike the vital point": 1) recognizing your own nature, that is the Buddha nature, empty cognizance suffused with awareness, that means seeing the nonduality of emptiness and perceiving; 2) deciding on one point: that the



three kayas of the Buddha are simply present in Buddha nature, that is our own nature; 3) gaining confidence in liberation, that is more important than meditation, which Rinpoche explains in the light of Vimalamitra's teaching on the three styles of liberation: 1) like meeting someone you know, when thoughts are liberated on recognition; 2) like a snake's knot unravelling itself, when thoughts are liberated the moment they arise; and 3) like a thief entering an empty house, in which thought activity is naturally liberated without harm or benefit. In discussing this "vital point" Rinpoche says that all his teachings concern this one point: that if we recognize that thoughts arise as the expression of our primordial pure nature then they dissolve back within the expanse of our own nature, whereas if we do not recognize this they go astray into the expanse of the six realms of samsara.

The chapter on "Samaya", written as a specific response to

continued on page 19

The ASIA project of building a Tibetan Language school in the Qinghai Province of Tibet commenced in 1993 and has been undertaken using the measures, directed towards a conservation of the Tibetan culture. Through working with the local people and a process that recognizes the traditional forms expressed in the culture's religious, literary and artistic heritage, a development that maintains the values and function of the culture can be ensured and is able to work towards bringing together the divergence between traditional culture and the circumstances of the present day.

The Tibetan culture of Qinghai Province is called Amdo and is one of three geographically distinct areas within the boundaries of Tibet. Amdo lies in the central part of modern-day China at the northern edge of the vast Tibetan Plateau that extends two

thousand kilometers from the Himalaya mountains almost to Mongolia. This area has been home to Tibetan herdsmen and their nomadic lifestyle for millennia and today they are facing the annihilation of their culture.

Within the Tibetan culture an education system that was traditionally based in the monastic system is no more. These monasteries were of immense proportions and often housed communities of over four thousand, or were simply the "black monasteries" that took their name from the color of the felt tents erected by itinerant monks serving the needs of the nomadic population. Typically male children were sent to the monasteries up to the age of twelve for an elementary education in reading and writing. They would then return to the family as herdsmen or contin-

mer camps across the higher pastures before returning to the base camp and the on-coming winter. The mentality seems to fuse diverse aspects, uniting rhythms of seasonal movement and a need for a fixed place, and supporting the Tibetan's Buddhist outlook that recognizes impermanence and a transmigration of the human spirit.

As a part of the primary school, a cultural facilities building is to be built. This will provide a focus that can maintain the social fabric of the community and for the administration of other activities for development. In collaboration with aid agencies seeking to direct resources to the area, this building will function as a literacy center and training center for development of production skills in the adult population. The building is the center for development of the school complex and provides a village meeting place for the administration of both the school and village activities. It is organized on two levels with a village meeting room at ground level and a library and teaching resource center on the first floor level used by both the primary school and wider adult population. The center will also be used as an archive that can document and collect traditional art forms and expressions of the culture. In this way a repository will exist for the gathering of:

ASIA Project in Amdo

by Tony Laurent

Excerpted from a talk given at the Tibet in Context Conference at the Australian National University in Canberra, Australia, February, 1996.

thousand kilometers from the Himalaya mountains almost to Mongolia. This area has been home to Tibetan herdsmen and their nomadic lifestyle for millennia and today they are facing the annihilation of their culture.

The lifestyle of the Tibetans in Amdo combines the raising of livestock with a sparse agriculture in fertile pockets that has developed over centuries in direct response to climate and geography. The area is exceptionally dry and cold and a nomadic pattern of seasonal movement is essential for an adaptation to such extremes of climatic conditions. With an average yearly temperature of minus five degrees C. and less than one hundred fifty days in the year free of frosts, the possibility for harnessing production from this "roof of the world" is limited. The short growing season in the valley plains produces only meagre crops of barley, broadbean and potato, and the rearing of sheep and yak livestock for meat, wool and dairy products is the basis of daily production. The geography is awesome; more a vast expanse of sky set against a backdrop of dry desert ranges and broad intermittent valley plains. The mountains are pitted with seasonal tracks winding up to higher pasture sprouting after the winter snows and looking out over distant plains and sparse agricultural settlements of earth houses that provide refuge from intense winters. This landscape supports the delicate grassland that is the lifeblood to the Tibetans and their ancient traditions based on environmental adaptation. Many of the families are permanently nomadic and share their large black tented compound at a base camp with herds of yak and sheep. With the passing of the winter snows, the herdsmen set out making four or five sum-

mer camps across the higher pastures before returning to the base camp and the on-coming winter. The mentality seems to fuse diverse aspects, uniting rhythms of seasonal movement and a need for a fixed place, and supporting the Tibetan's Buddhist outlook that recognizes impermanence and a transmigration of the human spirit.



Dangche School

the Tibetan mentality and their great concern for education and ultimately a regard for the Buddhist view concerned with a liberation of the human condition.

The Dangche school will provide education for five hundred children and is the first complete school in the area to present a curriculum in the Tibetan language. The program of the school is for the six grades of primary education with twelve classrooms, accommodation and living facilities for the teachers and for one hundred and thirty children of nomadic families, the teachers' offices and general meeting rooms

texts, paintings, for the recording of folk songs, collecting garments, fabrics, jewelry, carpets and other traditional objects that can provide a focus and memory in the community and be used as a teaching resource within the school. In the long term this can ensure the values underlying these objects, the principles expressed in the forms of the culture, remain as generating ideas that can contribute to cultural survival. The possibility exists for the installation of computers for the development of the information and communication facilities within the community and to a wider global network. It is

Reincarnation of His Holiness Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche

The reincarnation of Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche has been recognized by one of Dilgo Khyentse's most senior disciples, Shaden Trulshik Rinpoche and the recognition confirmed by H. H. the Dalai Lama. The father is Mingyur Dewai Dorje, son of Tulku Ugyen Rinpoche and the mother is Dechen Paldren. Their son, the young reincarnation, born on the birth anniversary of Guru Padmasambhava, the 10th day of the 6th month of the Bird Year, 1993, will be enthroned at Shechen Monastery in Nepal after two or three years.



Based on an announcement published in "Rabsel" No.3 Winter 1995-1996.

hoped to bring specialists, both Tibetan and foreign, into the area to study and teach and to encourage a deeper understanding of this ancient culture. This will provide a means for a preservation of the culture and can also make available to the modern world the traditional values before they are lost.

The school buildings use the traditional forms of the Tibetan architecture and like all traditional forms are one of the primary expressions that convey the values of the culture and function to communicate underlying ideas. The architectural design has used the courtyard, a form almost universal in eastern traditions and serves to create a definite place, a boundary distinct and focused. The cultural facilities building is the entry point and delineates between the courtyard inside and the world outside. The teaching facilities arranged on two levels are to one side and the single story accommodation areas of teachers and children to the other, each organized around its own courtyard. Like all traditional architectures they are developed in response to natural conditions of climate and place and such enclosure offers protection from a sparse and inhospitable environment. The buildings are sited on a wide open plain with the backdrop of distant mountains and the long and low masses of the buildings blend into the landscape as traditional buildings have always done. The materials and construction techniques use those found in the local area and where necessary using the structural technologies of today to provide earthquake resistance. The two story teaching block uses a reinforced brick system found throughout China and complies with the structural specifications of the Chinese Education Department. The single story accommodation buildings use the traditional form and construction techniques of the village area but with the addition of an improved roof in cement panels and with insulation and waterproofing. The enclosing walls and ancillary buildings use the earth and timber structure typical to the village. The whole arrangement has been proportioned with respect for traditional Tibetan buildings which means great consideration for the window openings and a treatment of walls to form a composition of

horizontal layers, particularly at the upper most level where a deep red cornice meets the sky.

The forms of the Tibetan buildings reflect underlying ideas and ultimately function to evidence the values of the culture. For example, the Tibetan pillar is not only a post to hold up the beam and then roof rafters and tiles. The passage from stone base to pillar, the ornamental capital, to carved beam, the intricate blocking and myriad of rafter ends that support the roof is a symbol that represents the Tibetan view of the manifestation from the world of form to the sensible. The carving and patterns elaborate a spiritual view and function visually much as a text communicates meaning by a written word. The use of so many pillars in the prayer halls not only hold up the roof, but act as a support for meditation. The choice of a square plan that respects the four quarters does not represent a lack of imagination to invent intricate modern geometries. It is square because it represents the Tibetan view of the nature of the spatial realm and human condition. Every element of the Tibetan traditional architecture is an ornament to support a view.

The school project uses this idea and recognizes the traditional forms and values of the culture as the base for development that can benefit the survival of the Tibetan people. The forms of the culture come about quite naturally through a view and the application of the principles of that view and if these can be discovered and applied, modern methods and materials don't have to lead to an intervention void of cultural value. It is not so much a copying of the style, but the application of the values of the culture that can offer a continuity for development in the present day.

Tony Laurent is an Australian architect who has been working for the last ten years overseas. Three years ago in Italy he began collaborating with ASIA, has recently returned to Sydney to set up a private practice and is negotiating with Australian aid agencies to gain support for funding a series of small schools to develop a network of education in the Tibetan language amongst the nomadic communities of Amdo.



SHANG SHUNG INSTITUTE

Transcription Project

To coincide with the project to transfer analog tapes in the Nastroteca (the tape library in Merigar) onto CD, (see the last Mirror and Bollettino) Shang Shung Institute would like initiate an international effort to create machine readable transcripts of all of Rinpoche's teachings which exist on tape from around the world. This information will be used to create a data base of all of Rinpoche's Teachings. The goal of this project is to make the Teachings more accessible to the entire Community.

We have contacted the Gakyils around the world to ask them for their collaboration in this project by choosing a local member of their Community to coordinate the transcription work in their area. The project coordinators designated by the local Gakyils will together decide the direction which the project will take. The first task of these coordinators will be to create an inventory of existing audio tapes and transcriptions in their area. Once finished, this will represent the first comprehensive inventory of Rinpoche's teachings.

It is an enormous job, but one we can all collaborate on together to realize, regardless of where we live. The work will go quickly if we can each find a few hours a week to dedicate to transcribing the teachings. Rinpoche feels that there would be much benefit for all, once the transcription project is completed.

Anyone interested in helping on this project can contact their local Gakyil or Josef Heim, the responsible for the project at the Istituto Shang-Shung: via degli Olmi 1-58031 Arcidosso GR-ITALY

Tel: ++39 564 966941/40

Fax: ++39 564 966846,

e-mail: 100043.1433@compuserve.com.

TIBETAN ASTROLOGICAL CALENDAR

FIRE MOUSE YEAR 1996-1997

Contains all the astrological data of the Tibetan calendar and the individual aspects for those born from 1912-1996. The calendar is indispensable for finding out the days that are favorable and unfavorable for both mundane activities and those linked to practice. Also includes positive and negative days for the practice for the Nagas. There is a short explanatory introduction.

Available from Shang Shung Edizioni, 58031 Arcidosso GR, Italy by international postal order or Eurocheque for Lit.12.000 including postage or, from May from Shang Shung Editions, P.O. Box 82, Conway MA. 01341, USA for \$5 plus \$2.50 postage.

PUBLICATIONS ANNOUNCEMENT

"Dzogchen the Self-Perfected State" by Choegyal Namkhai Norbu has just been rereleased in English by Snow Lion Publications, Ithaca, New York, USA. The original translation from Tibetan by Adriano Clemente, English translation by John Shane.

The French translation by Bruno Espaze of Choegyal Namkhai Norbu's book "The Crystal and the Way of Light", entitled "Dzogchen et Tantra - la Voie de la Lumière du bouddhisme tibétain", has just been published by leading French publisher Albin Michel.

Following is a complete list of transcripts present at Merigar as of March 4th, 1996: (In Italian: available typed or handwritten)

In Italian

- 1976 Subiaco partial transcript (dream parts)
- Costa Paradiso Christmas
- 1977 Prata in 2 vol. plus semzin extract
- Lucumitoni Christmas
- 1978 Pomaia Talk
- 1979 Arzachena Christmas vol. 1 & 2
- 1980 Monte Faito Easter Napoli 28.4 talk
- 1981 Samso, Denmark Forest Hill, USA Austria 14.1
- 1983 Merigar Easter teachings from Zhang Zhung Snyan Rgyud
- 1984 Merigar Christmas Arcidosso 1.1. Talk
- 1986 Neamakri, Greece Christmas
- 1987 Merigar Easter Barcelona 14.6 Conference Lhasa 28.8 Message
- 1989 France 7.6 Conference Talk Christmas Parts
- 1990 Rome 1.3

- 1991 Naples 28.2 Merigar Christmas
- 1992 Merigar Easter
- 1993 Merigar Easter
- 1994 Merigar Summer Cassette 4 & 5 only
- Merigar July
- Santi Maha Sangha level 1
- Tsegayla October
- Santi Maha Sangha level 1
- 1995 Merigar October
- Santi Maha Sangha level 2
- 1995 Bari 10.2

In English

- 1976 Subiaco Partial notes of B. Simmons
- 1979 California Yellow book London Easter
- 1980 Potters Valley Yellow book
- 1982 Oz, California Blue book
- 1982/3 Conway Green book
- 1983 Merigar April
- 1984-5 Merigar Christmas
- 1985 Bauker, Norway translation
- 1987 Los Angeles
- 1991 Merigar Christmas
- 1992 Merigar Easter

In German

- 1976 Costa Paradiso Partial
- 1977 Lucumitoni Partial
- Vienna & Scheibbs

- 1978 Vienna & Scheibbs
- 1979 Arzachena
- 1980 Monte Faito
- 1989 Schlempen
- 1990 Tashigar Christmas

Handwritten in Italian

- 1981 Torino Jan. 81
- 1985 Merigar Christmas
- 1986 Merigar Easter Mixed quality
- Neamakri Christmas
- 1988 Merigar Christmas Bad quality
- 1990 Merigar September
- 1993 Merigar Easter
- 1995 Merigar summer
- 1990/1 Merigar Christmas with Yeshe Norbu

There are also transcriptions in French, Spanish and other languages at Merigar. These will be listed in the next issue of The Mirror. Although transcriptions in all languages are of interest to the Nastroteca, in particular we wish to have transcripts in the language in which the teaching was given or in English.

It was a beautiful evening in Naples when, about thirteen years ago, Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche decided to found the publishing house of the Community. In the comfortable home of a practitioner in Posillipo after a Ganapuja, Rinpoche's idea suddenly came to life like a blazing flame. In a few minutes we had already found the president and vice-president, thrown Alberto Galli, the then young lawyer, out of

not given, as everybody knows, the hoped for fruit, mainly because the commercial results have not equalled the investment. The promotional society to whom national marketing had been entrusted went unexpectedly into liquidation just at the moment in which Shang Shung Editions had arrived at its maximum production output. For this reason it was not possible to get back the high cost of production for the last three titles. This

"business" publishing house but simply to form a structure which could legally publish texts of interest to the Dzogchen Community; that was all. This inspiring principle is still valid today as Rinpoche himself recently had the opportunity to confirm, and these considerations made us reflect on whether there were still the suppositions and advantages of maintaining a structure whose principle function could, today, be carried out by the

talking about "committees", "directors" and "co-ordinators". There have been rumors about financial ruin and various other oddities that have been quite nasty. In Italy today there is a very funny English word that is fashionable - 'bombastic', which is what comes in mind when thinking about some of the high-sounding chatter that has gone down. Shang Shung Editions has functioned for many years and we are all very happy

Shang Shung Editions, on a beautiful Neapolitan evening

by Giovanni Area

bed, and spoken at length of the aims and the activities of the publishing house. In short Shang Shung Editions was operating even before it existed. Some time later, in the disordered and somewhat baroque office of a singular Neapolitan notary, nine of us met together along with Rinpoche to create the society. It was February 24, 1983.

About twelve years later, Shang Shung Editions found itself in difficulty and after various meetings and encounters, after a lot of talking and backbiting, it now seems to be on the road, we hope, towards a serene dissolution. In fact, if all goes well, this thirteenth year will be the last for our co-operative. However, here it is necessary to point out an important fact: the last year for the co-operative, not for Shang Shung Editions. The explanation is very simple but, first of all, I should explain what has really happened, beyond any type of gossip and statements which have little or nothing to do with fact.

The recent transformation of the co-operative on the level of organization and production has

created a modest debit which, however, considering management costs and the halt in production was more difficult to make up than it appeared at the beginning. Difficulties of this kind are anything but rare in a small publishing company, as in other sectors and, in general, are not an insurmountable obstacle. However Shang Shung Editions had invested a large part of its resources in transforming a small editorial nucleus into a structure that could compete on a national level and offer work to members of the Community, and this unfavorable turn happened exactly at the least opportune moment, thus increasing its effect. At this point we asked ourselves in the Community to verify together what possibilities there were to resolve the economic crisis of Editions. As they say, one thing leads to another and from the discussions on the budget, projects, etc., there were also reflections on the role and function of the publishing house in a situation that was decidedly different from the situation so many years ago when even Merigar did not exist. Rinpoche's idea had never been to organize a

Cultural Association of the Dzogchen Community.

And so it was decided that Shang Shung Editions would continue to exist with a structure that would not be separate from the Community but within it. There would be no problem with the logo because it has always been the property of the Dzogchen Community (as are the other logos of the Institute and ASIA), and was given in concession to the publishing house.

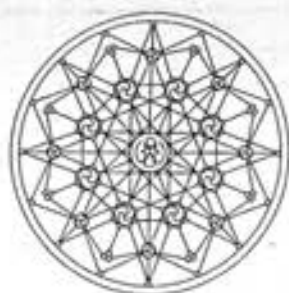
If, in the future, there are suitable requirements for re-forming a commercial structure, nothing will prevent it from happening but, for the time being, it seems more reasonable to continue internal production of texts on the Teaching, limiting as much as possible publications that are more demanding financially. Shang Shung Editions is giving up all its rights of use of its publications to the Dzogchen Community to which it has already sold a large part of its stock. In exchange, the Association will undertake to continue the publications of Shang Shung within the limits and ways that are possible. Recently there has been a lot of

that it can continue to do so thanks, as always, to the commitment of many practitioners whom we wish to thank, for the past, the present and the future.

Note: Shang Shung Editions and the Dzogchen Community would like to reassure all those who are interested that the production of publications on the Dzogchen teachings has never stopped and is still continuing. We hope to complete all the bureaucratic procedures necessary to legally dissolve the society before the end of 1996 or at least by the beginning of 1997. All commitments and relationships of collaboration made previously will remain valid until that time. For further information please contact Shang Shung Editions. The new address is the following:

Shang Shung Editions, Merigar, 58031 Arcidosso GR, Italy.
Tel & fax 0564-966039
E-mail The Mirror at 100530.527@compuserve.com.





I N T E R N A T I O N A L COMMUNITY NEWS



Courses at Merigar

April 27-May 1
Advanced Yantra Yoga Course
with Laura Evangelisti

May 3-5
Course of Dance of the Six
Spaces
with Prima Mai

May 10-12
Beginners Yantra Yoga Course
with Laura Evangelisti

May 11-12
Karma Yoga
to make TsaTsa to put in the
new stupa

June 7-9
Purification Retreat for
Smokers wishing to quit
with Laura Evangelisti
June 15
Ceremony
for the placing of the first stone
of the big Stupa

August 3-10
Advanced Dance of the Vajra
Course
with Prima Mai

August 3-10
Dance of the Vajra Course
for beginners or those learning the
opposite part
with Adriana Dal Borgo

Yantra Yoga Course
September 1-8
for expert practitioners and teach-
ers with Fabio Andrico and Laura
Evangelisti

Retreat in Moscow with Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche

May 17-21

The retreat will take place at a boarding house in the country-
side (twenty-five minutes from the Kurskiy terminal in
Moscow). Accommodation with full board (a simple break-
fast/lunch/dinner) will be available for about \$25 per day per
person. A dormitory, which will be cheaper, is also available.
The organizers suggest arriving a day before the retreat starts.
Offerings for the teaching: participants from East Europe \$30
US, participants from West Europe, USA etc., \$60 US.

To book accommodation, participate in the retreat and for
further information contact our secretary before March 15th.

We can send complete travel information (or information
on how to survive in Russia) by fax to those who wish to have
it. For any special help or assistance contact us:

Lyudmila - fax 007-095-3251378 or

Mikhail - 007-095-3120546.

Anna - 007-095-3913714.

Santi Maha Sangha Exam in Moscow - May 25-26
Santi Maha Sangha Training Retreat- May 31-June 2

The Santi Maha Sangha exam and training will take place
in Moscow. You can either book cheap accommodation in the
dormitory or a place in a double room in a hotel for about \$22-
30 per day through our secretary Lynda.

If you wish to attend the retreat, in order to get a letter of
invitation which will be necessary for the visa you should send
us the following information: your name, sex, nationality, date
and place of birth, passport number, date and place issued,
expiry date, and your address.



Tsegyalgar - 1996 Calendar of Activities

April 20
Buckland Land/Work on Guardian Cabin

May 18
Newcomer's Introduction
May 18-19
Community Weekend/Practice

June
Dance Retreat/Buckland

July
Community Work Weekends

August 1-5
Retreat Preparation

September 18
Newcomers' Introduction
September 19-29
Retreat with Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche

October 4-25
Santi Maha Sangha Retreats and Training
Dance Retreat with Prima Mai or Adriana

November 16-17
Community Weekend/Practice

December 7-8
Yantra Yoga Weekend

The Guardians of Tsegyalgar

by Conway Joe

The conception of the guardians cabin took place several years ago when Rinpoche
did a personal retreat on the Buckland land. During his stay there, he located sev-
eral sites for different types of cabins, each for a specific practice. It was during
this retreat that he received the terma for the Vajra Dance, and since that time the place
has been referred to as the 'sacred land'.

For many of you who are not familiar with Tsegyalgar, I will try to give a brief
description of the sacred land and the surrounding area. Buckland, Massachusetts is
located in the rural part of Western New England. It is an area that was under the control
of the Mohawk Indian Nation, and not until their defeat by the English in the mid 1700's,
did the area come under colonial rule and subsequent settlement by Europeans. The
'sacred land' itself is composed of one hundred sixty-five acres; with a small pond, open
meadows and dense woods of towering pine trees.



The guardians' cabin itself is quite special. It is not just a retreat cabin of a utilitari-
an design - a place to do one's practice while keeping the wind off your back and the rain
off your head. From its detailed design, to its elaborate painting in colors of red and
orange, to the very labor of its creation, all is a great offering to the guardians themselves.
Once the cabin is finished, it will house the masks, thankas
and other articles pertaining to the guardians.

When practitioners come to the sacred land to do a
retreat, first they must stop at the guardians cabin to make
an offering and do some practice before proceeding to one
of the other cabins to begin their retreat.

For all of those wishing to participate in the creation
of this manifestation and make their offering to the
guardians, you are invited to Tsegyalgar this summer to
help. The work will be on going every Saturday.

The Translators' Fund

More than two years ago, the "Translators'
Fund" was set up by the Merigar Gakyil on the
approval of Choegyal Namkhai Norbu with the
aim of permitting, in particular, Adriano
Clemente to work full time on translation pro-
jects. Thanks to this fund, of whom the first and
main contributor up to now has been Rinpoche
himself, important translation works have been
completed such as all the books of the Santi
Maha Sangha which have been published to date.

The projects on which Adriano is working
this year and which are expected to be published
next year are, besides the next level of Santi
Maha Sangha, principally two works: the final
version of the Yantra Yoga book and "The Small
Collection by Buddhagupta" a very important
Dzogchen text discovered among the Tunhuang
manuscripts, both by Choegyal Namkhai Norbu.

We would like to emphasize that this fund
is not supported financially by Merigar but only
by the contributions of Community people.
Since the fund is almost deplete at the moment,
we ask all those interested to contribute accord-
ing to their possibilities in order that this funda-
mental work of translation may continue.

Please send contributions to (specify for
"The Translators' Fund"):

Monte dei Paschi di Siena,
Filiale di Arcidosso,
58031 Arcidosso GR, Italy.

Account: ABI 1030 CAB 72160 c/c 3120.29 in
the name of "Comunita Dzogchen".

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Birth Announcements

Vern and Gaby Harrington of
South Deerfield, Massachusetts
have recently had a baby girl,
Rebecca Michaela. She was born
on January 26th. They are very
well, and happy to have a girl.

Born to Monica Sailer and
Claudio Maritano their second
son, Gawo Alano-Gregor on
February 3rd in Tuscany, Italy.

Enza Greco and Nicola Cassano
now have a sister for Luisina
called Laura, born on March 9th
near Merigar.

Karma Yoga in Namgyalgar



K. Ryan



Prima Mai



K. Ryan

HIS HOLINESS THE DALAI LAMA ON TOUR 1996

The Dalai Lama Visits the United States July 22nd to August 2nd. The Dalai Lama will visit the Mid-West and the West Coast from July 22 to August 2, 1996. This will be His Holiness' fifteenth visit to North America.

US SCHEDULE

July 22th to 25th

Gethsemani, Kentucky

Contact: Sister Mary Margaret Funk at 317-787-3287 or Grace Warthorn 502-549-4133.

July 26th

Bloomington, Indiana

Public Talk at Indiana University.
Contact: Elliot Sperling at 812-855-2233 or the Tibetan Cultural Center at 812-855-8222.

July 27th to July 29th

Conference at DePaul University on "Socially Engaged Buddhism and Christianity." Contact: Barbara Bernstein at 708-256-7415. For information on a public talk and other events in the Chicago area contact Steve Schroeder at 847-640-2288.

His final stop is Los Angeles, California. For detailed information contact Gene Lin at 818-445-2508.

AUSTRALIA

His Holiness the Dalai Lama will be touring Australia in September, 1996. He is scheduled to visit Melbourne, Sydney and Canberra. His Holiness will preside over the Kalachakra from September 19th-September 29th at the Sydney showgrounds and this is the first time the Kalachakra will be offered in the Southern Hemisphere.

For more information contact:

The Dalai Lama in Australia
PO Box 323

Prahran Vic 3181 Australia

Tel: 03-92775004

Fax: 03-92775005



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- These Endless Knot items have been given to volunteers and supporters of the Tibetan Resettlement Project throughout the United States and have been used as fundraisers for the Tibetan cause.
- Profits from all Endless Knot purchases go to the Tibetan Resettlement Project/Ithaca.
- Your Endless Knot order directly helps the Tibetan cause.

To receive your pendant, please send a check or money order for \$20.00 plus \$2.00 shipping (and tax - NY only) per item to Bead Store Cafe, 116 Center Ithaca, Ithaca, NY 14850. (607) 277-1729. Make the check payable to Tibetan Resettlement.



Rinpoche making momos

C. Braud

The Year of the Fire Mouse Begins Down Under

by Naomi Zeitz

Reflecting the flavor of life here on the great island continent, Losar was a simple and relaxed occasion in the glorious Australian bush. On the evening of February 18th, we began the opening of the Ganapuja with Rinpoche present and then carried on through the night with the Naggon, the short Jigme Lingpa Ganapuja and Vajrasattva mantra in sequence. A few of us remained during the night and at 3:30 am, Rinpoche and the others returned and we completed the Ganapuja with a very abundant feast offering.

Led by Rinpoche and Rosa, we ambled out slightly groggy to wash in the star water. We sat in a circle around the fire and made a sang offering. We then played a game in which each person had to demonstrate an animal designated by Fabio, who himself started the circle off with an attempt at the sound of the famous kookaburra bird. (The sound of the kookaburra is a truly unique crescendo of cries erupting in the air, increasing in volume and speed and reaching a peak of frenzied calls, ending abruptly. An explosion of laughter in the bush.) The game itself provided a humorous display of various creatures, from a spider to a wild boar.

We ate a shamar offering made of tsampa and nectar. We had a small tea break, Rinpoche was offered gifts and we returned to the Gonpa. As the sun was rising, the amazing symphony of Australian birdsongs began—the bell birds, the 'ah' birds, the warbling magpies, the monotone wonga pigeon—and we did the Mandarava long-life practice.

After these activities everyone went to rest. We returned to Namgyalgar at noon for a picnic, momo making and games. The momo making proved to be challenging and full of fun, as Rinpoche initiated (or reinitiated) us into the world of momos with many forms, names and levels of competence. Some of the doughy dumplings were quite amusing. Some a bit grotesque. A few of us watched longingly as Rinpoche and Rosa nimbly pleated the dough around the filling. Finally, the first batch was ready for consumption and fueled us to carry on what seemed to be an endless task of momo production.

In different locales around the outdoor kitchen people were engaged in games of mig mang, dice and pachen. The sound of clacking dice, coaxing words and dismayed groans were heard floating through the cool summer evening. As the night went on, a local fellow brought out his guitar and everyone sang around the fire. Champagne was uncorked, the New Year toasted and the last of the celebrants, one who auspiciously drove on the "opposite" side of the road for the first time on the New Year, departed.

On the third day of Losar we made the lungta purification and hung the prayer flags around Rinpoche's house - in - progress. Rinpoche's house is a Tibetan looking wooden and glass structure (some have nicknamed the "little monastery") with large verandas and breath-taking views, perched on the mountainside among the gum trees and thick bush. Rinpoche remained to work on the house as he has been doing daily for sometime now, and many of us joined in. After Rinpoche had his lunch, we sat on the veranda. Amidst the occasional screams of the table saw and the spectacular view of the mountains, sea, blue skies, shimmering gum leaves and newly hung prayer flags, Rinpoche recounted a story of some of his family history in Tibet. He told us about his grandmother's family of eleven children and the large family house that grew like steps up a hill in the Tibetan style of building expansion. He also told us that bad practitioners reincarnate as crows still crying "ah", and egocentric doctors reincarnate as bloodsucking leeches.

The Fire Mouse year already shows promise if Rinpoche's joyful singing of Tibetan songs as he makes his way around the house site, hammer or paint brush in hand, is any indication of the renewal of energy in store for our precious teacher and his rather endearing lot of disciples.

REFORM TO CORONIAL LEGISLATION

by Ann Pickering

The sudden death in 1993 of Gyalsay Tulku Rinpoche (the brother of Ontul Rinpoche) in Canberra, Australia, is acting as the catalyst for law reform. Gyalsay Tulku Rinpoche died of a stroke early on the morning of Sunday, the 21st of November, 1993. When the students hosting his visit found him, they called the ambulance. When the paramedics could not revive him, they called the police who, within hours of the death, came to take away his body to the morgue to await a post-mortem. Despite the best efforts of his students, acting under the guidance of His Holiness Sakya Trizin, it was not possible to avoid the removal of the body and the carrying out of an autopsy. However, in response to the distress of his students, the ACT Attorney-General announced an inquiry the next day into the ACT Coroner's Act to ensure that law and practice in relation to coronial inquiries and autopsies properly reflect the multicultural nature of the Canberra community.

A discussion paper was issued by the ACT Government in 1994 and Lisse Stutchbury, on behalf of the Dzogchen Community, was one of the signatories to a submission by the combined Buddhist Communities of Canberra. In addition, Sogyal Rinpoche wrote personally to the ACT Attorney-General, welcoming the Discussion Paper and indicating that he was disturbed to learn that it was simply not possible, under current Australian law and practice, to ensure that Gyalsay Tulku Rinpoche's body was given the respect traditionally due to a Buddhist teacher. "I hope and pray that Gyalsay Tulku Rinpoche's death will in a way act as a catalyst for a change in the law and practice, not only in Canberra but throughout Australia, to enable greater caring and respect for the dying and the dead, so that they can die well in accordance with their own religious beliefs...There is no way to exaggerate the importance of such a change. It would send a message to the rest of the world about the urgent need to pay attention to the questions surrounding dying and death, especially in a multi-cultural context...It would also act as a model for other Western countries..."

While there has since been a change of Government, the new Government is equally committed to reform. The need for reform had been further drawn to attention when the body of a senior visiting Pakistani civil servant was not handled in accordance with Islamic law.

Late in 1995, the new Attorney-General tabled an exposure draft of amending legislation late in 1995 for community comment. This proposes the amendment of the Coroners Act to require the Coroner, in deciding whether to order a post-mortem or removal of the body to have regard to the desirability of minimizing the causing of distress or offence to persons who, by reason of their cultural attitudes or spiritual beliefs could reasonably be expected to be distressed or offended.

Sabina Lauber prepared the submission commenting on the draft Bill on behalf of the Dzogchen Community of Australia and Ann Pickering drafted a submission on behalf of Rigpa Australia, the students of Sogyal Rinpoche. These welcomed the draft Bill as a significant step forward. However significant further changes were needed to ensure that in a multicultural society all people

should have the right to die, and have their body handled after death in accordance with their spiritual beliefs. More specifically, the Bill needs amendment in order to meet the specific requirements of Buddhists, to enable the person's masters and close spiritual friends to ensure that the appropriate ritual practices are carried out and their body is handled in accordance with their beliefs.

These developments in Canberra are important because of their potential to act as a model for reform throughout Australian and around the world. Copies of the exposure draft of the Bill can be obtained from Caroline Donovan, ACT Attorney-General's Department, GPO Box 158 Canberra ACT 2601 ph (06) 207 584. The Dzogchen Community submission can be obtained from Sabina Lauber at: 14 Percival Road, Stanmore, NSW 2048, ph 02 284 6317 work 02 560 1775 home; the work fax - you need to send a cover sheet saying 'personal and confidential' is: 02 284 6363, but the print on the fax is a bit blurred so ring her first.

May the death of Gyalsay Tulku Rinpoche be a source of blessing which helps bring about a transformation of attitudes towards death and dying so that people of all spiritual traditions can die and have their bodies handled after death in accordance with their beliefs.

Copies of the Rigpa Submission, Sogyal Rinpoche's letter and earlier combined Buddhist Communities Submission can be obtained from Ann Pickering at 2 Becker Place, Downer, ACT 2602 Australia (Email: 100253.3104@compuserve.com).

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Tibet in Context Conference

by Pamela Oldmeadow

The Conference was held at the Australian National University, Canberra, Australia, February, 1996

Do you love second-hand bookshops and are you an avid reader of old novels about Tibet? If so, you could be familiar with the idea of the White Lama.

He was usually a British explorer or agent who penetrated monastic mountain vastness of Tibet. He would rescue the deluded inhabitants from the clutches of corrupt and evil lamas. Then, begged to stay on, he became the White Lama, pure in heart as well as skin. Frequently, he introduced Mozart and modern hygiene. He represented a state of beneficent paternalism towards the misguided and simple-hearted natives.

This is the image of Tibetans, lamas and whites portrayed in English language novels of earlier this century. The idea of Shangri-la had quite a powerful hold on the English imagination for most of this century, but it was tempered by the clear understanding that the peaks of civilization are necessarily European!

A point that David Templeman, collector of such books, was making was that these books sold in hundreds of thousands, in contrast to the small readership of today's serious works on Tibet and Tibetan Buddhism. They are still readily found in second-hand bookshops and formed the popular basis of English-speaking people's images of Tibet.

David was speaking at the third Australian Tibet Studies Conference, Tibet in Context, organized by Elisabeth (Lisse) Stutchbury and Mc Comas Taylor at the Australian National University in Canberra where Lisse is a Post-doctoral Research Fellow. Held February 16th-18th, it was attended by some sixty-five participants. The atmosphere was relaxed and welcoming to both academics and others. At lunchtime, people lounged in pleasant sunshine on the grass under eucalypts, and ate curries and sipped chai from Grit Fair's mobile Skydance Cafe. Twenty papers were presented over the three days and two dinners held, one to celebrate the immanent Losar.

Paul Harrison gave a graphic account of the complexities of sifting through filthy mounds of burnt fragments of Tibetan texts at Tabo in Spiti to reveal what had once been a magnificent library. The library seems likely to have been pillaged on several occasions. Clearly there will be some treasures found amongst this pile, as early results suggest that some of the material may be contemporaneous with Rinchen Zangpo, the great translator (958-1055). His Holiness is to give the Kalachakra initiation at Tabo this year in celebration of its thousand year anniversary, and Paul

has assisted in creating some order in the Library for this occasion.

Lisse herself mapped a complex web of transmission relationships around Togden Shakya Shri and Adzom Drugpa from east Tibet indicating some of their connections with other Himalayan regions and the West.

Tony Laurent presented a brief talk and excerpts from the video of the Amdo school project with which he has been involved. He handled tricky questions about the motives behind and likely cultural effects of ASIA projects in Tibet.

Kevin Garratt looked at international law and the serious implications of definitions of people as refugees and questions of statelessness. Mark Stevens gave an interesting biography of a Tibetan lama in Rebkong in Amdo and talked about his ethnographic research.

Jey Clarke spoke about the process of translation and developing intercultural understanding, and drew out people's ideas about the ability of Westerners to represent Tibetan culture and communicate essential meanings of texts in translation.

I was only able to attend half the conference but by all counts the rest of it was equally interesting. There was, overall, quite an interest in the construction of Tibetan studies and the need to redress the balance by contact with the living tradition. Gabriel Lafitte addressed this issue, and Jay Garfield spoke about a project to facilitate a more equal dialogue between Western scholars and Tibetan informants. Heather Spence spoke on the ambiguous history of Britain's foreign policy towards Tibet in the first half of this century.

A reportedly entertaining gem was McComas Taylor's deconstruction of the writing of Alexandra David-Neel to raise serious doubts as to whether she ever actually visited Lhasa. John Powers pursued the political/social implications of the way Tsongkapa positioned Tantra in Buddhist practice.

There were also papers on reluctantly-risen corpses in Dolpo, learning grammar through music, sand mandala, the tradition of Sanskrit grammar in Tibet, healing resources in Tibetan settlements in North India and on Tertön Jamgon Kongtrül and treasure-finding. The latter was preceded up by a small treasure hunt for lollies in the garden, an event that pleased more than just the children.

Lisse intends to produce an edited volume of the conference papers.

Padma Duddul

continued from page 5

From that time on he did many dark retreats.

He stayed in retreat for six successive years in a small cave that was at the base of a place known as the Secret Place of the Jewel Rock. There he wrote down the symbolic instructions given to him by the Dakini in the year of the Iron Mouse (1840), and he practiced them.

For the first three years he just drank a little water from a skull cup and took one pill a day. For the next three years he was sustained using medicinal substances and honey in tiny quantities.

At different times in his life he met various masters such as the lama of Odgon, Sherab Gyaltsan, the master of Dza Paltrul Rinpoche (born in 1808), the Dzogchen master, Migyur Namkhai Dorje (1772-1838), the Yogi Kunzang Jigme, Sakyapa Phog kyi Langpo, the abbot Sherab Tharchin of Dzogchen Monastery, and the Repa Namdrol Dorje. So he received teachings of various schools and traditions.

Padma Duddul discovered many terms, among the most famous was Zabs Cho Kha' khyab Rangdrol (Profound Teachings on Universal Self Liberation). He taught to numerous disciples, male and female, many of whom achieved the same level of knowledge as him. Among his students were: Adzam Drugpa Drodul Pawo Dorje (1842-1924), Togden Rangrig Dorje, Rigdzin Chang Chub Dorje, the tertön Rigpai Dorje, Khandroma Dorje Paldron (also known as Ayu Khandro), Trulzhig Semsnyid Dorje, Nyaljorma Odsal Rangmo, Nyaljor Kunzang Thaye, and Rigdzin Thugchog Dorje.

In the area where his uncle lived, he founded Kalzang monastery. It had a temple and all the necessary statues. He also founded a monastery called Sangs Ngag Dechen Choling and a nunnery called Tshogyal Gonazar in the region of Nyarong. In this way directly or indirectly he benefited many beings.

The year of the water monkey (1872), on the new moon of the sixth month, Padma Duddul was in his tent surrounded by his disciples.

After giving many teachings and advice, he told them to sew him into his tent and then leave him there and not return for seven days. They obeyed him, although they were very worried. On the morning of the eighth day, the door of the tent was opened in front of all the disciples, and the only trace of the Master found inside were his fingernails, hair, and robe. His physical body had completely disappeared. As soon as the disciples invoked him, there appeared in front of them a rainbow.

This brief biography is based on the biography of Nyala Padma Duddul written by his disciple Yeshe Dorje. It is entitled rJe bla ma 'Kqil zhig Chang Chub gLingpa'i rNam thar sKal lZang dGa'ba'i bDud tsi'i sPrin tShogs. Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche obtained further information from his teacher, Khandro Dorje Paldan (Ayu Khandro) and his master Chang Chub Dorje, who were among his foremost disciples.

For additional notes, please contact The Mirror.



Rinpoche's House at Namgyalgar

A. Facer

The Earth is Narrow, but Australia is Immense

by Michel Bricaire

Extending above the huge ocean and Wallaga Lake is the land of Namgyalgar. The wind moves across the high tops of the long trunks of the eucalyptus trees like a powerfully growing wave that carries everything away; fly away lazy iguana with the long mute tongue, fly away innumerable snakes of colors and black.

When the dark falls in the upside down night sky of this enchanted wood, the kookaburra - the most interesting bird of this country - wishes us good night with his incredible and delirious laughter. The night movement is shared with mice, the peerless possum - a small marsupial with a little pig like nose - and the tail of the wallabies thumping the earth.

At dawn there is no rooster, but again the comedy of the kookaburra and the perpetual concert of fantasy provided by the songs and whistles of all kinds of birds.

The so called retreat "cabin" of the Master is also big like everything in Australia, situated on the second hill overlooking the eucalyptus wood. On one side down below is the great forest called the 'bush'; and on the other the lake and the vast pacific ocean. At the horizon is the antarctic-one end of the world.

Often, like in the old times in Merigar, the dear Maestro appears on the hill and we put ourselves in motion cutting the deck wood of the veranda and nailing it down. There is a troupe of dakinis everpresent around Rinpoche, like the bees around the Queen - who in this case is a King.

In this kind of paradise the birds are watching us and the smallest are very friendly, with their little red legs, beaks and tails. They are very near to us, without fear. Rinpoche sings and is happy.

Sometimes we meet Rinpoche on the beach - panoramic, unspoiled and powerful. The other day a rip-tide ripped our dear Adriana from us for a little journey in the direction of the open sea; the gentle waves brought her back to shore with the direct experience of Zerg-na.

Here the elements are never lacking. We can't forget the sweet sun that is able to burn the toughest skin is less than half an hour. Here I feel like I am on my land with the possibility to do again what I did not do twelve years ago.

The world is so small. Once again I meet Jim Valby, who I left not that long ago in Merigar, Jean Mackintosh and Catharine Simmonds, both who spent long

periods of time in Merigar, other Vajra sisters from South America, Jim Smith from Conway, helping tirelessly on Rinpoche's house, and of course the irrepressible Hiro, a rap dancer from Japan and new addition to the Community. The Dzogchen Community is really one. We have the feeling that space and time is very relative in our small human condition. Now travel is so easy and inexpensive, international communication with email and fax has been transformed, and the flow of money in instantaneous use where it is needed, from one Gar to another, regardless of the original 'source'.

The sun is coming through the walls of the kitchen. It's seven in the morning. The kitchen is finally vacated by the possums who were using it during the night; the possums who enter as soon as the last person leaves this lovely room with transparent walls. Walls transparent for those inside, translucent for those outside. Like the magic of the Australian bush.

And when the last candle is extinguished, very soon you can hear all the just washed pots and pans falling and moving around. The other night I regretfully disturbed one of these intelligent and busy animals with small nose of pig who tried to escape climbing the post of raw wood that supports the roof - this very nice construction of our American builders - thinking he would arrive at the top of a tree but was instead stopped by the roof. I felt sorry for him because maybe he thought the door of paradise was now closed to him.

For us, also, the kitchen is a kind of waiting room for paradise. So, every morning I have the good fortune to go up there in a nice Indian style pick up. It is a sensation that is difficult to describe, but if you come here you will be able to experience it. The best part is that you are as happy to go up as you are to come down.

The walls of Rinpoche's house are not transparent. They are made of shingled, perfumed cedar. The doors disappear into the walls. But the floors are transparent - either the deck of the veranda outside where there is space of light between the boards, made of one of the four hundred varieties of eucalyptus, or inside the house where the floor is so transparent that if you lose your presence you can fall down to the ground below. When somebody falls and doesn't hurt him or herself, you no longer call it falling but flying, like in the Aboriginal language...but that is another chapter.



Rinpoche and Gaboo

J. Valby

Interview with Ted "Gaboo" Thomas

The Mirror

Gaboo is an elder of the Yuin tribe of the Wallaga Lake region of New South Wales. Gaboo means good friend. He is eighty-seven years old, was chosen from many Yuin youth to become an elder at the age of nine or ten, and at this time was initiated into the wisdom of the elders by his father, grandfather and grandmother. He has been a worldwide spokesman for the Aboriginal people, and it was on one of his tours that included an International Peace Conference in Holland, he first met Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche. They became friends upon meeting and have remained so ever since. In 1987 Rinpoche came to Australia and met Gaboo again, they went to Goolaga Mountain and traveled around the area together.

The Mirror: Gaboo, how did you meet Norbu Rinpoche?
Gaboo: We met at an international peace conference in Holland. We just found each other, it was a meeting of the hearts. There was a lot of talking there from the heart. We spent almost all our time together there, we are good friends.

M: Gaboo, can you tell us what the totem of the black duck (Umbarra) signifies?

G: It is my totem and the totem of the Yuin people. When I'm in danger anywhere the black duck will show up. When I went on a trip to Western Australia once, we were all being interviewed, and I heard all my friends calling "Gaboo, look, there's your totem!" and there was a flock of black duck flying overhead. Then in the park by the lake where we being interviewed, I saw a black duck flying through the trees and it landed in the lake and came right over to me and started talking "Quack, quack, quack". I see them everywhere. You gotta have a totem, you know.

M: What do the Aboriginal colors black, red and yellow mean?

G: Black is the color of the early dawn sky. In the morning when I do my meditations, first the sky is black, and then the red clouds, like the earth, and then comes the bright yellow ball of the sun.

M: Gaboo, where were you born?

G: I was born in Braidwood (a town about one hour north of Namgyalgar) during the goldrush. My father was born in Braidwood from the Monaro people. He was a mailman. My mother was Chinese. Then I became an elder of the Yuin people when I was very young, the region from north of the Murrumbidgee River in Victoria up to Kosciusko (the tallest mountain in Australia), New South Wales where we do our walkabouts.

M: What is a walkabout?

G: A walkabout is when you walk from place to place, to meet with other people, visit sacred sights and go from midden grounds to midden grounds, eating bush tucker (bush food) and it is done at certain times of year. Midden grounds were the areas where people gathered and ate their fish and oysters together. I walked from Wallaga Lake to Sydney sixty-six years ago. I was a young fellow and it took me six months to walk to Sydney. That's three hundred and sixty miles. It is the same route that my father and grandfather walked.

M: Gaboo, how did you meet your wife?

G: The elders choose your partner; I couldn't have married a girl from Wallaga Lake because the blood wouldn't be pure. It's not good if the blood is too close. I married a girl from Taree (near Sydney).

M: Gaboo, what is that you are working on?

G: I am writing a book about my life. It will be called "The Veins of My People". I am the last of the older elders.

M: Isn't there a system of carrying on the elder status?

G: Yes, it goes from father to son, and I have initiated my son to carry on for me. I took him to Goolaga, all the women were waiting for him at the bottom. There are nine different sacred places that you go to on top of Goolaga as part of the initiation. Then he had teachings from the elders. Then he swam in a clear pond as purification.

M: How has your life been as an elder?

G: I have had a different kind life. I have traveled the world. I have just been able to talk the words that the Great Spirit gave me when I go around

Interview with Ann Thomas

The Mirror

Ann is an Aboriginal elder of the Biripi nation on the Northeast coast near Sydney. She was chosen as an elder three years ago. She has been running "women's camps" based in Aboriginal wisdom for several years. She married Gaboo as a very young woman, in the tradition of an arranged marriage from tribe to tribe. They are no longer married. They have four children.

The Mirror: Can you speak a little about your life and childhood?

Ann: I was born in Taree, the mid north coast. I was born in a family of eleven children, my mother and father. My mother is Chilean and my father part Irish.

M: Did you live in a settlement?

A: We lived both traditionally and in the way of the government camps, that were controlled by the welfare department. There was a white manager and police in charge of us.

M: You were also able to live traditionally?

A: When I was young we could live traditionally, which meant we were free to live as our ancestors had always lived. We did until the white man came to control us. This was begun by the Christian missionaries.

We are an ancient race of people knowledgeable in the ways of survival on the land, knowing what to eat, signs of danger, about the water, etc. We were free before the missionaries and government came in to practice our culture, set up our kinship system, etc.

M: What is the kinship system?

G: The kinship system was a way that we solved our social problems, through establishing the law, and it is still working today. It is a forma-

tion of our totemic regional tribal areas. We would walk around and meet all over Australia every ten years, on the trade routes. We would camp at different places, exchange goods, etc. You can still find remains in the desert in the center of Australia, of sea shells and fishing spears from the walkers who met at these kinship meetings.

M: Can you elaborate on some other aspects of Aboriginal wisdom?

A: There are separate teachings and places for men and women.



Ann Thomas

A. Pickering

Goolaga is the women's mountain and Mumbulla the man's mountain. The men and women have separate, independent teachings and they are not told each other's teachings. Women determine their own lifestyles and spiritual traditions.

M: Can you talk a little about your family and tribe?

A: My mother and sister are midwives. I was chosen as an elder by my tribe three years ago. My tribe's totem is the white shark. Every year we'd go down to the ocean, boys and girls and old people all together and we were taught about our culture.

M: Can you tell us a bit about what you were taught?

A: We were taught to look after each other, first of all, in our kinship system. We were taught how to be doctors, how to cook, how to care for people, how to initiate young people, women's law, and taught how to survive. We became the Southeast coast custodians.

M: Are there medicine people in the Aboriginal tradition?

A: Yes, everyone is taught the medicine, but there are particular people who become the healers, the ones who are more suited to it.

M: How did you come to the Yuin area?

A: I came originally as a Christian missionary. Then I married Ted. He was sixty something and I was a teenager.

M: What does your totem mean?

A: It means that you were a white shark millions of years ago and you and the shark are one. You are given your totem and birth by the elders; you can also get new names as you grow up and situations change. There are tribal totems and personal totems.

M: What happens at the women's the dreaming camps?

A: We all stay together in nature, and explore our lives as women with Aboriginal teachings and other ways. Many deep things happen for the women.

M: Ann, can you give some explanation of the dreamtime?

A: For example, when you wake up early before the sun comes up, and are in a beautiful space like the ocean, before the sun comes up, the kookarichoo bird calls out and you begin to meditate, call the spirit. You have that feeling all over and become involved in that feeling, the atmosphere of the spirit. So you let yourself move, your senses move and go away from you, and you look at the horizon, and on that horizon, that's where the pinpoint of the teachings comes from and where we connect with the spirit.

talking about the Aboriginal people. I just came back from Phoenix, Arizona where I met the Native American elders. Last night I took a church congregation of people into the bush to have a humming bee.

M: What's a humming bee?

G: It's something that came to me a long time ago. Everyone gets in a big circle with their arms around each other and makes the sound of the humming bee. Once we were doing a healing on Mt. Goolaga and doing the humming bee and we caused interference on the radio waves.

M: How is that sound?

G: Ahhhhhhhhh. Over and over. It creates such a strong feeling. The echo was going up in the bush and coming back again. Up in the corners, around in the gullies and coming back again.

M: What has been one of the most significant things in your travels?

G: When I was in London doing healing for people in a big Catholic hall; I was healing them with my hands.

M: Is healing part of your training?

G: Yes. My grandmother was a great healer and she would take me around. We didn't have much education as children in the missionary schools. They taught us cooking, sewing and gardening, not much else. I had a beautiful garden. But my father said "Son, you have to get out of that school and go back to dreamtime." So, I didn't go to school anymore. My father and grandfather took me up the mountain and gave me the teachings.

M: Gaboo, what is the dreamtime?

G: An example is one day I said to my father, "Hey, let's go up Mumbulla mountain" (the sacred male mountain). He said, "By and by". By and by could be next week, next month, next year or never. When I went up the mountain, I arrived in the evening, I found

my father already there. My grandmother used to disappear behind the tree. One day we went fishing and my grandfather was dancing along the big brim (the shore), and told me to follow him in the water and spear the fish. The fish just started coming out of the water onto the shore. Twenty of them. Then a big dolphin swam into my arms, and splashed me all over and swam away. I got a fright. My grandfather thanked the dolphin for bringing us the fish.

M: Can you tell something about Goolaga?

G: It is a sacred female mountain where my father took me for my initiation. I had to watch everything he did and learn. There is also a yowrie there, called the Wallaga snow man. He has a cave there. I meditate up there and I've seen him twice. He is a big hairy man. Goolaga always calls you back. I was just talking to an old man who said he had to come back to Goolaga to die. Whenever I'm away the mountain comes to me and calls me back. It is a very powerful place.

M: When you meditate, what do you do?

G: I sit with my eyes closed, in the morning and the evening and say "Thank you Great Spirit for the wonderful day".

M: Thank you very much for your time, Gaboo.

Gaboo's Poem

*Tis easy enough to be pleasant
 when life flows along like a song.
 But the one worthwhile
 is the one who can smile
 when everything goes dead wrong.
 For the test of the heart is trouble
 and it always comes with the years.
 But the smile worthwhile
 with all the praise of the earth,
 is the smile that comes through tears.*

Going "Up the Mountain"

by Naomi Zeitz

The Creation Myth of the Yuin People; Long ago, Daramulun live on the earth with his mother Ngalbal. Originally the earth was bare and like the sky, as hard as stone, and the land extended far out where the sea is now. There were no men and women but only animals, birds and reptiles. He placed trees on the earth. After Kaboka, the thrush, had caused a great flood on the earth, which covered all the east coast of the country, there were no people left, except some who had crawled out of the water onto Mount Dromedary (Goolaga). Then Daramulun went up into the sky, where he lived and watched the actions of men...

The report from Australia would not be complete without something about the Aboriginal people and their stories. Their energy is palpable here; the whole area full of the sacred places and mythology of the Yuin people. The Yuin tribe has inhabited the coast of New South Wales for around twenty-thousand years. The sacred animal or totem of the Yuin people is the black duck; the relationship to one's totem is of mutual protection. The Yuin people never eat black duck, and in return the duck is their guardian.

Namgyalgar is situated at the base of Mount Goolaga, a very sacred mountain to the Yuin tribe of this area. It is the considered the Mother mountain that has spawned two sons, Najanara, the younger, and Umbara Island, which is in the middle of Wallaga Lake. Goolaga is a mountain used for initiation rites for both men and women, with a particular location that is restricted to women only. The mountain is said to look like a pregnant woman. Mount Goolaga is in the Wallaga Lake area, which is the traditional center of the Yuin people between two sacred mountains, Mumbulla and Goolaga. The region is also known as the land of the five great forests - Bermagui, Murrah, Mumbulla, Tanja and Tanja West - that span from Wallaga Lake to the town of Bega.

coastal people went inland to gather bark for making canoes and vines to make fishing line, and burrawang (Macrozamia) nuts, a main staple of the diet, prepared by roasting and pounding and then washing away the noxious chemicals that reside in the raw plant itself.

Before the Europeans arrived in 1797, a smallpox epidemic occurred that caused a severe decline in the Yuin population. After the arrival of the Europeans, another smallpox epidemic raged and coupled with the introduction of venereal disease, the population of the Yuin people was dramatically reduced from many thousands to three hundred and eight people by 1847. The small group of survivors were put into reserves and given canned food, alcohol, tobacco, white sugar and flour. As is now a common theme, the native Australians were weakened and suffered greatly by the introduction of a life style so alien to their natural ways.

Somehow, the nearly decimated population was able to keep their heritage alive through their oral tradition of songs and legends. Each

these people have maintained their unique and magical capacity to live in many dimensions simultaneously. Perhaps this is what has partly saved them from complete devastation and annihilation. The spirit of the Aboriginal people is a place one must be invited to, not demand to enter. There seems to be a hidden place that the White invaders were unable to access, and it is possibly in this space between the worlds where the Yuin tribe, and many others like them, have kept alive their wisdom and transmission.

Going "up the mountain" is a way of understanding and contacting the native people and their tradition, and experiencing an otherwise inaccessible spiritual center of the Yuin tribe. There is an organized tour by the Yuin Cultural Center, where you are taken literally up the sacred mother mountain to the very peak in a sturdy four wheel drive vehicle. So we ventured up the mountain to the sacred site on the top of the mountain Mother, guided by the local Yuin people.

The first step was to receive a red cord to tie around your head, that symbolizes entering into sacred



mountain, rock, animal, and tree is carrying the stories and dreams of the Aboriginal people. Possibly it is

land with awareness and respect. We then headed out, and with the gentle guidance of our friends Stephen and Belinda, two young Yuin people, began the journey up. On our way we were shown a few points of interest. The first one was Najanara, the younger son mountain, where traditionally only the elders were allowed to enter to collect bird eggs. We were then shown the great birthing rock, the exclusive rock of women, near the town of Tilba Tilba (which means windy, windy). Stephen pointed out various trees and ferns: the gum tree that is home to the grub (larva) eaten either raw or cooked, the gum tree that leaves were used as a cure for respiratory problems when placed atop a person laying on a smoldering bed of bark, the seed of the fern that was used to make bread after being washed for three days of its poison, and the young, willowy trees used for making the spears used to spear fish. The rolling hills



The top of Goolaga

J. Chandler

of the countryside are lush and green due to a welcome rainy period after a seven year drought in the area.

We then begin the ascent to

rock formations, each one embodying different qualities. One was the female, one the male, a whale, a cathedral, a "baby" rock that we put our hands on to give and receive healing energy and the vision of our personal totem. Then we were asked to pick up a rock and place it on a pile of rocks to signify that we had become, along with many others, the keepers of Goolaga.

The view from the top of the large rocks was a vast landscape of green bush meeting the azure glittering sea. We sat atop the rocks and Stephen told us a story of how when the miners came to get the gold from Goolaga, their brand new machines were not able to work, and they were forced to leave. The rusted, abandoned machinery is still there along the river bed. There are other stories of how the guardians protect the mountain from pillaging and destruction - like camera men not being able to shoot, freak hailstorms that kept people from the mountain, etc.

On our way out, our exit was marked by the clack sticks and the clicking of the camera shutter, as we were now able to take photos. We climbed in the jeep, and made an almost silent journey back down the mountain mother, each one in their own space of thoughtfulness.

The experience of going "up the mountain" gave a more profound, intimate sense of the energy and spirit of the Yuin people, enriching our own contact with nature and the spiritual dimension. The strong respect and relationship to the land and the feeling of responsibility as caretakers of the earth and her treasures are qualities that we can take with us in our hearts and practice. It is said that Mount Goolaga always calls you back. We look forward to our return.



Belinda, Marcella and Stephen

N. Zeitz

The rich ocean shore and the inland forests provided many resources for the Yuin people. The

through this strong connection to, and deep respect for nature, its guardians and the elements, that

REFLECTIONS

Namgyalgar: A trip to the land where dreams come true

by Laura Yoffe

It was in mid December when faxes were coming and going between Buenos Aires and Sydney, making the final arrangements for the group of Argentines going to Australia for the Christmas retreat. The critical economic situation of our country coupled with the depression of its citizens made the energy even more dense in the days previous to New Year's Eve. We were making Ganapujas to create merit for those leaving the country, and for the others who would be meeting in summertime in Tashigar. Nelida and I, from Buenos Aires, together with Lorena from Chile, had decided to travel via the Pacific ocean, while the other six persons from the Community would be traveling in small groups through the south pole via the Atlantic ocean.

After being able to get out of our dense city, where the energy was always trying to pull us back, Nelida and I met Lorena in Santiago de Chile's airport. Out of Buenos Aires the nightmare began to vanish and everything began to smooth out; our trip began to have the quality of one of the most beautiful dreams that ever came true in our lives.

Passing through Easter Island, we stayed afterward in Papeete, the capital of Tahiti. Papeete is a paradise where we were delighted with beautiful dances performed by the most graceful men and women who showed us a way of moving their bodies with total freedom. We felt as if we were living in a gods' realm! All the time we were saying, "Thank you Rinpoche for giving us the possibility of living such a beautiful dream!"

We arrived in Sydney on Christmas night and stayed in Tsewang's apartment. Lynne Geary had arranged everything for us near Namgyalgar. We departed early in the morning of December 25th with the idea of getting to the land in time for the Ganapuja that would be held at the opening of the retreat. Alatheia and Rosemary took turns driving a minibus through the beautiful landscape of vast and green open spaces, woods with high trees, with a vista of the light blue sea on this clear and sunny day. A most appropriate day for the beginning of Rinpoche's Teachings.

When we arrived in Namgyalgar and began looking for tent sites, we were delighted by a surprise meeting with Rinpoche. I still can't express in words the deep emotion of meeting our Master again after not having seen him since the last retreat in Tsegvalgar when his illness was discovered.

Now he was looking so good and really recovered! The dream of meeting him had come true,

together with the possibility of being again with our Vajra brothers and sisters of the whole world!

The December retreat found a group of nine people of Tashigar together trying to learn from the Australian Community various ways of organization, noting the common factor of trying to maintain a Gar involving people who live in close proximity, as well as far from, the land. After having long and deep conversations with Lynne Geary, Pamela Oldmeadow and Jean Mackintosh, we began to think about creative solutions to working together in our own country.

By the end of the Christmas retreat, Martin and Mariquita Bortagaray had committed themselves to live in Tashigar. Their decision gave us the feeling that things would improve there by having more people living in and near the Gar.



Santi Maha Sangha Exam

It was after the end of these Teachings when Nelida, Lorena, Monica, and I began to study hard for the Santi Maha Sangha exam. Together with Paolo from Italy, Ines from Uruguay and Lorena from Chile, we shared a house that Jean Mackintosh found for us to rent near Central Tilba. When I got to this new place, I felt as if I had arrived at a kind of Nirvana, surrounded by green hills with cows, a horse to ride and feed, a dog that protected the house day and night, and Dave, the very kindly owner who lent us his car and took us on weekly shopping outings to Narooma to buy food, make phone calls to our families far away or to the post office to send all our cards and letters.

Lorena, Paolo, Ines and I had met the year before in Tashigar where we did long life practices for Rinpoche. There we had also shared a house, and now, once again, discovered the pleasures of group living and collaboration. Each of us cooked lunch every fourth day, so we enjoyed the food

from a variety of countries, and learned new recipes from the others.

Naturally a rhythm and discipline arose that began with the mornings where we each studied by ourselves, at noon shared a meal, spoke about our doubts in answering the questions, and in the evenings we had a practice of Yantra Yoga. Once a week we had a Ganapuja and at dinner we relaxed a bit more, chatting, laughing and telling stories about our countries and the different ways of life.

We had a month study retreat in our "Home Sweet Home" near Central Tilba where Jean Mackintosh was our only contact to any other kind of reality besides the study. On beautiful afternoons when we were longing to get out of the house, she would come and fetch us and together with our books. We would go off to one of the most wonderful beaches of New South Wales, where we could sunbathe and play in the cold water of transparent light blue sea and lay down on the very soft and clean sand, to continue with our studies. It was then that Paolo convinced

Jean to prepare herself to take the exam and stimulated her by explaining the questions he had already been studying for two years.

During these weeks Lorena and I shared our doubts about passing the exam and our difficulty and fear of expressing ourselves in front of Rinpoche. We faced our discomfort at the thought of standing in front of Rinpoche with a blank memory. In the last week Nelida came to help us with our study and some relief came. She had been studying Buddhism for over two years and explained the different classifications of tantric teachings and the last series of the one hundred and thirty-three questions. Then we each checked our answers and practiced answering in three different languages, depending on in which one we had decided to take the exam. We had very funny moments trying to learn by heart the strange names of the five medicines, the enchanted goddesses, the senses and the purified aspects of each and we found

strange rules and ways in our native Spanish tongue to learn and pronounce these difficult names in Tibetan.

Nelida, Paolo and Ines sat for the exam on the first day, Lorena and I on the second, and Monica on the third. Under a beautiful tree in the middle of the land surrounded by green trees and landscape, we sat in front of Rinpoche and took the exams. His infinite compassion made us feel comfortable and helped our knowledge to manifest. Jim Valby, my dearest friend from Tsegvalgar, was present there assisting Rinpoche and delighting us with his constant good humor and patience. On the first day after the exam everyone went to relax on the beach with Rinpoche, while on the second day we all climbed up to the place where Rinpoche's house is being built to help the workers with their job. Rinpoche was the first one to go to work and show us the spirit of collaboration while inspiring us into good humor and pleasure in working together.

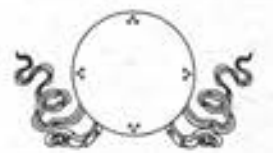
On the following days after the Santi Maha Sangha training we had to say good-bye to Dave, the owner of our little paradise, to Begg, his faithful dog, and to Jess, his funny horse. Ines and Paolo soon departed to go to work to collect pears and apples in the north of Australia, while Lorena went to Canberra to see the beautiful koalas and kangaroos she adores and then back to the Gar to practice the first level training practices with Nelida and Monica, the two women from Tashigar who remained in Namgyalgar studying and practicing until the Easter retreat.

Now as I write down these notes about the happiest time I have had in my life, the loveliest memories of the building of Rinpoche's house come to mind together with the faces and the voices of the people with whom I have shared such moments of bliss. The building must surely be coming to an end soon, and the beautiful dream of having a house for our Master must have turned into something real- thanks to all the work inspired by our deep love and devotion to our beloved Master.

When I see the photos of the two wonderful months of living with my Vajra brothers and sisters, of attending Rinpoche's Teachings, of working in the Gar and camping on the land, of doing a personal retreat, of working in the kitchen preparing food for the workers, of working on the house, of the beautiful farewell party, I feel tears of deep happiness and bliss running down my cheeks. When I remember all this, I want to thank Rinpoche and all the Sangha and look forward to seeing everyone next year in Namgyalgar, and invite all of you to Tashigar for the next Christmas retreat! Let us all continue to work together to spread the teachings and towards the growth of the Dzogchen Community all over the world,

making the beautiful dreams of collaboration come true in all the Gars!

My life during the study and after the exam of the base level of the Santi Maha Sangha training has changed in a very deep way and I think this is one of the aims of our powerful and profound practices. This is what I have observed in the people who have studied together. And it is what I want to share with others who have passed through this strong experience and with those who are preparing for it. It is really worth trying because it brings changes in our points of view, our behavior and in the whole of our lives when we really apply the knowledge together with the practice of the Teachings and the development of the spirit of collaboration between the Vajra brothers and sisters around the world!



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counteract difficulties encountered by modern day students, contains many warnings that all we supposed dharma practitioners should take to heart, on the tremendous benefits and huge risks of the Vajrayana samayas. Receiving Vajrayana empowerments is likened to a snake entering a bamboo shaft: the only directions it can go are up or down. Likewise, Vajrayana practiced keeping samaya can lead to realization of Vajrasattva in our heart, but if we break samaya this Vajrasattva becomes like a fierce yaksha, a self destructive force that shortens our life span and consumes the vital essences of our heart blood. There follows a detailed explanation of the four samaya impairments (infraction or contradicting, transgression or damaging, violation or breaking and breach or passing) and of the three samayas (distant, close and very close) with our vajra sisters and brothers and with the guru: the latter is the more important. Rinpoche quotes a saying that highlights the importance of maintaining samaya: "Samaya violation is my worst enemy; the guru is my best friend." Rinpoche concludes this important chapter with this warning: when there is no more distraction, conceptual thinking is naturally liberated, and one transcends the dividing line between keeping and breaking samaya. "But until this realization, isn't claiming 'I don't break any samayas!' only pretentious self-deception?"

In teaching on the importance of devotion (for the enlightened ones) and compassion (for those who are not yet enlightened) in order to progress in our practice to recognize mind essence, Rinpoche entreats his readers, "Please keep this teaching at the very core of your heart": if we have devotion, it

can be caught on the hook of the Buddhas' compassion. Rinpoche emphasizes the importance of becoming familiar with our Buddha nature through our practice, advice which he reiterates in the chapter on "Mindfulness". Mindfulness is of two kinds: deliberate and effortless - mindfulness must be deliberate at the beginning of Mahamudra practice, because if we rely only on effortless mindfulness we may not notice when we get distracted. If we get distracted, it is deliberate mindfulness that brings us back into the view. In fact, in Mahamudra once the practitioner has recognized the view, then he/she must take mindfulness as the path, but if mindfulness is lost, then practice is forgotten and one strays into ordinary habitual patterns.

In his chapter on the "Qualified Master" Rinpoche gives a detailed explanation on the qualities a vajra master must possess, giving as an example of such a master his own guru and uncle, Samten Gyatso. In order to express his humility in terms of his guru, Rinpoche uses a startling metaphor: "My guru was excellent, and I am related to him, in the same way that excrement is akin to the very good food it initially was." The author mentions how, when Samten Gyatso was forced to teach and give initiations he said that he was under the influence of the fourth Mara, the "heavenly son", inducing him to behave like a vajra master instead of going to caves to practice, and he warned that those teachers who thought their capacity for benefiting others was expanding were falling prey to the "pleasant obstacle", which is a major hindrance for progress.

The chapter on "Tiredness" contains further advice from the heart on dharma practice: "You should not become tired of alternately recognizing and forgetting your mind nature. What is truly tiring is the state of deluded mind

that creates completely pointless activity from one moment to another." Moreover, "How could unfabricated naturalness be tiring" "Even though you have already recognized (the awakened state), if you start to formulate, 'Now it's rigpa! I've got it!' your mind essence becomes clouded over by thought. There is no need to confirm your experience by thinking 'Now I recognize it!' This is unnecessary; it's merely another thought that interrupts non dual awareness immediately. This dualistic frame of mind is what is tiring." While the chapter on the "Bardo" contains much personal guidance on the post-mortem state, the final chapter on "Conduct" contains further heart advice on the kinds of problems modern day students have to overcome. "We need to integrate view and conduct. Padmasambhava said, 'Though your view is higher than the sky, keep your deeds finer than barley flour.' ... attention to the smallest detail... is to keep harmony between view and conduct." As always Erik Pema Kunsang is to be thanked and congratulated for his very readable and accurate translation.

I hope readers of The Mirror will forgive me if I end this review on a personal note. On reading the Preface I was informed that Rinpoche wrote the chapter on the "Bardo" at the request of his disciple Bill Fortinberry, who was suffering from incurable cancer. Bill was a vajra brother of mine, and I had the privilege to travel with him in India in 1973, when he went to study and practice nendro under Abo Rinpoche. Although we lost contact over the years, for me Bill has always remained an ideal of the kind and selfless bodhisattva practitioner. Although I was deeply saddened to learn of his death, I was glad that it was under the protection of such a fine master.

Andy Lukianowicz

Integration: Culture, Experience and the Teachings

A Message from Woody Paparazzo

Woody and Barbara Paparazzo are long-time members of the Dzogchen Community living in Conway, Massachusetts, near Tsegylgar. For the past year they, and their daughter Nina, have been struggling with her recovery from cancer. Nina is twenty-two years old. After an initial remission some months ago, the cancer has recurred. We are all praying for her swift recovery. Here is a message from Woody that he would like to share with the Community.

"I have recently been saying prayers for help in our situation. For some reason, the Lord's Prayer seemed a comfortable thing for me to repeat inwardly during the day. Doing so, I discovered some experience of its meaning. Rinpoche, of course, has always said we can integrate the teachings into our own experience and culture. It has worked in this way for me and been both a kind of refuge and a way to integrate the teachings into my daily life. I offer my comments on this Christian prayer from my recent experience."

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father who art in heaven

The unborn unchanged natural state. All enlightened beings;

Rigzin and my own vajra Master. My own natural condition.

Hallowed be thine name

Sacred and secret, the state which can not be described. Unlimited, beyond concept and perfect.

Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

May the potential of my own natural state arise in me.

Give us this day our daily bread

May the energy of the non-duality of emptiness and clarity sustain me.

And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.

May compassion arise spontaneously through me for the benefit of others until all beings are enlightened.

Lead us not into temptation.

May I be free from distraction.

But deliver us from evil.

From this grant me protection.

For thine is the Kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever.

Amen.



Rinpoche with Aboriginal dancers

A. Pickering

TARA MANDALA 1996 SCHEDULE

May 18	Stupa Ground Breaking Ceremony with Dugu Choegyal Rinpoche, Tsultrim Allione and friends
May 20-June 12	Stupa Building Project with Dugu Choegyal Rinpoche
May 24-June 2	Dakini Doha Retreat with Dugu Choegyal Rinpoche and Tsultrim Allione
June 15-16	"Finding the State of Peace" Meditation Retreat with Tsultrim Allione
June 21-23	The Long Life Practice of Mandarava Teaching Retreat with Tsultrim Allione
June 24-30	Mandarava Practice Retreat with Tsultrim Allione
July 5-7	Simhamukha: Lion-Headed Dakini Teaching Retreat with Tsultrim Allione
July 8-14	Simhamukha Practice Retreat with Tsultrim Allione
July 19-24	Chöd Intensive Retreat with Tsultrim Allione at Lama Foundation near Taos, New Mexico
July 25-26	Chöd Practice Pilgrimage on the land with Tsultrim Allione
July 30	Stupa Celebration
August 2-11	Family Retreat with Tsultrim Allione, Carol Fitzpatrick, Jeffrey McIntyre and Nancy Miriam Howland
August 16	"Lovingkindness" Book Signing and Lecture with Sharon Salzberg
August 17-18	"Lovingkindness" Vipassana Retreat with Sharon Salzberg
August 23-25	White Tara Retreat with Gangteng Tulku Rinpoche
Aug. 28- Sept. 2	Dzogchen Teachings with Khetun Sangpo Rinpoche (Note: tentative at this time)
Sept. 7-Oct. 20	Individual Retreat Time at Tara Mandala
October 25-27	Wild and Wise: A Celebration of Women in Buddhist Practice, a benefit retreat with Tsultrim Allione, Joanna Macy and Yvonne Rand at Spirit Rock in Woodacre, California
Oct. 31-Nov. 3	Chöd Retreat with Tsultrim Allione at Land of the Medicine Buddha in near Santa Cruz, California
November 14-17	Meditation Retreat (practice to be announced) with Tsultrim Allione at Seabeck Conference Center near Seattle, Washington

For program details write: Tara Mandala, P.O. Box 3040, Pagosa Springs, Colorado 81147, USA, call (970) 264-6177, or fax (970) 264-6169.

On Reflection

continued from page 20

any of the sense of the compulsion or competitiveness that is symptomatic of the functioning of the narrow, selfish mind that suffers so, blown this way and that by the conflicting emotions of attachment and aversion.

A great light always throws a deep shadow, and as individuals joined together in a group with a common spiritual purpose we must be careful, as we study the wonderful teachings we are privileged to receive, that we do not become blinded by the undoubted light of those teachings and the joy of

relating to the master while at the same time pushing the collective neurosis that inevitably develops in any group out of our awareness into the shadows where it can gain in power.

With good humor, kindness, patience and tolerance, and without becoming preoccupied by it to the point of becoming discouraged or paranoid, I believe that it is the responsibility of each of us to keep our individual and collective shadows in view so that they can be dissolved little by little in the light of awareness. Working in this way our spiritual community can really fulfill its promise and be the powerful force for liberation that we all believe it can be.

On Reflection: Individual Integrity and Spiritual Community

by John Shane

Like many others in the Dzogchen Community, I grew up in the sixties. I cannot claim to fully know the experience of other generations, but in my generation, in adolescence and early adulthood, many of us had a deep distrust of organized religion. The study of the Europe's history of bloody religious strife and persecution, added to our own experience of the emptiness of much of the religious teaching we received when young made us aware how truth could be corrupted by the very institutions that were originally designed to promote it.

As we grew up, like most generations, we reveled in our new-found freedom from the constraints of parents and school and we wanted to experiment with everything rather than accepting the word of established authority. We pushed ourselves to go beyond all limits, beyond the rules of society, rules that seemed only to restrict us in our quest for direct experience. We wanted to see and to know for ourselves without any intermediaries between us and the naked truth.

Many of us did make significant progress towards personal freedom in this way, though many also came unstuck. When you set out on a difficult journey without an experienced guide or a clearly defined path there is obviously a strong chance of getting lost. But while it is true that there were casualties to our experiments, by and large the losses suffered were more than balanced by changes that we managed to initiate that still continue to benefit all levels of our society. Yet ultimately most of us who were really concerned with inner development discovered that we had personal limits we could not overcome just by working on ourselves alone.

Some of us then entered therapy, while others returned with a new awareness to look more deeply at the various ancient traditional systems of thought and spiritual practice that exist on our planet. And in them we discovered the great treasures of teachings that could provide us with models of reality more sophisticated than those we had been able to arrive at on our own, and modes of practice more satisfying to us than those we had encountered in the religions of the families into which we had been born.

Our belief that these ancient traditional spiritual disciplines could offer us a more subtle understanding of the mind than the still evolving methodology of the various schools of contemporary psychology made us want to do more than study those ancient spiritual disciplines. We wanted to practice them, and for that we needed more than just the books we were reading could provide.

There is an old saying: "When the student is ready, the master appears", and remarkably enough it was exactly at this cultural moment that the first Tibetan Buddhist masters began to arrive in the West. I was among those who were fortunate enough to receive them and their teachings from the very beginning, when I met Trungpa Rinpoche in Scotland.

But for those of my generation who became involved with traditional forms of Buddhism there nevertheless remained a certain tension between the radical appraisal of our own culture that had first fueled our quest for self-knowledge, and some aspects of the structures of the oriental traditions we embraced. Our first hand experience of the politicization and hypocrisy of religious institutions in the West that seemed to have become almost

totally spiritually bankrupt made it difficult for us not to notice certain similar patterns in some of the external culture-bound aspects of the oriental traditions we began to study and practice, and it was difficult for us not to feel privately somewhat divided in ourselves. We wanted to be whole-heartedly committed to the spiritual paths we had discovered, but we also wanted to remain true to ourselves in terms of where we were coming from in our own culture.

I can personally still remember the profound sense relief and gratitude that I felt when I first met Choegyal Namkhai Norbu in the early days of the Dzogchen Community. It was a great wonder for me to meet a true spiritual master who was in many ways as radical in relation to his own culture as many of his young students were in relation to theirs. By radical I mean, of course, that he was concerned to get to the root of matters rather than remaining preoccupied with superficial concerns, and he did not accept everything at face value, but was open to questioning everything.

When, with time and the increase in numbers of his students, it became necessary for Rinpoche to establish the Dzogchen Community on a more formal basis, Rinpoche's long term commitment to critiquing the integrity of the institutions he had to deal with in his own life made him take great care to ensure that he was creating a spiritual community that would be just that: spiritual.

Rinpoche's aim was to inspire and guide a free association of individuals concerned with spiritual development. He did not want to take any chances that a community founded to practice and communicate the Dzogchen teachings-whose function is to promote the liberation of the individual from every kind of conditioning - might come to be dominated by organizational or bureaucratic factors that would end up conditioning the individuals who were its members.

I believe that Rinpoche is successful in his aim, and that the Dzogchen Community presents his students with an extraordinary opportunity to learn how to integrate spiritual practice into their lives. Working together with a very varied range of people from many different backgrounds towards a particular common purpose brings up all kinds of issues in each individual that they might not come face to face with if they were working alone. And when such issues do come up, the individual can try to hold them in awareness to see them for what they are. In this way an individual can get to see and know his or her own shadow - areas of their mind that are habitually pushed out of consciousness.

As individual members of a spiritual community get to know themselves through meditation practice and through interaction with the master and other students they will surely experience the wonder of deep insights into the nature of reality and glimpse the possibilities of a freedom that transcends all limits, but they will also inevitably discover difficult truths

about themselves that are hard to bear, and a spiritual community should provide a 'safe space', a place of compassion and understanding, in which individuals can undertake this kind of difficult but essential work.

As the individuals support the community, so too, of course, the community should be supportive to the individuals who are its members. No one should ever be made to feel that their real difficulties are not acceptable because they do not measure up to an imagined ideal of the teachings. The teachings are about how we really are, not about a fantasy of what we might be.

We are all in Rinpoche's debt today for the great effort he expends in thinking through the issues relating to the structure of a spiritual community before committing himself to allowing the development of a community around himself and his teachings. It is worth remembering that he was initially reluctant to allow the formation of a formal community around him at all. This reluctance is quite understandable when one considers the enormous personal responsibility and the external pressures such a development would involve for him and his immediate family, but eventually he felt that the need for him to allow a community to develop was greater than the reasons for not doing so.

In this regard it is important for us to recall that before Choegyal Namkhai Norbu took the initiative no other master was willing to teach Dzogchen to Western students as openly as he did. Before he began teaching Dzogchen, Dzogchen was generally regarded as a reserved teaching that Westerners were considered unlikely to understand, and although it seems hard to imagine now, Rinpoche was even roundly criticized in certain quarters for teaching as he did, despite the fact that he was one of the most qualified living lamas of the Dzogchen tradition and was quite able to decide for himself the best way in which he should proceed.

Now that we can see the world-wide development of interest in Dzogchen, Rinpoche's decision to teach it can be seen to have been based on real clarity, and I think it is fair to say that as well as initiating a re-evaluation of the Bon traditions - for which he was also initially criticized but for which he is now widely respected as having undertaken vitally important pioneering research into the origins of Tibetan culture - Rinpoche also pretty much single-handedly opened the way for the teaching of Dzogchen in the West.

When we speak of Buddha, Dharma and Sangha it often seems that the Buddha, who is naturally mentioned first, is the most important element. But it seems to me that each of the three components of the Three Jewels are equally important, and I think many of us have found that the experience of a true spiritual community is a remarkable thing, rare and precious. Like many of my readers, I know from first hand knowledge how much benefit such a spiritual community can bring to both its

members and to society at large, and I feel very strongly that I personally owe my positive experience of a spiritual community to the generosity and wisdom Choegyal Namkhai Norbu.

But whether such a community continues to remain true to the profound teachings it is intended to safeguard does not only depend only on the will of its founder. It depends too on the vigilance of each and every one of its members. Physical effort and material support are extremely important for the development of any such undertaking but no matter how much we may manage to contribute to our community in terms of externals, it can ultimately only truly be sustained by a deep commitment to personal integrity on the part of its individual members.

To remain true to the heart of the teachings we must remain true to our ourselves.

I feel that we must always be scrupulously careful that the demands of communal association and action do not compromise the integrity of the individuals that form the community.

Just as apathy and lack of commitment can hinder the development of a community, so too can fanaticism and neurotic attachment, which bring about a closing rather than an opening of the heart, and a narrowing of outlook rather than a development of real awareness.

When the members of any group cease to look freshly, openly and honestly within themselves for answers to interpersonal and communal problems, the group they belong to may begin to condition its members rather working for their freedom. In this a spiritual community is no different from any other group, and the mere fact of an external allegiance to a great teaching and a great master will not transform lack of integrity into anything other than what it is, which is an evasion of truth.

As we enter a new Tibetan year, I feel the need to remind myself to look continually into my own mind with quiet and patient listening, to really be sure that the faith that I profess in the master, the teaching and the spiritual community is not blind but is based on a pure intention and a clarity of purpose, on real awareness. I need to remind myself too to always be sure that the commitment I try to bring to any tasks I endeavor to undertake for the community is pure and uncontaminated by neurotic attachment, because I have seen for myself that no matter how lofty or noble one's aim, attachment can corrupt it, just as false pride can destroy all the merit of good actions no matter how fine an image those actions may present to the world.

If we really want the teachings to live in us, our devotion must ultimately be to seek the profound truth in the depths of our own being, because it is in that truth that is unmistakably our own that we connect most deeply with the master and the transmission and are thus enabled to recognize the truth in others. Then we can truly collaborate with our colleagues in a spirit of common understanding, without

continued on page 19

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