

In the Dzogchen teachings a mirror can be used in many ways as a metaphor to clarify various aspects of the teachings and as a symbol to explain the functioning of the mind.

THE MIRROR

THE INTERNATIONAL NEWSPAPER OF THE DZOGCHEN COMMUNITY
INSPIRED BY THE TEACHINGS OF AND UNDER THE SPIRITUAL GUIDANCE OF
NAMKHAI NORBU RINPOCHE

One of the ways in which a mirror is used as a symbol is to remind one to observe oneself at all times and to check whether one is distracted or truly present in the moment.

His Holiness Tenzin Gyatso the XIV Dalai Lama of Tibet Inaugurated the Shang Shung Institute and gave a Teaching in Merigar's Gonpa

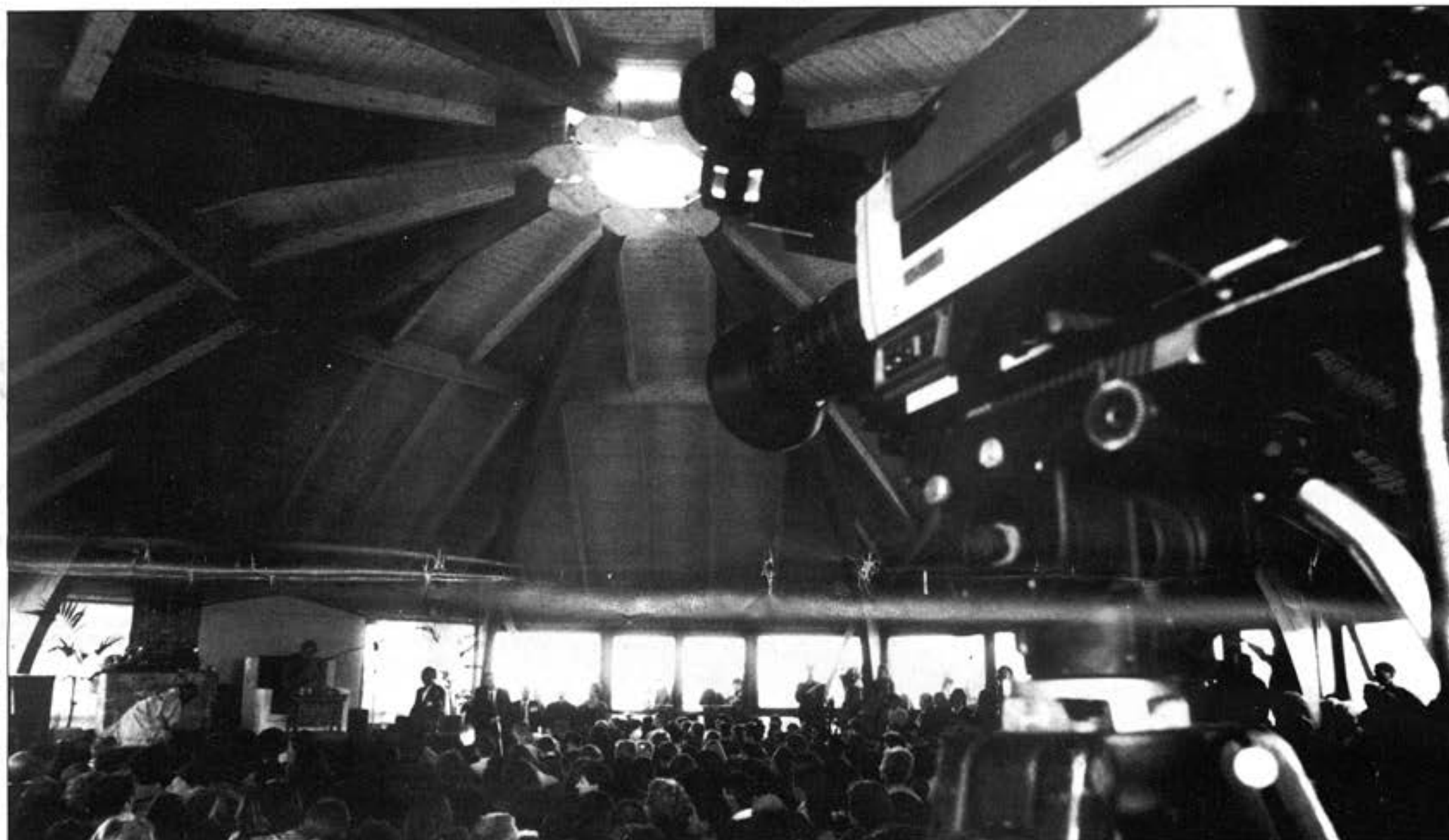


Photo by: Gianni Baggio

CHRISTMAS INAUGURAL RETREAT OF NEW COMMUNITY
LAND IN CORDOBA, ARGENTINA:
23RD DECEMBER 1990 1ST JANUARY 1991;

I would like to invite all our community members, all over the world, to come and help celebrate the beginning of this Dzogchen Gar in Argentina, at Christmas time. This will be a very special retreat, in a very special place.

See you at Christmas in the new swimming pool on the land in Argentina.

Namkhai Norbu, Rinpoche



Community of Argentina

CHEAPER RETREAT FLIGHTS TO ARGENTINA

If you want to fly from Europe to Argentina for the Christmas retreat send your name and address to the Mirror. We are trying to organise the cheapest possible group tickets or charter flight.

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Collaboration is not based only on organization but mainly on spiritual feeling, and the understanding we receive through the Dzogchen Teaching

An Interview with **NAMKHAI NORBU RINPOCHE**

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THE TEACHING GIVEN BY
HIS HOLINESS THE XIV DALAI LAMA TO THE DZOGCHEN
COMMUNITY IN THE MERIGAR'S GONPA ON 30TH MAY 1990

The first teaching to be transmitted in the Dzogchen Community's New Gompa was given by His Holiness the Dalai Lama. According to Samten Karmay, a well known Tibetan Buddhist scholar, who also attended this teaching, it was the first time this particular teaching had ever been given in public, and the first time it had been given in the West. It belongs to the twenty five cycles of the secret teachings of the Fifth Dalai Lama, Ngawang Lobzang Gyamtso (1617 - 1682). Reference to it can be found on P.58 of Samten Karmay's book, Secret Visions of the Fifth Dalai Lama, The Gold Manuscript in the Fournier Collection, and Plate 13 of the same book is a reproduction of the mandala of this teaching painted by the master artist of the Fifth Dalai Lama. We have prepared a transcript of the teachings which is published on page 2 - 3.

REFLECTIONS FROM MERIGAR. John Shane.

The preparations for the visit of His Holiness the Dalai Lama drew everyone together at Merigar in a concentrated effort, the wonderfully successful results of which surprised us all. As Rinpoche commented happily after His Holiness had left Italy: "You see what we can do when we don't have time to talk too much about it beforehand!"

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**PRACTICE
RETREAT
AT MERIGAR
FROM 9TH TO
15TH AUGUST
1990**

**WITH A SPECIFIC
PROGRAMME
GIVEN BY
NAMKHAI NORBU
RINPOCHE.**



**THE INAUGURAL
RETREAT
OF THE
NEW GONPA
AT MERIGAR
WITH
NAMKHAI NORBU
RINPOCHE
FROM
21ST TO 29TH
SEPTEMBER 1990.**



The teaching that will be given to you in this session today belongs to the Vth Dalai Lama and is from a collection known as the Sangwai Gyachen (*gSang-ba rgya-chen*) or "Great Secret". As you all know, the tradition of Tibetan Buddhism contains all of the vehicles: the small vehicle, the Hinayana; the great vehicle, the Mahayana; and the Tantras. For this reason it is useful on this occasion that I explain briefly the general path. In general one can say there are myriads of worlds, but within this particular cosmic system in which our own earth is situated it is said that in a very long period called an aeon, a thousand Buddhas will appear, and that the founder of the doctrine, Buddha Shakyamuni, was the fourth of these thousand Buddhas. After his enlightenment Buddha Shakyamuni gave the teaching: it is said that he turned the Wheel of the Dharma on three occasions. In the first Turning of the Wheel of the Dharma Buddha Shakyamuni explained the Four Noble Truths. The Truth of Suffering is that all human beings desire to end suffering and desire to be happy, but when one looks at the situation of suffering and of happiness one sees that they are occasional events. The Truth of the Cause of Suffering states that suffering is brought about by causes and conditions, which are not just random causes, but they must be substantially in accordance with what their result will be. In order to obtain real happiness it is not enough to eliminate the symptoms of suffering, but rather to uproot them at their base in order to eliminate their causes. This complete irreversible elimination of suffering is what is called the Truth of the Cessation of Suffering and that is what has to be achieved. The method for achieving the cessation of suffering is the Truth of the Path. This is the explanation of the Four Noble Truths. They can be divided into two aspects: that of contamination and that of purity. The progressive way the Buddha

gave these teachings in the three Wheels of the Dharma was, I think, his main intention and maybe also his master work.

Regarding the Truth of Suffering and the Cessation of Suffering there are the subtle aspects and the more gross aspects. Since the greater part of the explanation of these first two Noble Truths is the First Turning of the Wheel of the Dharma, one can say that the most subtle aspects re-

spoke about the clear-light nature of the subject, of the mind. The explanation of the clear-light of the mind was given very clearly and in detail in the Sutras of the Third Turning of the Wheel of the Dharma, but this does not mean that it was explained in the same way in all of these Sutras. For example the Sutra called Explanation of the Meaning of Sutra (*mDo-sde dgongs-'grel*) explains emptiness (*Ngo-bo nyid kyi-stong-*

these last three are considered the most essential. There are different kinds of classification of the Tantras: there is a classification into six Tantras and another into four Tantras.

In the Namasangite (*sGyu-'phrul-dra-ba*) text on Manjushrimitra, there is a verse in which it says that all the Buddhas originate from the letter A. There is an explanation of the meaning of A which is common to both the Sutra and

mation. Whereas if I say that there is not a flower on this table, in effect the non-existence of the flower exists on the table. It is a reality on the table and so it can be understood. But it is understood in a different way. It is not understood directly, through an affirmative process, as in the case of the book, but through negation. First one has to understand what is the object of the negation, that is, the flower. Only after having understood the object of negation can one understand the absence of the flower on the table. What appears is an absence, a negation of the object, a negation of the flower. There are two categories of this last kind of understanding through the process of negation. One category initially negates something but in the second phase affirms another phenomenon; the other category is a mere negation of something and nothing more.

The innate mind, the immaculate mind of the clear light, is a mind which is extremely subtle, the most subtle. It is in this context that one speaks of an object of negation. This object consists of all of the conceptualizations which obscure the fundamental nature of mind.

The Guhyasamaja-tantra speaks of negation in this particular context introducing terminology which precisely differentiates emptiness: empty, very empty, extremely empty, and completely empty. This refers to different levels of emptiness of thoughts, concepts and preconceptions. In the Kalachakra Tantra, on the other hand, it is a matter of emptiness in relation to form, and of immutable bliss. Therefore in this context when we speak of emptiness there is still a negation. That which is negated is material substance. So the letter A, finally speaking, is a symbol of the Empty Essence, and of the Clear Nature and these two concepts are contained in all of the vehicles of the Tantric path.

In Tibet the different schools arose in relation to different moments in time and also because there were different masters, different famous practitioners. The first was the Nyingma school, called the School of the Ancient Tradition and later, among the schools of the New Tradition there were the Sakyapa, then the Kagyupa and then the Kadampa School and afterwards the School of the New Kadampa, the Gelugpa School. Before the spreading of Buddhism in Tibet, Tibet had its own particular religion, the Bon religion of Shangshung.

The four main orders, the Sakyapa, the Kagyupa, the Gelugpa, and the Nyingma are like schools of thought. In India there were four schools of thought: the Vaibhasika, the Sautrantika, the Cittamatra, the Madhyamika. These four are subdivisions of the Madhyamika Prasangika, the ma-

jor representative of which was Chandrakirti, and the Svatantrika Madhyamika which was founded by Bhavaviveka. Principally all these schools adhere to the Prasangika view. In any case all the doctrines are based on the classic traditions of the Indian texts.

The major scholars of the Nyingma School were Longchen Rabjampa and then later Mipham and Dodrubchen Jigmed Tempai Nyima. When these explained the path of Dzogchen they started by introducing the View of the Madhyamika Prasangika. The first three great masters of the Kagyupa tradition were Marpa, Milarepa, and Gampopa. All three of these went to India, and listened to many pandits in India. The origin of their tradition, their view, came from the Mahasiddha Maitripa. In the text of Mahamudra by the Mahasiddha Maitripa there is a verse in which it says that the Madhyamika not explained by the Holy Father, is not Madhyamika, in the sense that it is not the supreme Madhyamika. Here the "Holy Father" always refers to Chandrakirti. And in Milarepa's songs when he speaks of the View, effectively it is principally according to the Prasangika Madhyamika.

In the Sakyapa tradition when they teach the View, the Path and the Fruit, the View is always based on the Prasangika. In the Kadampa school it is always said that the principle View is that of Chandrakirti. In the school of the New Kadampa, the Gelugpa School, Je Tsongkhapa says the same.

The highest Views in the four streams of Tibetan thought are these: in the Nyingma it is the View of Dzogchen, the practice of Tregchod (Khregchod), contemplation in a totally relaxed state; in the Kagyupa school, Mahamudra; in the Sakyapa school, the practice of the Union of Samsara and Nirvana; and in the Gelugpa school they speak of the practice of the great Madhyamika. But Madhyamika is a practice common to both Sutra and Tantra. In the Kagyupa tradition there is an explanation of Mahamudra common to both the Sutra and the Tantra. There is also an explanation of Mahamudra particular and exclusive to the Tantric path. Therefore if one has to speak of a correspondence of a practice exclusive to the Tantric path this is the practice of Union. In the Sakyapa school there is the Union of Emptiness and Clarity; and in the Gelugpa school the Union of Bliss and Emptiness. These four are in fact different names for the same thing. In the Kagyupa School they speak of the four yogas, the Tsecig (*rTse-gcig*), which means one pointed concentration; Todral (*sPros-bral*), which refers to the practice of Lhag-tong (*Lhag-mthong*); Rocig (*Ro-gcig*), one taste and Gomeditation (*sGom-med*), without medita-

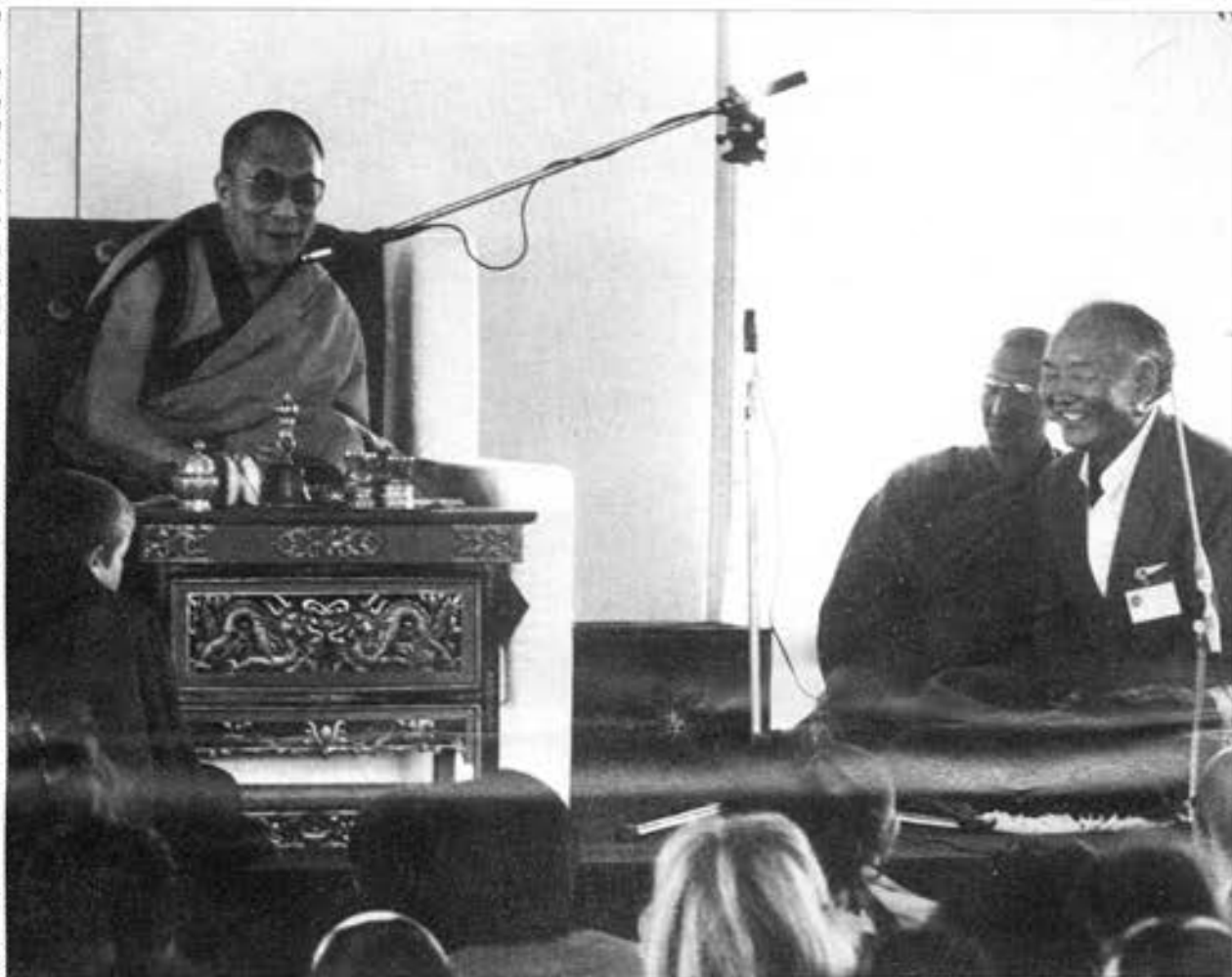


Photo by: Gianni Baggi

maintained to be explained. In relation to the Truth of the Cessation of Suffering it was useful at this stage to explain emptiness, Shunyata. The different schools arose from the different ways of considering the Truth of Suffering and the Origin of Suffering. Emptiness in relation to the Truth of the Cessation of Suffering was explained in the Second Turning of the Wheel of the Dharma, which is called the "intermediate". Here it was introduced as the element for attaining the Cessation of Suffering. Also the concept of the fundamental purity or clarity of the mind was introduced in order to enable people to understand that it was actually possible to achieve this cessation.

The introduction of the purity of the mind is common to both the Sutric and the Tantric vehicles. And so the direct content of the intermediate Turning of the Wheel of the Dharma is the explanation of the meaning of Shunyata, emptiness, whereas the indirect content or the implied content refers to a different stage of realization. This was the explanation of the nature of the clear light from the point of view of the object of perception. Buddha also explained this nature from the point of view of the subject. He did this in the Third Turning of the Wheel of the Dharma when he

explained in the same way as in the intermediate Wheel of the Dharma, in order to help inferior disciples to understand. It was explained by dividing reality into three logical affirmations (*mtsan-nyid gsum*): 1) everything that exists is caused by something; 2) everything that exists has no real self-nature and 3) everything is a mental imputation. But the main Sutras in the Third Turning of the Wheel of the Dharma, the Tathagatagarbha (*bDe gshegs snying po'i mdo*) and the Uttaratantra (*rGyud bla-ma*) explain the clear-light nature of the mind. As the nature of the mind of the subject is pure and immaculate from beginningless time, it is possible to use certain particularly effective skillful methods to realise the union of Shunyata and Vipassana. These special methods are the path of the Tantra.

In the tradition of the ancient school, the Nyingma, the path is divided into nine yantras. The first three are Shravakayana, Pratyekabuddhayana and Bodhisattvayana, which refer to the Sutric path, whereas the succeeding ones refer to the Tantric paths. There are three Outer Tantras and three Inner Tantras. The three Outer Tantras are called the Kriya, the Upaya and the Yoga Tantras and the Inner Tantras or vehicles are called, Mahayoga, Anuyoga and Atiyoga:

the Tantra, but there is also a particular meaning which is exclusive to the Tantric vehicle.

From the point of view that is common to both Sutra and Tantra the letter A represents emptiness, Shunyata. However A is also a letter, a particle, that is used to form a negation, so it refers to that emptiness which is a mere negation of the inherent existence of the object. On the other hand among the various texts of the Prajnaparamita there is one which is called the 'Prajnaparamita in one Letter': this one letter is A. And so, in this case, A is also the symbol of the innate fundamental mind, whose innate nature is clear light, which is of the same nature as the A. So the meaning of A in this last context is not something which is understood through negation, in the sense of understanding arrived at through negating something. In general a distinction is made between phenomena which are understood through negation and phenomena which are understood through affirmation. I will explain a little about what we mean by affirmative phenomena. For example, in front of me there is a book. To understand that there really is a book on the table, one does not pass through the process of negation. The book is there and it is understood by affir-



HOLINESS THE XIV DALAI LAMA NITY IN THE MERIGAR GONPA



tion.

Anyway one must consider that, very often different scholars and practitioners explain these teachings according to their own personal ideas, their own personal experiences and therefore in different ways. For example, in his long text on Mahamudra, Dagpo Tashi Namgyal (Dvags-po bkra-shis nam-rgyal), says that the teaching of Mahamudra is not part of either the Sutras or the Tantras but it is part of another vehicle. Clearly he was saying this in a particular context, from his own particular point of view, because in general if something belongs neither to the Sutras nor the Tantras then it is difficult to say that it came from Shakyamuni Buddha himself. In the Sakya tradition there is an explanation of the View, the Path and the Fruit, the Nangsum (snang-gsum), more from the point of view of Sutra and Tantra together and in another explanation, the Gyudsum (rgyud-gsum), the three tantras are explained principally through the Anuttaratant, the higher tantra. In this context they speak of Clarity, and Emptiness. It is said that Clarity is the characteristic of the mind, Emptiness is the Nature of the mind and the union of Clarity and Emptiness is inexpressible.

In general, one can say emptiness is the same everywhere. For example, there is no difference whatever between the emptiness of the mind and the emptiness of a vase. That which has a big belly and a narrow neck and is used for carrying water is the definition of "vase", and the emptiness of its inherent existence is the more intimate nature of the vase. However in the practice it is important to meditate on the emptiness of the mind, and the realisation of this emptiness of the mind is one of the particular aspects of this practice, and it is for this reason that it is called the Union of Emptiness and Clarity.

In this context of the union of clarity and emptiness the Tibetan lama Khyentse Wangchuk, who was the spiritual son of Tsarchen, asked "When the mind or the wisdom that realises this union appears, then what does it consist of? It is the state of instant presence. And that state of instant presence, what is that? Is it an affirmation or a negation?" He said that it was an affirmation. Asking "Is it absolute or relative truth?" he said that it was relative truth; and that of the three classifications of phenomena: material, consciousness and the remaining classification that is neither one nor the other, he said that it was consciousness. Another disciple of Tsarchen said that this mind, this very same mind is the absolute truth. Therefore you can see how different scholars and different practitioners of meditation have different

ferent opinions about the same thing, they give them different names and definitions but in actual fact they are talking about the same thing.

In the Gelugpa tradition, when they speak of the Union of Bliss and Emptiness, "Bliss" does not refer to bliss such as is obtained through the practice of concentration, a mental and physical flexibility, but something more, something which is obtained from causing the psychic winds, the psychic energy, to enter into the central channel. This provokes, through a gradual increase of bliss, a gradual decrease of all the gross elements and conceptual thoughts until a mind arises that is clear and completely free of conceptualizations, the most subtle mind, which then becomes fused with emptiness. This union of emptiness and clarity is also exactly the same thing as we were talking about before.

In the Dzogchen teaching the principle of our existence, our condition, corresponds to the two kayas, two states: the kaya of the dimension of Form, and that of the Dharma, which is the nature of all existence. The kaya of the nature of existence is the one that represents our condition of emptiness; is pure from the very beginning, and is called Kadag. Whereas its qualification, its potentiality that manifests is called Lhundrub, which is generally called the Rupakaya. On this basis, this is what manifests in realisation.

The methods for applying the practice of the Dzogchen path are linked to our three primordial wisdoms: of nature, of emptiness and of energy, the manifestation of our potentiality. Bringing these into practice one obtains the realisation of the three dimensions. In particular in the Dzogchen teachings there is Ati Dzogpachenpo; Ati means the primordial vehicle. This is the way that is beyond effort and beyond modification, which means it is beyond the mind and concepts of the mind, whereas all the different paths until that of Ati Yoga, like Mahayoga and Anuyoga are paths which are linked to application of the mind and the concepts of the mind. Dzogchen talks about Tsoldral (*rTsol-bral*) which means "beyond effort." But this does not mean that one does nothing, although one might misunderstand it in this way. The real meaning of Tsoldral is that one has a real understanding of this state, of this consciousness. This knowledge comes through following one's Master with devotion and through this one receives a kind of empowerment from the Master and then this awareness arises. It is not something constructed; it is something that comes from the discovery of one's own nature. All the methods until Anuyoga, all the paths for realisation of knowledge are linked to various methods involving effort. For example in Tantrism

there are practices with the prana, the chakras and the channels etc. All of these involve effort and so it is said that even these are paths of the application of the mind. Whereas the Dzogchen teaching which is called Atiyoga is said to be the application of the path of wisdom. This means that there is something the Master introduces to the disciple and also that the disciple discovers an awareness, a consciousness. And so in this sense Dzogchen, Atiyoga is considered to be something that is not a teaching of a gradual path, it is more a direct path of knowledge. But in this case one cannot say that "beyond effort" means that one has nothing to do or that one does not use any effort to gain knowledge or realisation.

In general, in Dzogchen, there are two methods Tregchod (*Khreg-chod*) and Todgal (*Thod-rgal*). The real meaning of Tregchod is a totally relaxed state. But that does not, of course, mean just letting go, abandoning oneself, but keeping an instantaneous presence, and remaining relaxed in that. Lhundrub means the self-perfected state, the potentiality of every individual. These are two principles and for the application of these there are two methods: Tregchod and Todgal. Tregchod is linked to consciousness or knowledge of emptiness as already explained, whereas the principle of Todgal is entering into this knowledge and developing it. But if one wants to apply the special methods of Todgal one must first of all have a very precise knowledge of Tregchod. Otherwise when one applies the Todgal methods with visions, at the same time one might develop attachments to those visions. In that case instead of developing and liberating oneself, one can create problems for oneself.

In order to have the Tregchod very precise, first of all one has to do the Ngondro practice beginning with the understanding and knowledge of the Four Awarenesses. After that there are the practices of Rushan. Rushan means the separation of the mind from the instant presence or the nature of the mind. For this one does the Rushan of the body, the Rushan of the voice and the Rushan of the mind, one by one. It is indispensable that

these practices should be applied gradually from the very beginning, and in this way one proceeds until one reaches Tregchod and Todgal. Even though it is a non-gradual path nevertheless all of these are relative and useful steps.

Now, when I do this practice I always accompany it with a general knowledge of all the texts. That is why, on this occasion, I wanted to explain it from this point of view. Since I feel that it does me good to practice with a basis of this general understanding, I think that it will also do you good. In the highest of the three Inner Tantras there are two series: Gyudde (*rGyud-sde*) and Drubde (*sGrub-sde*). In this case the Gyudde series of Tantras needs more study and application of knowledge, whereas the Drubde series has more methods to apply. In the Drubde series there is a famous group of eight, which is particularly linked to transmission from the masters, and which contain the *Lama Rigzin Kor* (the Sadhana we are about to perform Ed.). This tradition is based on oral transmission of the teaching. This does not mean only the spoken word but also the written word. There is another series called the Terma which has a

union of the Three Roots, Guru, Deva and Dakini. With this presence we recite the following words.....

(recitation)

Now for the cultivation of Boddhicitta, we take Refuge and follow the teaching and through its realisation bring benefit to all beings. Now we recite the following words.

(Recitation)

Now everybody visualise the Master as you did before, and imagine the Master is communicating and transmitting this knowledge through these symbols and these words. The knowledge of your own state is represented by these words. (Reads) "E MA means marvelous, all dharmas, all existences, all knowledge, are all perfected in this self-originated state of instant presence. The essence of the path is that when you discover one, you liberate all; this is your true state. In this state everything is unified, - everything considered to be Tantra and Mahayoga and all the series of Anuyoga, which means all of the methods of non-gradual transformation; the methods of the Upadesha in the Dzogchen teachings; Atiyoga; in particular the principle which is the essence, nature and energy which represents the three primordial wisdoms,

ceives the transmission. Maybe I am not very expert but I have received this transmission from various Masters, so if we collaborate together then it can have an effect on everyone. Then you sit with control of the body, voice and mind in the position. In general in this method used by many Masters you hold the hands on the knees and control the position of the body. Then to control the five senses the eyes should be half closed, not fully opened, but relaxed. The eyes are the basis of vision, so they represent all the senses. What we spoke about before, control of the body, voice and mind, does not mean controlling rigidly but controlling in a relaxed way. This is a very important point. Then concerning the mind and the senses: all the senses have contact with the object and also the mind has contact but one still does not let oneself be distracted by thoughts, but relaxes in the state of presence. In this way when one finds oneself with a relaxed mind this state is called Hedewa. Hedewa means that one is not conditioned by the different functions of the senses or by thoughts. But at the same time Hedewa does not mean the state of Rigpa. Hedewa is not the state of Rigpa, but a kind of state of relaxation. But when one has not let oneself go completely, there is always a state of presence and in this case through the transmission and through the work of all our three kinds of existence, using all of these together a presence arises and this is called the presence of the state of Dharma-kaya or the state of Rigpa. This is represented by the crystal in this presentation and also in this text there is a piece of paper called the Tagdrol. In the original text it says that one has to touch this to the three places, the forehead, the throat and the heart of each individual. But since here there are so many people this is not possible. So I will just touch some of you and everyone else will have contact with it through this presence. With this you find yourself in the experience of the state of Kadag, that of primordial purity; and Lhundrub, of its potentiality, manifestation, without working or creating anything with the mind, beyond all concepts, in this instant presence. Try to find yourself as long as possible in this state and remain in this state of contemplation. Now we recite the dedication. Now we have finished and you can slowly go outside while we finish this practice.

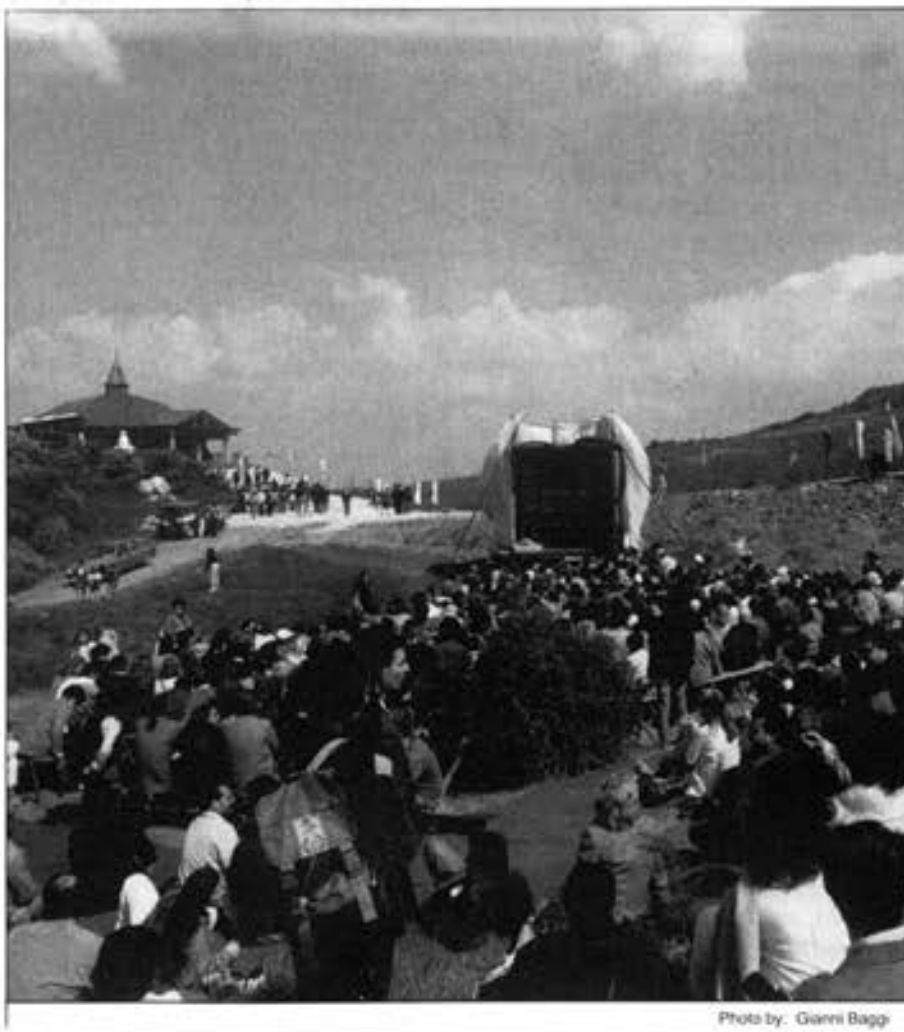


Photo by: Gianni Baggi

shorter lineage and is considered to be more essential, and still more essential is what is called Dagnang (*Dag-snang*) which means pure vision. These are the characteristic kinds of transmission.chanting and at this point His Holiness explained how to do the visualisation for the empowerment.

We all recite together the seven verses of the invocation of Guru Padmasambhava. (Recitation) Now we take Refuge. We ask for Refuge from the union of Masters which represents the

and also nangzhi (*sNang-ba bzhi*), the four visions which are principally explained in the Todgal method - all of these methods are perfected in this. The moment you understand this, you are self-liberated, this is your own true primordial state. Finding yourself in this state and observing without distraction, there are the three A. The principal transmission in the Dzogchen teaching is called Direct Transmission. This means the Master transmits through the principle of the potentiality of the Transmission, so the disciple re-

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Collaboration is not based only on organization but mainly on spiritual feeling, and the understanding we receive through the Dzogchen Teaching

An Interview with Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche

When the staff of The Mirror went to make this interview with Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche he was, as usual, working. He was helping Adriano Clemente with a translation. Meanwhile Fabio Andrico was making arrangements for Rinpoche's coming retreats. Also, as usual, there were many Community members around the Master. Meeting Rinpoche is always a great human experience, from the first moment you approach him you feel tender waves of respect, love and calmness. Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche is the Master who teaches us that the only way to overcome our limitations is to observe ourselves more carefully.

Rinpoche smiled and continued chanting, and everyone felt more and more happy and content being near the Master, who achieved one of his aims the moment the Dalai Lama arrived at Merigar to take the leading part part in the inauguration of the Shang-Shung Institute and the new Gonpa, after years of non-stop hard work to develop the Dzogchen Community all over the world. Rinpoche stopped chanting and we started the interview.

The Mirror: When we talk with you this time, we are speaking after the new Gonpa and the Shang-Shung Institute have been inaugurated, and also the Dalai Lama has visited Merigar. At this time we remember that you have spent almost 26 years - from 1964 until 1990 - working for Tibetan culture and knowledge, establishing the Dzogchen Community and bringing it to the point where it has been able to invite the Dalai Lama for the inauguration of the Shang Shung Institute. We - like every member of the Dzogchen Community - would like to know from you the most important marks, in these 26 years here in the West.

Rinpoche: Yes, I think it is a very important time. We can also consider that it is good that for many years we have cultivated the seeds that we have planted. We have used our efforts in many directions but I don't think we have yet realised all of our aims. We have a very precise idea of what we can do for preserving Tibetan culture and also for integrating ancient Tibetan knowledge in the same way as we are doing with the Dzogchen teaching. There are many other branches of knowledge, such as Tibetan medicine, astrology and so on. We don't want to keep these separate; we want to integrate them into the knowledge of all countries and all peoples. It is very important to remember this and to work in these fields. Our idea of the Shang-Shung Institute is that it should be the base, and our way to meet people who are interested in developing this principle. So I feel this is really the starting point, something very important, and I hope very much that other people, not only of the Dzogchen Community, but everybody in the world who is interested in Tibetan culture and human culture in general will participate and collaborate so that our idea and aim will become something concrete.

The Mirror: When you met the Dalai Lama in Merigar

what was your personal feeling about that moment?

Rinpoche: My feeling was very nice because the Dalai Lama was happy when he understood what we are going to do and what our aim is. I think that it is important because the Dalai Lama is the symbol of Tibetan culture, besides which he is also very important as a person, for me.

The Mirror: Let's come to another point. Members of the Dzogchen Community all over the world always wait for your advice and guidelines. We know that there are common problems facing the Community, such as how Community members can collaborate among themselves as individuals and how communities of different countries can collaborate with each other.

Rinpoche: Maybe some people consider they need guidelines from me, but this means that they are confused about the difference between the teaching and how to organize their work. I am not the one who gives guidelines for their organisation because, as everybody knows, the Dzogchen Community does not have a bureaucratic system. Each Gakyil in each place of the Dzogchen Community is free. There is not any kind of government or someone who is guiding or giving orders. That is not my idea at all. But maybe people consider that they have to ask for my advice because the basis of the Dzogchen Community is the Dzogchen teaching, which is mainly transmitted by me in our Community. That is why they ask me, and why I collaborate. But I think it is important that people should know what it means to have a teacher to guide and help them, it is not a kind of dictatorship. In another way, it is also important that each Gakyil and the community members in each country should realise that they must be responsible. At the same time collaboration is very important. Collaboration is not based only on organization, but mainly on spiritual feeling, and the understanding we receive through knowledge of the Dzogchen

teachings. If we work in this way then we will not have many problems and things will become much easier. I don't think people should feel that they always have to wait for the advice of the teacher. That is not ideal.

The Mirror: Members of the Dzogchen Community in all parts of the world now have many means of communicating with each other including this newspaper. Do you think that it is a good idea to ask the various Communities about organising collective activities, such as exchanging visits, or combining talents. For example, we were discussing the idea of having an orchestra made up of members of the Community world-wide, that could give some performances each year, in this way using the talents of people both from the Community and from outside the Community, something to make the members of the Community feel that they have, apart from their spiritual relation, also a physical and cultural relation with each other and the rest of the world.

Rinpoche: Yes, this has been my main idea since I thought of starting the Dzogchen Community. I said that it must not be a kind of organization, a bureaucratic system, but that the Dzogchen Community in all countries must be like the same family - beyond limitations and passports. Everybody should collaborate with the feeling of being members of the same family. This feeling is only possible if we have the spirit, the knowledge that is given by the teachings; otherwise it is impossible, because we live in Samsara, we live in our dualism and limitations. I think that it is very important for the future to gradually develop an exchange of ideas and people, an exchange of activities, and to develop collaboration between all countries. In this way all countries will benefit, not only one. So my idea is to have five main places. The main one in Europe is Merigar; in the United States it could be Tseggyalgar, near Conway; in South America it is the land in Argentina; and then one in Australia, where we don't yet have any land or precise place; in Asia it will be in Eastern Tibet. In these five places we can develop everything more than elsewhere, keeping the same conditions and the same system, and all the other countries belonging to each continent will be able to collaborate with the main place. This is the unique way we can develop and collaborate. The Community is based on knowledge and teaching, and the teaching must be received from a teacher, like me, for example. I cannot go all around the whole world every year. The idea is that I will move from one place to another, spending three or

four months in each place. In this way I could have more contact with people and also there would be many possibilities to bring teachings and practice to all places in a more concrete way. It would be very good if at least in these main places people collaborated with each other very well and had some kind of exchange with the other main centres. For this reason we also need a newspaper, magazi-

ne and newsletters. These are the only ways for us to communicate and inform each other effectively, because we have no system such as sending ambassadors and delegates everywhere. We want to communicate our feelings and projects. I think that it is very important that people give information, that they write articles, but it is also important that they understand what writing and communicating is. Sometimes people write strange things that could create problems in the Community. Many people like to criticise when it is not necessary. If it is necessary it is better to talk about these things with the Gakyil or directly with the persons involved. It is not useful to publish these kinds of criticisms. There are many useful things one can write about and develop. This is the only way to write and to develop our system of communication.

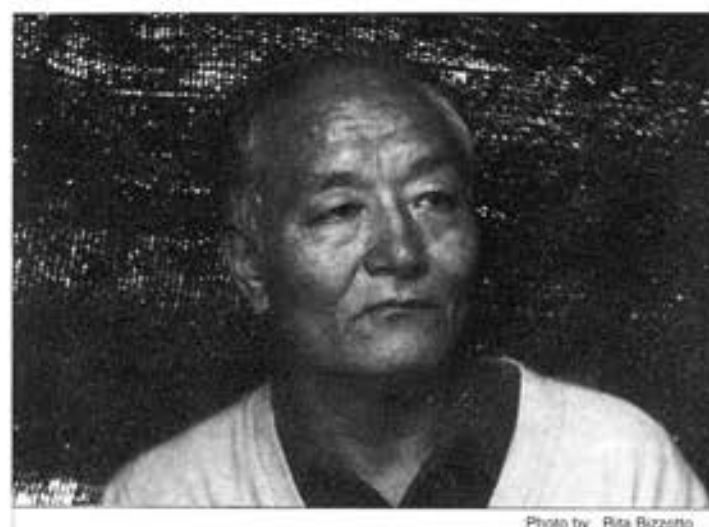


Photo by: Rita Bizzotto

The Mirror: We would like to talk now about your schedule for next year. We know that you will be leading retreats in U.S.A. in July, then in Merigar in September and in Argentina in December. Could you tell us what the characteristics of these three retreats will be?

Rinpoche: In general the teachings I give in the U.S.A. are based on the Yangtig, because there we have a place to do dark retreats. But I will also teach something more public during this retreat. This year I will give a particular teaching of the Upadesha that I transmitted in France last year. It will be more or less the same as that one. I have no precise ideas about the September retreat in Merigar, but maybe we will do something from the Dzogchen Semde and possibly part of the teaching of the Upadesha that I am going to

give in Massachusetts. In Argentina there may be some Dzogchen Longde practice and perhaps some practice of Upadesha. It is not so easy to give you a programme, because teaching goes with the situation, how the people are and what the circumstances are at the time.

The Mirror: We know about your schedule until December. What about January and February?

Rinpoche: I want to do a personal retreat and I am also a little worried about co-ordinating my work at the University.

The Mirror: Some members of the community think that in our society human beings are going through great confusion about what are the values to respect, and this confusion is also present in the Dzogchen Community. Many people born in the fifties have, in the past, refused all kinds of traditional values such as family, integration into society and so on, without suggesting any alternatives. On the other hand many practitioners have been aware of the necessity of doing something positive, but on the practical level we still show great confusion and unbalance, and above all a lack of love, of understanding and compassion for each other. Some people seem to have achieved a good understanding of the teaching, at least intellectually, but this knowledge is still on a very individual level. What I would like to know is what we can do in a very practical way to improve this situation collectively, like practising together or talking together.

Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche: In general, of course, we have much confusion because we are in Samsara. We have emotions and many kinds of passions. We are all distracted, we have no knowledge of our real condition, that is why we are in Samsara. All of this is very normal. Following a teaching does not mean that we immediately change and become realized. But the teaching gives us the possibility to discover our situation, our problems, our confusion. So I think that the most important thing is that all the people who follow the teaching, no matter

whether they are 'new' or 'old', should work on observing themselves and try to understand what teaching really means and what it is for. Teaching, and in particular Dzogchen teaching, is not for creating a kind of school or religion or tradition. All of this is only secondary. For instance, many people, when they meet Dzogchen, say that it is a Buddhist teaching. But we don't say Dzogchen is a religion, or that it is Buddhism. We do not have this concept. In the same way we don't say it is not a religion, and we do not agree that we don't follow a religion. A person who follows Dzogchen teaching must feel free and must know the human dimension. It has its real dimension. It is not necessary to be conditioned by anything. We are ignorant of our real condition so we are trying to understand it. We receive teaching from a teacher in order to discover that nature, that knowledge and that understanding. We are following the teacher and the teaching in order to realise that principle. But we must understand that we have confusion and we must know what the root of our confusion is, so that we can help ourselves. Our Dzogchen practitioners do sometimes practise together. That is very good, but the principle is not only doing collective practice or doing practices like praying or chanting mantras, all of that is secondary. The main point is that we should work with ourselves and try to discover our real condition. Then finally we will be able to understand that whatever practices we perform, such as collective practice, praying or chanting mantras, it doesn't matter whether something is considered as belonging to a religion or not, we will know what is of value and how we can get beyond any kind of limitation. In that way we will be able to realise the meaning of any teaching. That is the important point we must understand.

The Mirror: Thank you, Rinpoche, for giving us your time. We appreciate it very much. Is there anything you want to address to the members of the Community all over the world, on this occasion of the visit of the Dalai Lama after all this success that has been achieved by your guidance and your help?

Rinpoche: I always want to say the same thing. People should try to collaborate with each other and try to be in their real condition, their own dimension, their real nature. In that way people can also see what it means to respect each other and collaborate with each other. Then we will be able to understand what peace means.

Excerpts from the Welcoming Speech of Namkai Norbu Rinpoche during the Inauguration of the Shang-Shung Institute and the Gonpa at Merigar 29th May 1990 by His Holiness Tenzin Gyatso the XIV Dalai Lama of Tibet

Your Holiness, Ladies and Gentlemen,

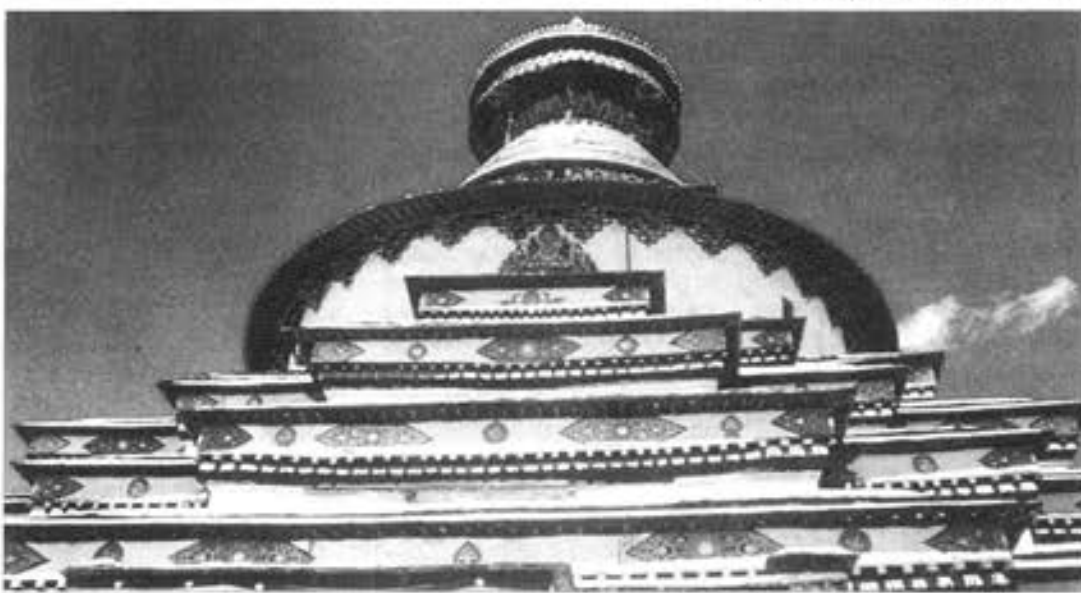
I would like to welcome you and thank you for accepting our invitation, honouring us with your presence on this auspicious occasion to mark the official opening of the activities of the Shang-Shung Institute. The Institute has been founded with the precise intention of making a real contribution aimed at safeguarding Tibetan culture and protecting it from the danger of extinction which threatens it."

Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche went on to speak of the ideal of peace and the importance of preserving individual cultures and respecting what each has to offer. When a culture is lost it is an irreplaceable loss both for the individual and for mankind. He said that to allow individual cultures to die is detrimental to the spiritual evolution of mankind. In times of rapid social upheaval, when a culture can no longer provide a base for its members then the consequences can be harmful for each and every person.

"Certainly, we all know very well the situation in which the Tibetan culture finds itself to-day, and the events which, during the Cultural Revolution, brought about the massacre of the learned



Photo by: Yeshi Namkhai



people. What is also well known is that many of the learned people who survived have since died or having passed the average life span, are now approaching their death. But how much of that culture which was alive in them, will they leave behind? It seems important to think on

this."

"Times have changed, and the Chinese themselves have acknowledged the errors made during the Cultural Revolution; and, in part, an attempt is being made to rebuild what has been destroyed. No more than a year and a half ago, I had the opportunity to see with my own eyes the progress being made in the country, to see the will and commitment devoted to reconstruction, but also to see how this effort is unequal to the task."

"The situation is delicate and complex. Many monasteries have been rebuilt. But in general the monasteries are without those people who, through their knowledge, made them centres of life and of the spreading of culture. Certainly the style of education may have changed, for example by the schools having become lay institutions, however the fact of illiteracy

in the country cannot be questioned. And these two facts - the steady disappearance of the people who knew their culture, as well as the illiteracy, mean that the Tibetans do not have access to the very sources of their own cultural traditions. The few schools, which could remedy this lack of education, serve around 10% of the population and are only to be found in provincial capitals. And this

occurs in a country predominantly inhabited by nomads, farmers and shepherds living far from the major towns. The situation as regards health is not very different. In order to get medical assistance one has to go to the provincial capitals, involving journeys over vast distances in a territory half the size of Europe, and where travelling is certainly not as easy as here. Reconstruction is quite difficult, but has to be carried out. The time at our disposal does not allow me to dwell on this theme, but what I have said is sufficient to give some idea of the problem. It is because of the extreme gravity of the situation, and because of the will to remedy it, that the Shang-Shung Institute has been founded. Its overall aims are these: to promote the study, understanding and spreading of knowledge of Tibetan culture, both Buddhist and pre-Buddhist, in its

true value; then it is important to try to do something in Tibet itself, where the Tibetans live, where there are the roots of the culture to be saved. To do something, so that they do not lose the knowledge they have preserved for so long, and to start the rebuilding of schools, directly intervening with the teaching, to bring back to the Tibetans what was theirs, and what they are about to lose forever.

I want to speak of the overall plans of the Institute, and of means suitable to pursuing these plans, because they will become more clearly defined when all those who are willing to support the Institute will contribute their ideas. In the days immediately after the inauguration there will be meetings with scholars and any others willing and able to make a real contribution to the pursuit of the aims of the Institute. Well-defined programmes will develop from these meetings in the most appropriate cir-

as confirmed by recent studies, was the very source of Tibetan civilisation."

Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche went on to say that Shang-Shung is the name which, more than any other, can represent the cultural identity of Tibet and of the people of Tibetan culture. He said that the base of knowledge of the individual disciplines such as medicine, astrology, philosophy etc., is the basis of Tibetan culture and all of these are derived from the ancient culture of Shang-Shung.

He concluded by saying "I would like to end by thanking you again for having come; and also by introducing the speech by our illustrious guest, His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Tenzin Gyatso. Everyone well knows who he is; his fame is not limited to the Himalayas, and the Nobel Peace Prize conferred on him this year has served only to enhance this. His Holiness is, in fact, acknowledged by many as the very symbol of



cumstances and with the participation of all those involved.

In the conclusion to my speech, I would like to draw your attention to the name of the Institute. Why the name Shang-Shung? because this was the name of a very ancient kingdom, the culture of which, in all probability and

the culture and spirituality of Tibet. We are therefore extremely grateful to him for having accepted our invitation to open the activities of this Institute, of which the centre of interest and, operation lies in the Tibetan culture.

Prof. Namkhai Norbu



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REFLECTIONS FROM MERIGAR

by John Shane

continued from front page 1



There had been moments when we thought we would never be able to have everything ready by the date of His Holiness' visit, particularly after that date had been brought forward by a month through circumstances beyond our control. But the fact is that we achieved the seemingly impossible, despite the obstacles of our own hesitations and resistances, problems created by the weather, and delays in receiving the last signature on the approval of our planning application for the Gonpa.

The weather! Who can ever predict it? In the week before His Holiness arrived, a rain and hail storm of torrential proportions descended over Merigar and the surrounding hills, while icy winds gripped the mountain, all totally out of character with the mild late spring/early summer weather that is usual in this part of the world. What if it were to rain like that on the day of the Inauguration, we worried, when hundreds of people would be out in the open on that same hillside? Tents for so many people were too expensive to hire. We resorted to practice, and did a puja in the medicine room at Merigar with Rinpoche to ask the local guardians to ensure good weather. As the date of His Holiness' visit approached, the builders working on the Gonpa worked late into the night to complete the building on time, and though it often seemed we would never make it, on the very evening before His Holiness arrived the last loads of gravel were being laid on the roadway leading to the Gonpa's steps. It seemed like a dream: there was the Gonpa that we had planned, discussed, struggled to get the planning permission for, now actually existing, sitting like a jewel on the hillside, its copper roof gleaming in the sun, a superb, elegant, graceful structure, blending harmoniously with the landscape below Monte Labro.

Meanwhile in the small gonpa of the main house of Merigar, teams of volunteers had been sewing prayer flags up until the last minute to line the road up the hill from the main road below. The local town authorities collaborated in many ways with the preparations, including in this case sending a fire engine to help put up the prayer flags.

Down in the office of the Shang-Shung Institute in Arcidosso, the staff of the Institute was in a continual fever of activity, sending and receiving faxes, answering and making phone calls, taking care of a thousand and one details. Over the road, Shang-Shung Editions staff was busy decorating a shop opposite the Institute's office, where books, posters, and prayer flags would be sold throughout the inaugural events.

Up at the Aldobrandeschi castle, whose tower dominates the

town of Arcidosso, a team of volunteers and professionals was setting up the exhibition called: "Tibet: a land and its culture" (Tibet: una terra, una cultura). Here, too, everything fell into place right at the last minute. But what a beautiful exhibition it was! The old castle has just been restored by the town authorities, so that all the many rooms are freshly painted, making a wonderful environment for such an exhibit. Entering the main gate of the castle on the night before His Holiness arrived, there was a magical quality surrounding the whole building, lit up as it was by spotlights in the warm evening air. Prayer flags hung across the central courtyard, from which the staircase ascends to the many rooms above, and faces of Community members working there appeared and disappeared over the balustrade as people called up and down to each other for the materials or manpower they



needed to complete the work. The sound of Tibetan music drifted invitingly down from a room at the very top where a push-button installation gave those who visited the exhibition the chance to hear many types of Tibetan ritual and folk music. After looking at the barrel-vaulted projection room where the many videos relating to Tibet would subsequently be shown, and at the other rooms on the first floor that contained the first part of the splendid collection of photographs of various aspects of Tibetan landscape, people and culture that was displayed in the many other rooms of the castle, the visitor would ascend the stairs, where a brightly-painted wooden architrave gave the impression that one was approaching a Tibetan temple. And indeed, on the first landing one then entered a darkened room that was a very realistic representation of the interior of a small Tibetan temple, complete with an iconographic mural, lama's throne, thangka on the wall, and so on.

Continuing on through the other various rooms grouped around the central open staircase of the castle, the photographs would introduce the visitor to all aspects of Tibetan life; exhibits of clothes and sacred and everyday objects added to the completeness of the presentation. As a whole the exhibition was an effort of which its creators should justly feel proud, and which fully deserved the praise and enthusiasm with which all who saw it greeted it. When it was officially opened there was a particular satisfaction in seeing Community members guide parties of

school children or old Italian farmers around the exhibit, for here was one of the Shang-Shung Institute's principal aims being put into action: the sowing of seeds of a real understanding of the value of Tibetan culture among the wider public.

As the day of His Holiness' arrival drew nearer the intensity of anticipation increased. There were so many things to take care of, but every need seemed to be being met by Community members who had come from all over Italy, and from many other countries. The day His Holiness arrived in Venice for the first of the many stops on his visit to Italy, we all gathered in the Hotel Capenti restaurant to watch an interview with him on the principal national television channel, RAI 1. The questions were interesting, and his answers gave a strong sense of his warmth and humanity; members of the Community felt a pleasant shock of recognition as the



overdubbed translation from English into Italian of His Holiness' replies revealed itself to be in the familiar voice of none other than our own Andy Lukianowicz.

The next day the first of the very many articles about His Holiness began to appear in the Italian press, all of which were favourable and many of which mentioned the inauguration of the Shang-Shung Institute that was later to take place in Arcidosso.

His Holiness' tour took him around Italy by car and often by helicopter. The Dzogchen Community's responsibility was for the Tuscan part of the tour, the first part of which was a flying visit to Grosseto, where His Holiness arrived by helicopter to inaugurate the sculpture dedicated to world peace that the Dzogchen Community had offered to the City of Grosseto, the provincial capital, which is on the coast, situated an hour's drive from Merigar. Created by Babette Eid, and sited in a new park, the sculpture contains part of the Berlin wall on which the graffiti 'Julie' is prominently visible. The mayor of Grosseto made a speech of welcome, a local choir sang a traditional Italian song of exile to His Holiness, and Babette Eid explained her sculpture, noting that it was her hope that it would continue to be a living work to which others would add their contributions over time, making it a real collaboration towards peace. His Holiness then replied with a simple but moving speech, continuing to develop the theme of world peace and collaboration, and asking to be invited back to

Grosseto when the monument was finished. "If you ask me back, I will definitely come," he promised. "I was here at the beginning of this project, so I should be here at its end." Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche attended this event, as did many other Community members, and the local press carried articles about Merigar and the Shang-Shung Institute the next day, creating further excited anticipation among the whole local population of the Monte Amiata region for His Holiness' visit to Merigar itself. His Holiness left Grosseto in the helicopter immediately after inaugurating the peace monument, to attend a Mass at a monastery in Florence that is famous for its ecumenical activities and its long tradition of openness to faiths other than that of the Catholic church, and to give two days of teaching at the meditation centre founded by the late Lama Yeshe at Pomaia.

After that His Holiness' next appointment was an afternoon conference in the beautiful historic city of Siena, one hour's drive north from Merigar, where he addressed a large audience in the crowded Great Hall of the University of Siena on the theme of 'Educating for Peace'. The Rector of the University welcomed His Holiness, praising the activities that had earned him the 1989 Nobel Prize for peace, and then Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche also gave a short speech of welcome, in which he described the present plight of Tibetan culture, explaining the founding of the Shang-Shung Institute for Tibetan Studies whose aim is the preservation of Tibetan culture, and inviting all those present to attend the inauguration of the Institute the next day at Merigar.

His Holiness then spoke about the importance of educating children in the right way, so that they would develop early those qualities which lead to an understanding of others and a desire to live in peaceful collaboration with them. He commented that many people hold the view that human nature is essentially aggressive and violent, but that he felt strongly that this was not true. Standing in his familiar maroon robes on the elegant podium of the University's grand main hall, he cut a very touching figure as he raised his hands to his face to examine them, acting out the words he spoke. The dignitaries seated in the front row of the audience, including many high ranking police and army officers in the military style uniforms that are worn by such officials in Italy listened attentively as His Holiness said slowly with evident good humour and playfulness: "Looking at my own hands, at my own fingernails, or when I look at my teeth in the mirror in the morning, I do not see much evidence that my body is built for aggression like that of a tiger or other ferocious beasts. There are other creatures that have a more pacific nature, such as deer, and I feel that human beings really and truly have more in common with them." Violence, he added, was always a sign of weakness. His Holiness then went on to stress that human beings all want happiness, and don't want suffering, and that

understanding that we have this in common is to find common ground between us. We want friendship, but we are often unwilling to act in a way that makes friendship possible, he added. There then followed a long period of questions and answers, with the written questions being handed forward to be read by Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche who then passed them to His Holiness' translator. The meeting finished with warm applause leaving everyone feeling uplifted and inspired. From Siena, His Holiness was then accompanied to Arcidosso by Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche, where a brief ceremony of welcome was given by the town officials. Those of us who have lived the experience of Merigar from its very beginning felt a deep sense of satisfaction to see prayer flags across the main street of the town hanging from the town hall buildings. The Inauguration of the Gonpa and the Shang-Shung Institute took place at ten the next morning, and it was here that the Community really excelled itself. Never before has the Dzogchen Community taken on such a complex and delicate undertaking, and the fact that everything ran so smoothly on the basis of the awareness of the Community's members rather than on the basis of the simple obedience of rules is a tribute to the growing maturity of our Community's members. Murphy's Law, the famous proverbial (and joking) Irish scientific principle that states: "If anything can go wrong, it definitely will"



was for once shown to be unfounded. For a start the weather was wonderful. The morning was clear and bright, without a cloud in the sky, and all our worst fears that we would face another downpour evaporated.

The precision and courtesy with which the security arrangements, the parking of the hundreds of cars down at the Faggio Rosso Hotel, and the fleet of shuttle buses operated were a credit to the whole Community. The shuttle buses carried everyone up the hill, along the road where the prayer flags fluttered, to Merigar's car park where everyone descended to walk the last few hundred yards to the area of the new Gonpa itself. The Gonpa sparkled in the sun surrounded by more prayer flags. Those with guest passes went inside, while the others lined the road to welcome His Holiness, later to sit and watch the proceedings on a giant screen. Incense smoke from the sang burners filled the air as His Holiness approached. There were batte-

ries of press photographers and TV crews milling around the Gonpa steps, which were lined with all the little girls of the Community, who were holding bouquets of flowers and waiting very patiently for the Dalai Lama to arrive.

The walkie-talkies that were used to link the personnel at the various security posts, the Shang-Shung Institute office in town, and the main house at Merigar, had been delivered the night before, and much fun had been had learning how they worked, with Community members playfully sending the most bizarre messages to and fro, enjoying themselves in the midst of so much hard work. But now they were put to serious use, and the arrangements all went well.

His Holiness took his seat on the dais, and the guests of the Institute sat down to listen to the speeches, beginning with a welcome from the Mayor of Arcidosso, who spoke at length on the subject of laying the foundations for peace. The Mayor stressed that the Town Council of Arcidosso had welcomed the Dzogchen Community from the very beginning of its activities in the area, and that the visit of His Holiness, the winner of the Nobel Peace Prize for 1989, confirmed the validity of the Town Council's decision, as it showed that they had given their support to an organisation that upheld important spiritual and cultural values. He pledged the continuing support of the town to the Shang-Shung Institute and to Merigar. Then Prof. Gherardo



Gnoli, the President of the ISMEO in Rome (the Institute for Middle and Far Eastern Studies) gave a short speech of very warm welcome. Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche then read a prepared speech, the contents of which is included in this edition of 'THE MIRROR'. His Holiness the Dalai Lama then spoke, saying that he had nothing to add to the words of the Mayor on world peace, but that the situation was just as the Mayor had expressed it. He then continued speaking in a very simple and direct manner on the subject of human values as the basis for world peace. Many military officials were once again present in the front rows of the audience, and we can only imagine their thoughts when His Holiness, speaking about the important values that Tibetan culture can contribute to the world, commented that in Tibet in the past and among Tibetans today, to have someone in the family who is in the military is not something of which one would

REFLECTIONS FROM MERIGAR

by John Shane

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be particularly proud. Indeed, he added, the military profession was traditionally regarded by Tibetans as rather inferior, because the values of their culture taught them compassion as a central value, stressing the importance of doing no harm to others and emphasising the need to preserve the culture of

ganzo!", which is Tuscan slang for "Isn't he great! Isn't he great!" When he had finished his speech, His Holiness showed the crowd three white scarves. He told them that in Tibet when such scarves were given as gifts on greeting, their white colour symbolised purity of intention, the fineness of the silk symbolised great appreciation, and the

these pages. The text from which His Holiness taught was profound, and his translator who did such excellent work throughout His Holiness' visit, had some difficulty rendering some of the phrases, but Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche was there to guide him. It was a very powerful experience for members of the Community to receive teachings from His Holiness and Rinpoche together in such circumstances. After lunch, members of the Community gathered at the sports stadium in Arcidosso to say goodbye to His Holiness as he left by helicopter. His maroon-robed form seemed like a frail figure from another time when seen against the hi-tech background of the huge military 'chopper' that sat in the centre of the football pitch, with another smaller police helicopter parked nearby.

His Holiness waved and smiled as he boarded the aircraft; its engines roared, and it rose slowly and gracefully into the air, turning to let its precious passenger wave some more from the window. His next appointment was in Bologna, where he was to receive a degree 'Honoris Causa' from the University. The next day His Holiness was in Rome, where he attended a Conference at the Senate organised by the Dzogchen Community, at which he met important Italian political and economic leaders. Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche addressed the Conference in Italian, explaining that although he had lived in Italy for thirty years and was an Italian citizen, he was still a Tibetan, and felt responsible for Tibetan culture, which was in grave danger. His Holiness then spoke explaining the importance of Tibetan culture for the world, stressing the values that it had to offer. He suggested that Tibetan spiritual teachings had insights to offer that would be of use to modern sciences such as astrophysics, and that they were more profound and developed than modern psychology. Many important contacts were made for the future, and various political figures promised to give practical as well as moral assistance to the various enterprises the Community is undertaking to preserve Tibetan culture and to help the Tibetan people. His Holiness later went to the Vatican to visit His Holiness Pope John Paul II, before concluding his visit to Italy and leaving for Spain. Meanwhile, at Merigar, an all-day conference was taking place in the new Gonpa at which suggestions were being heard of how the Shang-Shung Institute should proceed to carry out its aims. The next morning Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche had returned from Rome, and, once again in the new Gonpa, the concluding ceremonies of the Inauguration were held. A summary of the talks held the previous day was given by one of the Vice-Presidents of the Institute, Giorgio Busetto, which was followed by a speech by Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche. He expressed his satisfaction with the way the entire Inauguration had been conducted, and thanked all those near and far who had contributed to its success through their collaboration. He asked everyone to collaborate

still further in the future, adding that a very important step had been taken with the founding of the Institute.

In a festive mood, silver plaques with the Shang-Shung Institu-



te's symbol were then presented to representatives of all the Communities around the world to be taken back to their respective countries.

A picnic on the side of the hill followed later with Tibetan momo soup for all, and local delicacies spread out on table cloths on the grass by a Tibetan nomad tent pitched in the meadow behind the Gonpa.

A pleasurable relaxation and feeling of accomplishment replaced the concentrated effort that had reached its climax in the last hours. It gradually dawned on us all that we had achieved everything that we had set out to achieve, putting into action a series of complex projects all at the same time, that involved considerable organisational skills. And we had succeeded in our aims without major problems. The Gonpa was 'suddenly' a reality, no longer a plan for the distant future. The Shang-Shung Institute had been launched in great style, in a manner that had generated wide press coverage and considerable public interest. The issue of the survival of Tibetan culture had been raised in high places all over Italy, and particularly in Rome. In the local area a far wider and deeper understanding of what the Community is doing had been created, which places those of the Community who live around Merigar in a different and clearer light in the eyes of those amongst who they live. Causes had been placed for many beings to meet the teachings in the future, and we ourselves had received a wonderful transmission from the Dalai Lama himself. In addition to all this, we had discovered what we are capable of as a Community when we act together in the light of the teachings with all our differences and our difficulties laid aside.

I will have left Italy by the time this newspaper goes to press, and will not be back until next year, so this will be the last 'Reflections from Merigar' I shall be writing for the time being. I have been very glad to have helped in the process of starting a newspaper for the Dzogchen Community and hope that my articles have been interesting and useful. I hope to write further articles from wherever my travels will take me, and also to continue to interview members of the Dzogchen Community in various countries of the world.

John Shane.

Practice for Special Days



UNIVERSAL TIMETABLE

31 July
16.30 Fairbanks, Hawaii
17.30 Dawson
18.30 San Francisco, Los Angeles, Vancouver
19.30 Denver
20.30 Chicago, Mexico City
21.30 New York, Montreal, Lima
22.00 Caracas
22.30 Buenos Aires
23.30 Rio De Janeiro
1 August
01.30 Reykjavic, Capo Verde
02.30 London
03.30 Rome, Berlin, Oslo, Paris, Madrid
04.30 Moscow, Nicosia, Helsinki, Athens
06.00 Tehran
08.00 ODDIYANA, Delhi
08.30 Rangoon
10.00 Ulan Bator, Djakarta, Singapore
10.30 Beijing, Lhasa, Manila, Hong Kong
11.30 Tokyo, Seul
12.30 Sydney
14.30 Wellington, Marshall

5th Month, 30th day
Sunday 22/7/1990
NEW MOON - TOTAL SOLAR ECLIPSE 01.53 - 04.11 GMT
This is an ideal day for purification practices. It is best to do Purification of the Six Lokas either collectively or alone, preferably in the morning. Otherwise you can try to do a medium or short Tun. The time of the eclipse is a very good time for practice, because it is considered that during that time all effects of practice are multiplied.

6th Month, 4th day
Wednesday 25/7/1990
This is the anniversary of the Dharmachakra (the first turning of the Wheel of the Dharma), the first teachings of Buddha Shakyamuni (the Four Noble Truths), which he gave to his disciples at Sarnath, shortly after his illumination. On this special day you can do a Ganapuja with your Vajra brothers and sisters.

6th Month, 10th day
Wednesday 1/8/1990
This day is considered by many great Masters to be the birthday of Guru Rinpoche, Padmasambhava. This year, on the 1st of August 1990, when it is eight o'clock in the morning in Oddiyana, (see Universal Timetable) we Dzogchen practitioners all over the world will do a Guruyoga with the medium or long Tun, according to our possibilities. Those who can manage it can also add a Ganapuja. Thus we will practice together, communicating all transmissions in the same instant in the state of contemplation.

6th Month, 14th day
Sunday 5/8/1990
This is the anniversary of the 3rd Karmapa, Rangjung Dorje. On this day it is good to do "A Kar Lamai Naljor", Guruyoga with White A.
6th Month, 15th day
Monday 6/8/1990
FULL MOON - TOTAL LUNAR ECLIPSE
This is the anniversary of Gampopa, the chief disciple of Milarepa. Therefore it is an excellent day to do "A Kar Lamai Naljor", Guruyoga with White A. Since it is also a full moon day it is also good, if you have the possibility, to do the Long-life practice of Amitayus, "Union of Primordial Essences".

6th Month, 25th day
Wednesday 15/8/1990
This is a Dakini day, so it is a positive day for reinforcing the function of your energy and creating a vital contact with the energy of the universe, by doing a Ganapuja with your Vajra sisters and brothers. If there are no other practitioners nearby you can do a medium Tun on your own. In either case, when you transform yourself into the Dakini Simhamukha, it is good to recite her heart mantra as many times as possible.
6th Month, 30th day
Monday 20/8/1990
NEW MOON - PARTIAL SOLAR ECLIPSE
This is a very important day to do purification practices, especially the "Purification of the Six Lokas". If you have the chance you can also do a short, medium or long Tun.
7th Month, 10th day
Tuesday 30/8/1990
This is the anniversary of Jomo Menmo (1248-1283), a very famous woman Tertön, reincarnation of Yeshe Tso-gyal. She was the consort of the great Tertön Guru Chöwang. It is also a very special day of Guru Padmasambhava. Therefore it is an ideal day to do the Guruyoga and Long-life practice associated with Padmasambhava, "Universal Wisdom Union." If you have the opportunity it is beneficial to do a Ganapuja.
7th Month, 15th day
Wednesday 5/9/1990
FULL MOON
This is the anniversary of Tsarchen Losal Gyatso and Padma Karpo, a famous 17th century Druppa Kagyupa Master. Therefore it is ideal to do the Long-life practice of the Dakini Mandarava, "Cycle of Life's Vajra". It is better to do it early in the morning if you can manage it, otherwise it is perfectly alright to do it later in the day. It is also an excellent day to practice "A Kar Lamai Naljor", Guruyoga with White A.
7th Month, 25th day
Friday 14/9/1990
This is a Dakini day and also the anniversary of Pagmo Druppa (1110-1170), the chief disciple of Gampopa. Try to do a Ganapuja together with your Vajra sisters and brothers. If there are no other practitioners nearby you can do a medium Tun on your own. In either case, when you transform yourself into the Dakini Simhamukha, recite her heart mantra as much as possible and then do an intensive practice of Ekajati.
7th Month, 30th day
Tuesday 18/9/1990
NEW MOON
This day is ideal for purification practices. Try to do either the "Purification of the Six Lokas" or the "Namchos Shitrol Naljor", the "Yoga of the Peaceful and Wrathful Manifestations", either collectively or on your own.

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On the full moon day

July 31st and August 1st

we are dedicating our practice of Long Life to the salvation of the people of Tibet and the Preservation of their culture and to our Master Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche.



Tibet.

At the conclusion of the inauguration, His Holiness attended an official luncheon at the Aiule hotel, after which he insisted on going into the kitchen to thank and shake hands with all the kitchen staff, before returning to Merigar to visit and inaugurate a new library that has been created there in the "capanno-ne". Later that same afternoon His Holiness gave a speech to the people of Arcidosso from a balcony overlooking the main street of the town. This was an extraordinary occasion, at which an atmosphere of almost carnival-like joy prevailed. From the open windows of the apartment building opposite the balcony, the inhabitants of the apartments waved and cheered as His Holiness appeared with his translator and Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche by his side. The road had been closed to traffic, and in the street below hundreds of men, women and children in a dense crowd looked up towards His Holiness. He spoke in his usual direct manner thanking them for their welcome, and adding that he never felt like a foreigner wherever he went, but that he always felt as if he was one of the inhabitants of that place. He once again emphasised the importance of building on what we have in common. Whenever he paused in his speech to allow for the translation into Italian he giggled and waved and clowned in such a relaxed and friendly manner that he created a remarkable sense of intimacy with the crowd below. I overheard two local tee-



nagers laugh to one another behind me, saying "E' ganzo! E' ganzo!"

are based. A transcription of those teachings is included in



in It

He is Or

Everywhere he went His Holiness was received with deep respect, and in contact with countless people who came to caress little children and old people. People in the streets, often with tears in their eyes, said, "He's one of us!", as he laughed.

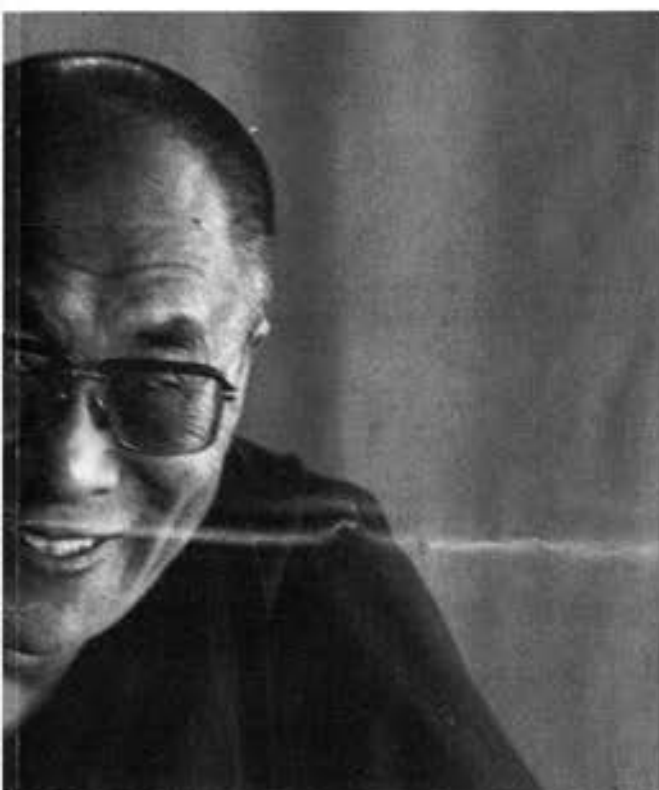


We Thank Yeshe Namkhai, Gianni Barozzi, ARS Fotografia, Office of the Mayor of Grosseto, and the photographer for their kind contribution

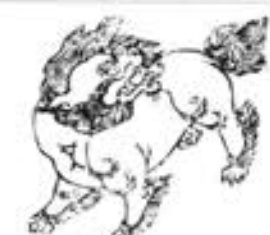




ness the XIVth Dalai Lama was
admiration and love. He made
e , darting through the crowds
old folk sitting on doorsteps.
with tears in their eyes, said,
hed and threw white scarves.



Baggi, Alex Siedlecki, Mario Maglietti, Rosseto, Comunità Montana and every artist on of photos and artistic work for Mirror.

[illegible]

I met His Holiness the Dalai Lama

by Leena Larjanko

The XIV Dalai Lama, Tenzin Gyatso, is an incarnation of Avalokitesvara, but he is also a person. I think that in our relative existence we cannot realize anything more than to be fully human - to really understand the meaning of our humanity. The Dalai Lama is the realization of human potential, because he deliberately chose to be born as a human; that is how he shows his compassion to all people and that is why he is called the Ocean of Compassion. Many members of the Dzogchen community have met the Dalai Lama, have shaken hands with him on a personal level. Lama Tenzin Wangyal worked for him in Dharamsala, in His Holiness' library, and met him personally a couple of times; John Shane met him in England a few years ago and again in Bodh-Gaya in India and Tuula Saarikoski met him a year ago, when he visited Finland.

John met His Holiness in London about five years ago when he gave a teaching in a big hall near the Houses of Parliament. On another occasion he accompanied His Holiness on a visit to the House of



John Shane

Lords, the upper house of the English Parliament. His Holiness gave some meditation teachings there to a group of Lords in one of the Committee Rooms and the next day he answered some questions about the political situation in Tibet. The Lords he spoke to, were impressed by his speech, and by his human qualities, and I believe that he made some important connections there. The British Government refused officially to see him but he was invited by Lord Ennals, a former Minister of the Labour Government. On another occasion the Dalai Lama gave a teaching to John without knowing it, which shows how the Dharma works in everyday life. "I was dealing with a complicated lawsuit, which for the first time in my life revealed to me that I had a personal enemy. While I was going through my own very difficult reactions and did not know how to deal with them I saw the Dalai Lama on television. The camera crew asked him many questions and at a certain point the reporter asked him: 'You have lost your country to the Chinese, how do you feel about the Chinese?' and then the camera zoomed right to his face and everybody expected him to say something terrible. But instead he said very slowly: 'That struck me very very deeply and it showed me the way to handle the situation I was in.' When you have a friend you feel comfortable and happy

but when you have an enemy, that enemy shows you the worst in yourself, not because he says bad things about you, but because of the way in which you react when somebody upsets you. If you react with anger that shows you what you really are, your real condition. The Dalai Lama's situation was much more difficult, much more complicated than mine, but all the same I had to solve my problem. In one phrase he showed to me how

I should observe myself and how to remain in my truth in spite of the fact that my enemy did not respect my truth. My enemy would do anything to hurt me, but I had to be aware of that while still remaining in my truth, without trying to win at any cost.

On another occasion, in London, I was present at a teaching, after which somebody asked His Holiness: 'If a master asks a student to do something which offends the student's moral sense, should the student do it or not?' His answer was: 'In no case should a human individual do something which offends his or her own moral sense, simply because some other human individual tells him to do so. You should respect your own moral values.' I think that this is an important teaching, too."

John Shane suggested that we should apply His Holiness' teaching about working with enmity within the Community, when we have to deal with others who have different opinions, different attitudes and different behaviour from our own. Such situations can act as a teacher to us. The Russian spiritual teacher Gurdjieff, at his retreats in a Chateau outside Paris, actually hired a man who was famous for his unpleasantness, paying him to come to the retreat without telling anybody else about his role. The man came as if he were a student and his function was to try to make the students get angry, to see how developed their practise was, and to give them something to work with. On my own Tibetan masters, prior to my meeting Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche, used to say that a good farmer never



HIS HOLINESS THE DALAI LAMA

throws away the manure of his farm; instead, he turns it into growth. The practitioner should know how to turn all the negativity in his life practise. It is inevitable that we encounter difficulties; and it's much better if we can put the experience to some positive use.

To John Shane the Dalai Lama is one of those persons whom you feel to have known all your life

LAMA TENZIN WANGYAL'S MEETINGS WITH THE DALAI LAMA

"I met His Holiness the Dalai Lama personally in 1986, before I left for Tibet with my master Lopen Tenzin Namdak. We wanted to meet His Holiness



Lama Tenzin Wangyal

before going on such a journey. We talked about how we would make the journey and about what we would do in Tibet."

Tenzin Wangyal said: "The Dalai Lama considers Lopen Namdak as an old friend. I talked with him about Dolanji, about our school and education, and also about the Geshe examination that we do there. The second time I met him was when I came back from Tibet with Lopen Namdak, and we went together to visit him. First he and Lopen had a personal discussion, then I had a possibility to explain all my experiences in Tibet. One of the main reason why I went to Tibet was the Bon po'i bka' gyur, the Bonpo canon, which consists of one hundred and eight volumes, of which there is only one copy in the world. We thought that, if they had been a great pity. We went to the place where the texts are kept

and made sure that they were safe. I went to meet His Holiness and told him about my meeting with the Chinese authorities and with Panchen Lama. He was very pleased and said that I had done a very good job. A friend of mine, Tsering Loden, was going to Tibet, and His Holiness said to him: "You

should do like Tenzin."

His Holiness was very glad about my trip, and asked me to write about my experiences. So I wrote 75 pages about my trip to Tibet, visiting many monasteries, and all my experiences, and it will be published by the Library of Dharamsala this year.

After that I was invited to work in His Holiness' Library in Dharamsala, to make a catalogue of Bonpo writings. At the same time His Holiness appointed me as an assembly member of the Bon religion, but unfortunately I could not accept, as I was going to Europe and I had to continue my studies.

TUULA SAARIKOSKI'S MEETING WITH THE DALAI LAMA

Tuula Saarikoski spent three memorable days in Helsinki with the Dalai Lama and his entourage about two years ago, when he visited all the North European countries, starting from Finland.

"When his airplane landed, the foreign minister of the Dalai Lama's government and I, just the two of us, left the VIP lounge and all the other people who were there to welcome him and the press, and went to meet His Holiness by the airplane. On the way there, I suddenly understood that, stupidly, I did not know how to behave in such an intimate occasion, whether I was supposed to shake his hand,



Tuula Saarikoski

to bow or prostrate. But nothing could have been easier. His Holiness came, smiling. I was introduced, he looked at

me and without saying a word we walked to the airport bus hand-in-hand.

Organizing an event of that magnitude was not without complexities, but everything went very smoothly. Thousands of people came to listen to His Holiness at the Cathedral of Helsinki and in the great hall of the Helsinki University.

As I was listening to his speech - I listened carefully because later I was to give a summary of it in Finnish, I was struck by his incredible quality as a human being. There was no feeling of any kind of defences, he was totally present. Besides everything else that he undoubtedly is, he is also an amazing teacher of what it means to be a human being; in his complete openness and lack of our normal protections. He is therefore full of the power - if I dare say it - of eternity.

His Holiness also



Leena Larjanko

gave a Dzogchen teaching to about two hundred people in a private gathering.

Yes, I had expressed a wish, but I had never expected it to happen; because there was not much space in the schedule, and the people present were not acquainted with the Dzogchen teaching. But my wish came true, and the Dalai Lama gave a wonderful teaching of the Dzogchen Base, orally and otherwise, in just three hours.

After the teaching, when people were paying their respect to the master, his Tibetan interpreter came to me and asked: "Are you happy now?" And I could see that he was as happy as I was.

For some people the teaching may have been a surprise, as they had expected something more on the level of Sutra, but I think the Dalai Lama was a surprise in general, and on many levels, for those who met him. There was a press conference immediately after he landed, because this was the first occasion for the international press to meet the Dalai Lama after China had offered him negotiations for the first time. I was there as a spokesman, and to my very great surprise all the tough, not always so well-behaved foreign affairs reporters addressed him as "Your Holiness", which just shows his natural authority.

Leena Larjanko

YOUR
CONTRIBUTION
TO THE MIRROR
IS NEEDED

'THE MIRROR'

'THE MIRROR' is not just the newspaper of the Italian Community, or of Merigar alone. 'THE MIRROR' is the newspaper of the entire Dzogchen Community world-wide; we are using the English language because that is the language that will enable the largest number of Community members to understand what is written in it. We now need a response from the whole Community to enable us to know if our fellow Community members value the efforts that are being made to communicate with them enough to help to finance those efforts.

Everyone

Everyone can contribute to 'The Mirror' even if they can't write articles or make illustrations. Everyone can take out a subscription as soon as possible. The basic subscription is 50 (fifty) US Dollars a year, or its equivalent in your local currency.

YOU

We want YOU to feel it is YOUR Newspaper, and to make it truly reflect all the colours of the Community's rainbow-like spectrum.

PLEASE

Collaborate and send news and other articles from YOUR area as soon as possible, as this is a major project which cannot truly succeed in reflecting our Community's presence and activity in the world if we do not receive material from everywhere!

DARK RETREAT HOUSE IN FRANCE

an Interview with Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche by Alain Viguerie
Wednesday May 30 1990.

Alain Viguerie: We should be able to finish the dark retreat house in July.

Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche: In July?

Alain Viguerie: Yes. We still have some money problems but with some publicity in the Mirror people can send more money and we'll make it. In Brittany they formed a dark retreat Gakyil and they have some questions. None of them has ever done a dark retreat before and the attendants want to clarify what happens to

practitioners in the retreat so that they can respond accordingly. Margaret, who lives next door to the retreat house and is a Yantra Yoga teacher, said that if you wished so, she could be your attendant were you to go into personal retreat for a long time.

Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche: If people want to do a dark retreat they must have a precise base. Dark retreat is not an ordinary retreat. If they want to do an ordinary retreat they can do it also with light, but dark retreat is special. This means that before entering into the dark they must have transmission and very precise instructions. There are also specific ways of developing the practice

later. It is necessary to meet with the teacher, receive the transmission, and tell him which kinds of experience one has had already. But first of all one needs the transmission. Many people have it, I gave it in many retreats:

necessary to have experienced the dark. It's enough if you stay 24 hours or two days. In the dark you have that experience, precisely and continuously. People who have already received the transmission try to have this experience.

Alain Viguerie: In Brittany people ask for some rules. They say to themselves "Who am I to decide?". First question: who is allowed to go in? You say people should have had transmission.

Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche: Also many people, not only in France say

"I have had the transmission, I want to do the retreat."

Alain Viguerie: Should the transmission always come from you, especially for the dark retreat?

Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche: I don't know. It does not mean from me only. But people must have precise transmission and know what it really means, otherwise then there isn't much sense.

Alain Viguerie: Many Tibetan masters are in France. People will know about it and want to come.

Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche: If there is a teacher who gives precise instructions for this practice that's fine but I don't think there are so many.



first the preparation, then the practice and once they do it then they can develop it further. But you couldn't just follow some instructions immediately before shutting yourself in.

Alain Viguerie: In Brittany they heard that in Conway people sometimes have had experiences, positive and negative, the very first day they used the dark retreat cabin, so the attendants want to be able to answer any kind of problem that could appear when the practitioners come out.

Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche: That is good. Also that way, when you receive instructions, you have experiences and possibilities to develop. For a teacher, to transmit in a correct way, it is

Homoeopathic Medicine and Tibetan Medicine

by Pia Barilli

I think The Mirror is an excellent instrument for international communication, and I would like to start to use it as soon as possible to find out how many doctors there are in the Dzogchen Community, especially those practising Homoeopathy, and who they are. Our Precious Master always speaks about the "Three Existences: Body, Speech and Mind". When I stu-

Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche. In 1982, in fact, listening to some lectures by an important Argentine homoeopathic master, Dr. Paschero, I understood that using a therapeutic instrument such as classic homoeopathy needed a personal path of continuous self-improvement, a condition which is absolutely necessary to be a good physician. So I took part in my first

Dzogchen. I also believe that it is very important, in the light of the birth of the Shang-Shung Institute, to see who amongst us has the possibility of confronting him/herself with Tibetan medicine, which contains in itself - from its origins - the consideration and the practices of the Three Doors, i.e. Body, Speech and Mind, and how to do this.

Nobody is asked to renounce his/her medical practice, whichever it is; but Tibetan medicine is certainly an occasion for comparison that is too precious to be ignored.

In this spirit I would like to make a concrete proposal: that of a meeting of all doctors in the community. I suggest a first level of contact which could be a meeting to be held at Merigar this year during the September retreat.

My plan is to organise, on a long term, an international meeting to get to know each other and understand how to develop our contacts with Tibetan medicine.

I wish everybody serenity in their daily work.



died Western medicine in Milan, Italy, I became aware very soon of the fact that I was working on a material level of knowledge, linked to the Body as the object of research and to the five senses of the Body as the instruments of this research. Partly this was stimulating for me, but partly I considered it limited. So I started to look for a therapeutic instrument that had something to do with "Energy" (Voice), which is by definition invisible (i.e. not immediately measurable by the five senses) and dynamic, meaning all of the factors which keep our organism moving and alive. This research brought me to homoeopathy, which ever since then, for twelve years, has been my daily therapeutic practice.

retreat, at Merigar. In this way, through the Teachings and practices of Dzogchen, I felt finally able to unify the path related to Body and Voice to that related to Mind.

I chose to be a doctor not for the sake of money and career. I follow a teaching such as Dzogchen, which speaks about the energy and the nature of Mind; I practise daily a therapy - homoeopathy - which researches and cures the causes of sickness, rather than suppressing their symptomatic manifestations. Therefore I am interested in knowing and getting together with the medical practitioners in the Community in order to be able to discuss together how we can be doctors nowadays, having in our hands and hearts a Western technical instrument as well as a Teaching such as

PIA BARILLI
VIA P. VILLARI 14
50126 FIRENZE -
ITALY
TEL. 055/677566
055/855289

Dr. Luigi Vitiello supports my proposal and asks me to give his name and address as a reference for this co-ordination of doctors:

LUIGI VITIELLO
VIA PIETRAVALLE 12D
80131 NAPOLI
TEL. 081/ 5462045

Funds are needed urgently to finish building
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Ocean of Translations

by Elio Guarisco

While I was working on a translation in Sonada, near Darjeeling (North-West India), I received a letter from Italy, saying that Norbu Rinpoche wanted me to participate - as his representative - in a Convention on the Translation of Tibetan Texts, organised by the Tibet House of Delhi, the cultural association of the Dalai Lama. I hoped that everything would end there with that letter. I did not feel at all like going down from the mountains into the dust of Delhi. But later I received a letter from Tibet House, saying that Rinpoche had written to them saying that I would go, as his representative, and then even Rinpoche himself wrote me. So I found myself in trouble, I had no choice. I took a taxi to the Indian plains, in the night, to discover that my train had been cancelled because of a strike. So I had to sleep on the floor in the station hallway until five o'clock the next morning. I arrived at Delhi just in time for the formal opening of the Convention.

The next day, in a less official atmosphere, with all of the fifty participants sitting at a round table, the work started. Many people were there to speak on different subjects, such as "Theory and Principles of Translation", "Lexicography and Terminology", "Translations and Translators", etc. The spokesmen had sent their reports some time before. As I was obviously the last to arrive, without even a blank sheet of paper in my hands, I did not have a chance to express in detail my ideas about the various subjects, and maybe it was just as well.

After one and a half day of reports, it was clear that the majority of the participants had an intellectual background and were more or less connected to the Gelugpa school, except for some Indian professors of Sanskrit and a couple of western academicians. Of course this gave a particular mark to the Convention, and the discussion was focused mainly on the translation of classical texts of Buddhist philosophy, texts by authors such as Nagarjuna, Dharmakirti, Asanga, Vasubhandu, etc. Only a few of the participants had directly experienced the wave of propagation of the Teachings through the West that has taken place in the last 20 years; for this reason the problems in translation were analysed only either from a technical point of view or from the point of view of written translation. But it seems to me that - since translating texts or oral teachings is not something that one does just for the sake of doing it, but it is something that one does for the

purpose of presenting the text in a different language, and therefore in a different cultural and historical context, a message whose aim is to bring considerable benefit to mankind - a translator should take all of this into account. He or she must think of how a message can be presented - keeping intact its meaning and original flavour - in a language that can be easily understood by Westerners, in order not to decrease the power of the message.

Some of the participants emphasized that the spreading of the Teachings in the West is more similar to the diffusion of the Teachings in China than in Tibet. There are many reasons for this, but there are two main ones: the big difference between Chinese and Sanskrit; and the highly sophisticated culture characterizing pre-Buddhist China. Also, the complexity of Western philosophy prevents all attempts at standardising Buddhist terminology in the same way as it was probably done in Tibet. The polysemantic nature of Buddhist terms and of their Western equivalents, and the disparate nature of the public makes these attempts impossible.

"Literal Translation or Interpretation" was the fundamental dichotomy brought up in many reports and discussions. It was about methods of translation that are apparently and theoretically opposed.

The methodology of the first translations from Sanskrit into Chinese was called Ko-i or "parallel terms", because it required a similarity between the terms of Indian Buddhism and the Chinese terms already existing with an already established meaning in the vocabulary of Taoist concepts. This is an example of a radically interpretative method. The method adopted by the Tibetans involved mainly the correspondence of terms between the two languages, together with the invention of new Tibetan terms, instead of basing itself on an already existing conceptual system. This is an example of a literal method. Some people define it as a technical translation, even though it is not, of course, a mechanical method in the sense that a Tibetan term is always equalled to the correspondent Sanskrit term, independently of the context.

Prof. Joe Wilson examined the book "Primordial Experience", translated by Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche and Kennard Lipman, that - as Mr. Lipman says in the book - adopts a first order language, as opposed to the "second order language", i.e. the

Buddhist jargon, and presented the book as an example of "extremist translation". He says that this kind of translation draws away from the translated text. He in particular points to the title "Byang chub kyi sems bsgom pa", which he would translate as "Cultivating the Awakening Mind", making - in my opinion - a wrong translation, because it ignores the particular context in which "Byang chub kyi sems bsgom pa" should be understood in that text. This example proves the opposite of what he wanted to demonstrate, i.e. that a literal translation could also fail to render the meaning of the words. Frankly, I think that such a thing as a literal translation does not exist.

To many of the people present at the Convention non-literal translation means imprecise translation, and I really think that this is not true, because a literal translation may not only be imprecise, but even misleading, while a non-literal translation is not necessarily imprecise.

Jeffrey Hopkins and his Tibetan followers seem to be advocates of literal translation, which seems to me to be based on a model that follows the stream of the first translations from Tibetan, in which no attempt was ever made to formulate a language which could be easily understood by ordinary Westerners, researching new terms and methods of translation.

Instead, Guenther was widely criticised as an interpretative translator who radically broke with the ancient Tibetan methods of philological precision. His books can only be read after studying his vocabulary, which is full of terms borrowed from Western philosophy, such as "facticity", "noetic", etc. In spite of his valuable attempt to present the Teachings in a language that is not the "tribal" one of western Buddhists, he seems to fall into a complexity that is useless and ineffective for transmission of the Teachings, particularly Dzogchen Teachings. Nevertheless, only a few scholars object to the use of terms that are found in the philosophic Western tradition, as long as their meaning is clear to the translator and as long as they are applied exactly to the terms to be translated. It seems that a good translation must proceed along the "middle way" between philological literalism and exaggerated interpretativeness. Some suggest a translation based on a brief definition of the terms instead of a literal translation, a definition to be found in the text itself or in the tradition to which the text belongs. This approach involves - of course - some practical problems, such as the length of the sentences, particularly when a term is used

repeatedly in a text; anyway this methodology is to be considered.

A report that aroused a very lively discussion was that of Ms Elizabeth Napper, who brought up some ideas about translation that were obviously derived from Jeffrey Hopkins. Ms Napper says that she strongly agrees with the ideas that he suggests, but that, of course, other translators do not necessarily have to follow them. Ms Napper referred to Paul Griffith and to a threefold process that he explains. The first aspect of this process is to understand the nature of a text, the second is to contextualise it within the tradition from which it comes and within the works of the author, the third is to own the meaning of the text, which essentially involves rewriting its meaning using terms that are



Elio Guarisco

different from the ones used in the text itself.

Griffith says that Buddhist scholars, as academicians, must communicate, and condemns the contemporary tendency, of Western Buddhist scholars, to withdraw into an impenetrable protection made of technical terms, understandable only by specialists. Griffith considers that a Buddhist scholar cannot be a proselyte or a Buddhist, because such religious persons are non-critical and therefore incapable of a rigorous historical and philological analysis. Buddhist scholars - he says - must study a text creatively and interpret it, leaving the mere translating to those who do it as a work of religious "supererogation". Ms Napper, starting from this last point, says that - since what Buddhist scholars look for is Truth - there are no conflicts between these two roles. Ms Napper recognises the necessity of reaching a vast audience, but - she says - instead of offering the reader an interpretation, a summary, something that forces the reader

to accept the translator's own judgement about what is relevant and useful, it is important to translate the texts into English and to let educated readers read them and draw their own conclusions about their meaning, importance, etc. Then she went on to say that the criterion used in translating should not be that of elegance and style, but that translation should be a vehicle to allow a full understanding of the Buddhist tradition. The material is often philosophical - she added - of a technical nature and

often the style is not very elegant. The best translation is the literal one, the one which renders technical terms precisely and allows the subtle philosophical discussion proper of the Tibetan language to be reflected into the English language. It is important - she went on - to simply translate

the Tibetan terms, instead of looking for other similar terms in the Western philosophic tradition. The Western and Eastern philosophic traditions are so different that trying to use "akin" terms brings only confusion. It is necessary to use terms whose meaning can be developed by using them, instead of using a conceptual structure belonging to a very different system of terminology and thought. She also said that she did not believe that translators should try to translate Tibetan terminology into the current idioms of our language, since languages are subject to continuous changes, and worrying too much about being "current" leads to translations that very soon become "dated". Many reports and clear arguments that were then brought up discussing the principles of literal translation expressed by Ms Napper, as well as the difficulty of applying such principles in translation, made her withdraw to a "softer" position.

Peter Della Santina then presented an interesting report, analysing the relative and indirect role of language in relation to the reality and experience of liberation. Reality - the direct experience that leads to liberation - is devoid of concepts and words, while language is deter-

mined by a terminology related to a particular cultural situation and does not have a direct relationship to the experience of reality. Peter rightly emphasised that translation is generally and essentially a reinterpretation of terms and concepts within a particular cultural "milieu". Reinterpretation of the language is inevitable in the case of a translation into languages that belong to completely different cultural environments. Peter analysed the evolution of concepts and terms in Buddhist philosophy, demonstrating the dynamic nature of the use of language in the Teachings. Terminology - he says - must be developed creatively in order to be more effective in its educational function. Words such as "vacuity" and other epithets for "reality" participate in an educational process that eventually leads to a direct experience of reality. But they are not part of reality, and language should actually be used to eliminate the constriction of linguistic and conceptual factors. In the case of transcultural translations this process will necessarily be revolutionary and it will occasionally require the redefinition of the linguistic and conceptual context of a particular term, and therefore it will bring a new perspective to the meaning of the term itself. This process of radical reinterpretation - Peter said - was applied by Buddha himself, for his particular era, when he redefined terms that belonged to the dominant, non-Buddhist culture.

The Tibetan scholars present at the Convention, more practically, insisted on the necessity of agreement about the translation of terms and about the necessity of creating a dictionary.

Part of the discussion was also devoted to the necessity of collective translation work, where it is important to include in the team the presence of someone who is qualified in the mother-language of the text and in Sanskrit as well as in Western philosophy.

At the end of the whole discussion some resolutions were made, such as that of organising workshops to define a common terminology in translating and a school for Tibetan translators.



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BUDDHA MIND

A BOOK REVIEW BY DES BARRY

"Buddha Mind", an anthology of Longchen Rabjam's writings on Dzogchen by Tulku Thondup Rinpoche. Edited by Harold Talbot - Snow Lion Press, Ithaca, New York.

Considered the greatest of philosopher scholars in the Dzogchen tradition, Longchen Rabjam is also acknowledged as a supreme master in his realization of Primordial wisdom. Tulku Thondup Rinpoche has chosen extracts from a wide variety of Longchenpa's writings, and presented them in a formidable volume, which is meant to illustrate how the goal of Dzogpa Chenpo - the realization of intrinsic awareness - (Rigpa) - is the same goal as that sought by the Sutras and Tantras, and how Dzogchen is the essence of the Buddha's teachings.

This theme is very similar to that presented by His Holiness the Dalai Lama during his teaching in San Jose, California. Perhaps this is not surprising as one of the lineage transmissions of Dzogpa Chenpo to His Holiness is the same as that of Tulku Thondup Rinpoche, this being through the great Dödrupchen Rinpoche. Tulku Thondup Rinpoche is familiar to many Dzogchen Community members, especially at Conway, where he has taught several times. Close to Conway, in the town of Hawley, is the Mahasiddha Foundation which is under the guidance of Dödrupchen Rinpoche. Tulku Thondup is one of the main spiritual guides of the Mahasiddha group. He was educated at Dödrupchen Monastery, where he obtained the degree of Dorje Lopon after intensive study of the Sutras, Tantras and Dzogchen. He has taught at Indian Universities, and from 1980-83 he was a visiting scholar at Harvard. "Buddha Mind" takes the reader through an inspiring, logical exposition of each level of Sutra, Tantra and Dzogchen. It explains how the viewpoint, meditation and result of one level of teaching is the basis for, and is encompassed and accomplished within, the methods and realization of the next level of teaching. This begins with Sutra, progresses through each level of Tantra and culminates with Dzogchen.

The book is divided in two parts. The first part takes the reader through all nine yanas (or vehicles of teaching), as explained in the Nyingma tradition. It de-

scribes the philosophical point of view of Sutra, and that of the outer and inner Tantras and also of the three series of Dzogchen. This is done by quoting from the writings of many Dzogchen masters including Longchen Dharmashiri, Jigmed Lingpa, Pema Ledrel Sel, Mipham Nam-

sara and Nirvana. It then goes on to explain the function of karma, and the philosophical view of the "phenomenal existents", according to the point of view of Mahayana Sutra and Dzogchen. These points are illustrated by extensive quotes from the Shingta Chenpo.



gyal, and many others including Longchenpa himself. It then compares the point of view of Dzogchen with the other yanas, and with other traditions. Especially interesting is Tulku Thondup Rinpoche's very open examination of the comparison between Dzogpa Chenpo and the Ch'an Buddhism of Hasang Mahayana, which has also been considered in Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche's "Dzogchen and Zen". The first part of the book concludes with extracts from the lives of various Dzogchen masters, selected to illustrate various points of the teaching, such as the importance of training, relying on authentic scriptures, devotion and other considerations necessary for the sincere practitioner of Dzogchen. There is a short biography of Longchenpa himself which is extremely illuminating and inspiring.

The second half of the book is devoted entirely to Longchen Rabjam's writings, mostly extracts from the Shingta Chenpo (rDzogs-pa chen-po sems-nyid ngal gso'i 'grel ba shing rta chen po) (vols. I and II), the Tshigs don rin-po-che'i mdzod, and others; and the complete translation of the rDzogs-pa chen-po sems-nyid rang-grol and its commentary, the rDzogs-pa chen-po sems-nyid rang-grol-gyi lam-rim snying-po'i don khrid.

This part of the book is a little more difficult to read, but well worth the effort. It is divided into sections on View, Meditation and Result. The View section begins with the Dzogchen view of the origin of Sam-

The second section, on Meditation, deals extensively with Tranquillity (zhi gnas) and Insight (lhag mthong), Contemplation (Ting nge 'dzin) and the naturally liberated mind. There are very technical explanations of meditative states of mind, and advice on the development of contemplation, which is important to understand for the development of contemplation in one's practice. This section continues with a veritable jewel of a translation: the complete rDzogs-pa chen-po sems-nyid rang-grol, and its commentary. This is Dzogchen from the Dzogchen point of view. It is pure poetry, pure inspiration, a song of Longchen Rabjam's expression of total liberation. As Tulku Thondup Rinpoche says in his introduction, the utmost simplicity is also the hardest for us to understand in reality; but this beautiful teaching gives the essential flavour of Dzogchen.

After reading these chapters of this section, I wondered why Tulku Thondup Rinpoche seemed to go back to explaining the trainings and attainments of the five paths of Mahayana. Once more, his extraordinary, logical mind set out in a very practical way, how the trainings and attainments explained by the Buddha in the Sutras are accomplished more quickly by the skillful means of the Tantras, and how Dzogchen accomplishes the same result, in a non-gradual way, through Tregchod and the Four Visions of Todgal.

The last section, on the Result, explains the Budd-

ha bodies from the point of view of Sutra and Tantra, and what this means in practical terms in the development of the state of Dzogchen.

The book closes with an appendix by Khenpo Nuden, of Khathog Monastery, on Karma, which serves to remind the reader of the ever present relative level, which we are all constrained by our limitations to respect and work with.

All in all this book is extremely valuable to Western practitioners who wish to gain an understanding of Dzogchen and its relationship to Sutra and Tantra in the Buddhist Tradition. It makes available in the English language at least some very pertinent extracts from original texts, which are so hard to come by. As a practitioner, I found it a little frustrating not to have the texts translated in their entirety, because it would have been very helpful to know what the original text was setting out to achieve, and how. This is especially true of the Shingta Chenpo. Certainly, to give even background information to all the texts quoted would have made the book larger by volumes. Although Buddha Mind is not easy reading, and requires a great deal of concentration in order intellectually to understand the meaning of some of its sections, for students who have had some experience of actual practice it can be a great inspiration and an aid to understanding that practice. We, in the West, who have no command of Tibetan language, are very limited in our possibilities of studying original texts. The importance of having access to those texts cannot be underestimated. Tulku Thondup Rinpoche has given a great gift to Westerners interested in the Teaching in general, and the Dzogchen Teachings in particular, by making available extracts of the original works of the greatest of the Nyingma Dzogchen Philosopher Masters, the incomparable Kunkyen (Omniscient) Longchen Rabjam.

Des Barry

Announcements

Jack Ellison

is trying to collect a mailing list for the whole world

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Please send him your updated mailing-lists to the following address:

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Gianni De Jure

is donating 50% of the the selling price of his marvellous Statues of Buddhist Images to Merigar.

HOUSE FOR SALE

There is a beautiful house for sale situated about 30 kilometres from Merigar. It is in a tiny Italian village in hilly countryside about two and a half hours drive from Rome. The house is traditional Italian style made of stone with a large garden of flowers, fruit trees and vegetables. There is plenty of sun and also views over the surrounding countryside. Water, telephone and electricity are connected. There is central heating generated from the large wood cooking stove. Price is negotiable at 130,000 million lire or \$U.S. 110,000. Interested persons should contact Paola Agarossi by letter: c/o "The Mirror" Merigar P.O. BOX 47 58031 Arcidosso GR. Italy.

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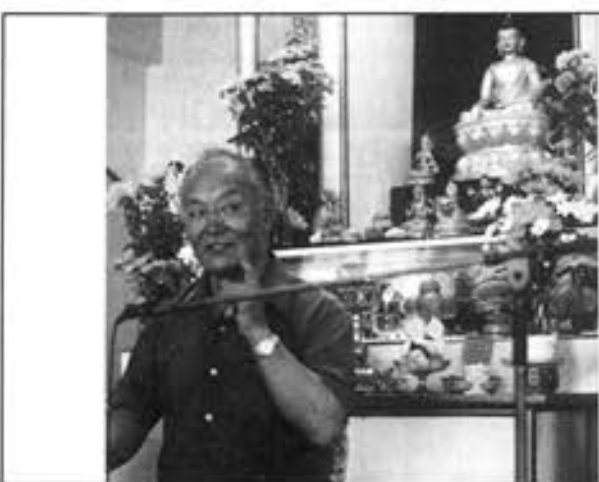
By Sue Fielding Melbourne Australia

As I find myself bracing against the cold of Melbourne's winter, Singapore and Malacca assume even more of the dream-like quality they already present in my life. But in my mind's eye I can still see the colour

and life of those cities, and remember the feeling of being amongst it all in the incredible heat. Thirteen Australians travelled north to meet Rinpoche for two retreats. With many last minute arrangements and changes to itineraries we all somehow managed to meet up on the first day of the teachings in Singapore. The Singapore Community hosted a six day retreat which was held in the conference room of a bowling alley near the centre of the city. Rinpoche had been to Singapore several times already and has committed students there.

It was wonderful to see Rinpoche again! He looked rested and well. This was a great relief after seeing him so tired in Australia. During the next six days, Rinpoche gave teachings and the transmission of practices of the Tun and of the Practices for Special Days, as well as the Chod

meals in the nearby hawkker food centres and resting or sightseeing between sessions. One afternoon Rinpoche spent several hours meeting with the Australian group and we had a swim together.



We talked about the search for retreat land and showed him folders of photos and information prepared by several members of the Community. The suggestion was made that we locate land close to a concentration of practitioners who would definitely utilise it, as well as put energy into its upkeep (we had previously been concentrating our search for land half-way between our two population centres). Now we need to raise the money. If we believe it can happen, it will.

The Singapore retreat ended with a colourful Ganapuja. Delicacies of all shapes, forms and flavours were passed out, and enjoyed. We now turned

house some distance from there. This was the first time that Rinpoche had visited Malacca to give teachings and it was an honour to experience such an auspicious event. Most retreatants were members

of the local Kagyu Centre. We did Yantra Yoga in between sessions, which was quite a challenge in the heat. Tan Yi Hui from Singapore taught us in a very clear and competent way. It was videoed for future practice.

Exploring Malacca was a delight. There, the energy was gentler and more spontaneous than in Singapore. Settlement by Dutch and Portuguese traders has added colour and life of its own to the city. The teaching format was much the same as in Singapore with more explanation of the basic principles of Dzogchen, and especially of integrating them into daily life.

It was all over too quickly, and we found ourselves bidding farewell to our precious Master and watching him disappear into the distance. The following day we bundled into taxis for a kamikaze style return journey to Singapore and our flights home. The morning light dawned on rolling hills and eucalypts, wide-open space, autumn sun and rain. And then like a dream we were home.

Sincere thanks to the communities who hosted Rinpoche and made the two retreats possible. I am very conscious of the benefit of having contact with the South East Asian Community. Being fortunate enough to travel and attend retreats with Rinpoche in different Dzogchen Communities around the world, I am aware of the absolute boundlessness of the transmission and teachings we are so fortunate to receive. Cultures vary, but there is one thing that we all have in common. Those of us whose paths lead us in this life to the Dzogchen lineage transmission of our practice and our precious Master Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche, share the opportunity, view, responsibility and the path to self-liberation.

E MA HO



and Garuda. He gave many precious teachings about integrating the practices into everyday life. He taught in English, which was translated into Mandarin. Apart from the Australians, there were only two other Westerners at the retreat. The group was comprised mainly of Chinese people with some Malayan and Indian people as well. There is a lot of Tibetan Buddhist practice in Singapore and many are members of the local Kagyu or Sakya centres. One day Rinpoche gave teachings at the Sakya centre.

Attending teachings in Singapore involved many things for us, daily jaunts on public transport or taxi,

our minds to reaching Malacca, a colourful and ancient city on the west coast of Malaysia. The journey was 5 & 1/2 hours by bus and took us through many villages and plantations of rubber, banana and coconuts. We were met at the bus depot by two of Rinpoche's students who kindly transported us to our hotel - The Lotus Inn, no less - which became home for the next 6 days. We were almost all together under one roof now, and it was great to have the opportunity to get to know each other.

Rinpoche arrived the following day and stayed at the Kagyu Centre. The retreat was held in an empty ware-

THE MIRROR
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July 1988

Rita Bizzotto

THREE DAYS IN THE TRIANGLE OF LIGHT



"Triangle of Light" is the name given by Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche to the tiny cave that overhangs Azamgar after having spent ten days there. You get there by means of a ladder made from a trunk of a tree, carved in the Tibetan fashion by the master himself.

Flaming sun, in the air the buzzing of thousands of insects and the echo of far flocks.

Carefully I climb the trunk carved by the master. I want to end my retreat up there.

Trying not to bend the pale snap-dragons, that grow on the rock.

I can hardly drag up my sleeping-bag, step after step.

Then there it is, the cave that dominates the valley, so tiny,

it leaves no doubt that that is the stone where the master has laid his head, integrating the stars.

With renewed energy I whisper mantras to the sun, Fluttering butterflies as companions.

In the night a voice that I hardly recognize matches the damaru.

Beats of the heart.

The orange dawn breaks and becomes golden in the damp morning, dispelling all fears.

Mantras carried by the wind, beats of wings and dartings in the blue.

Quick passing of time.

Slowly I go down.

With Joy in my heart

I pick flowers and strawberries for the Puja.

Rita Bizzotto



drawing by: Giuseppe Goia



Rita Bizzotto

Happy Birthday



Viola



Tinley

Our Congratulations and Best Wishes to Tinley and Viola and their families hoping for them the most fortunate life.

DON'T BE SHY!

My desire to write an article came to me upon reading Rinpoche's article on "Buddhism and Psychology" and from a discussion I had some time ago with Cesare Spada about the fear and difficulties some people have concerning writing for the MERIGAR LETTER, rather than the REVIEW or the new "MIRROR". In his article Rinpoche says that to be a true Dzogchen practitioner, one really must be courageous. As far as I am concerned, I have understood that this means assuming my responsibilities, expressing myself, and creating. It is not without mistakes. If it is possible to avoid it would be almost impossible. But the making of mistakes must not paralyse my potential. I am afraid of writing something for "The Mirror"? What could happen? At worst as often happens, people could criticise, or mock or they could praise or even find my article interesting; but in the end, what difference does it make? If I can receive a criticism that is justified then it can be useful for me, but if it isn't justified then why should it bother me? Why is it so important to defend oneself?

If I am really practising for my spiritual development; if I am part of the Community and want to collaborate with others on the path, to overcome my limits, to try to maintain the knowledge and transmission of the teaching, not only for myself but also for the future, in order to keep this precious gift alive in my heart, why should I let my ego be so powerful that it continuously limits me to my vision full of enemies?

Am I not together with others on the path to collaborate and communicate in the spirit and meaning of the teaching? On the other hand, is it not by having respect, a true and deep respect for the Teacher, the Teaching, the companions on the way and in general for all beings, that I can truly bring awareness into my daily life and try to overcome the many problems that surround me.

"The Mirror" can be very useful for the Community, an instrument that can be used by all to communicate with each other. It is up to us to create this opportunity. "Us" means "the community", the planet, the earth, not only Merigar, not just a group of people, but the whole community. The divisions we create, true or imagined, have absolutely no meaning and are very dangerous. Isn't it better to try to really communicate in some way or other together?

I hope this article of mine, if it is published, (in so much as I think the editors of "The Mirror" also have the responsibility, the right and the duty to not publish everything indiscriminately, but must create an order, respecting all, yet following their own method of working), does not appear to be telling you what to do and what not to do as if I were "parroting" the Master. As regards the teaching there is an extensive contribution from the Master in every issue of "The Mirror". Mine is a reflection on myself and on a few things that I do not entirely understand.

Fabio Andrico

A LETTER TO MY VAJRA BROTHERS AND SISTERS,
FROM VERENA SMITH OF TSEGYALGAR

When we bought our piece of earth in Buckland, Mass., none of us thought it might never be eligible for the necessary perc tests to be allowed to build on it. But by now we know; we own 165 acres of land and we will never be able to do more with it than maybe build a one/two family dwelling on it (of course we can sprout little cabins here and there - to preserve the land and its beauty and practically use it to do personal retreats and 'picnic - type' larger gatherings).

Over the last six months we have been holding our group practises in people's houses. At least one a week, rotating from house to house. It has been insightful, interesting and enjoyable.

Some months ago it came to our knowledge that some land was for sale very nearby, a 3 1/2 minute drive from the gates of our land - a 10 minute walk. The land consists of 8 lots - side by side - along a now quiet country road. The lots count 2 1/2 acres each approximately, they cost from 15.000 to 31.000 \$ each, depending on the beauty and dryness of the land etc. The area and all is beautiful and it is certainly understandable why someone might have a dream like this: if a number of people bought a piece of land, each or together or however - and hopefully the Tsegialgar Community could buy one of the lots, then we would really be thinking into the future. Next summer and the summers after would be easier - not resolved, but easier. We would start grouping ourselves around a centre point. If possible we would build a barn-type building on the community lot. Smaller retreats and community activities could take place there. Should our teacher choose to stay with us for a longer time throughout the years, he could legally reside there; should other Lamas follow our invitations, they could stay there. All together, in some peoples' mind, a wise move.

Back to reality: at the moment we do not have the money - we do not have enough members of the Tsegialgar Community to buy some of the other lots privately - even though some of us do have active wishes and dreams. Furthermore, for reality's sake, it must be said that the lots are perced, but it is still necessary to bring electricity and water to each lot and build leechfields, which may mean another 15.000 \$ per lot. Yet it is also a buyers' market; and the more people are actually interested the better our chances and the price are.

When I feel like I'm getting carried away by a dream, I like to restore my thoughts and feelings by attempting to relate them to the teachings; when I just sit and feel for the responds to the vision it feels connected to the sense of 'going somewhere together' and 'collaboration', I have a good feeling about Tsegialgar Village.

You can phone me - or write if you are interested in the lots for yourself - or if you want to offer some money to the Community - so we can buy one lot together.

Verena Smith 19 Cosby Ave. Amherst MA
01002 USA Tel. 413 - 549 - 2830

Note: The "perc" test = percolation test.



The son of Gianni De Jure would like to stay with an English speaking family for 1 year in order to improve his English in England or U.S.A.. He is willing to do any work to support himself

Guests of Merigar



The Rolfs Family - England



Laure - France

Wilvin and Marius - Norway

SCHEDULE FOR LAMA TENZIN WANGYAL

22 - 27 JULY:

Contact: Gordon and Marit Cranmer
4157 Utstein Closter Stavanger
NORWAY
Tel. 04/514705

27 - 30 JULY:

OSLO NORWAY
Contact: Professor Per Kvaerne
Tel: 02/504809

2 - 15 AUGUST:

HOUSTON TEXAS USA
Weekend teachings. Contact:
Prof. Ann Klein
Tel: 713/6690585

18 - 27 AUGUST:

GERMANY
Contact: Martha Heinen
Tel: 07727/497

9 - 14 SEPTEMBER:

Edicija Arijoga Jovanovic Zeljka
Zeleni Venac 1 11000 Belgrade
YUGOSLAVIA
Tel: 687/123



12,13,14 Oct. '90:

PADOVA
Contact Rita Bizzotto
Tel: 049/8801329

1-4 Nov. '90:

SARDEGNA
Contact: Giampiero Dessole
Tel: 079/273156

16-18 Nov. '90:

BARI
Contact Teresa Dentamaro
Tel: 080/451118

24-25 Nov. '90:

BOLOGNA
Contact Enzo Terzano
Tel: 051/503809

A SUMMER RETREAT IN FRANCE WITH
HIS HOLINESS
DILGO KHYENTSE RINPOCHE

Head of the Nyingma School of Tibetan Buddhism
One of the greatest living masters of Tibet
Dzogchen Teachings and Empowerments
H.H. Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche will make one of his very rare visits to the West this summer, when he will give teachings at Rigpa's International Summer Retreat in August in France.

Khyentse Rinpoche is universally revered as the greatest living master of Dzogchen and upholder of the 'Rimé' non-partisan spirit in the Buddhist tradition of Tibet. Born in 1910 and recognized as the mind emanation of Jamyang Khyentse the Great, he is a holder of all lineages, a discoverer of Terma teachings concealed by Guru Padmasambhava, and the teacher of many of the well-known masters of today. For further information please contact:

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22 rue Burg
75018 Paris
Tel. (1) 42 54 53 52

Germany
Rigpa
Forster Str. 37
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Tel. (030) 618 1801

Switzerland
Rigpa
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8059 Zurich
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Australia Rigpa
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THE MIRROR NEWS

THE INTERNATIONAL NEWSPAPER OF THE DZOGCHEN COMMUNITY
INSPIRED BY THE TEACHINGS OF AND UNDER THE SPIRITUAL GUIDANCE OF
NAMKHAI NORBU RINPOCHE



PRAYERS ON THE FLAGS

Om A Hum

A A Ha Sha Sa Ma

To the Three Roots, the Divinities of Long Life and of the Lungta!

We Beseech You to Put Your Promises into Action! Increase the Long-Life, Good Fortune and Power of the Buddha Tenzin Gyatso!

May all Illuminated Beings Gather Together Here! Om Dhare Dhare Bhandhare Svaha.

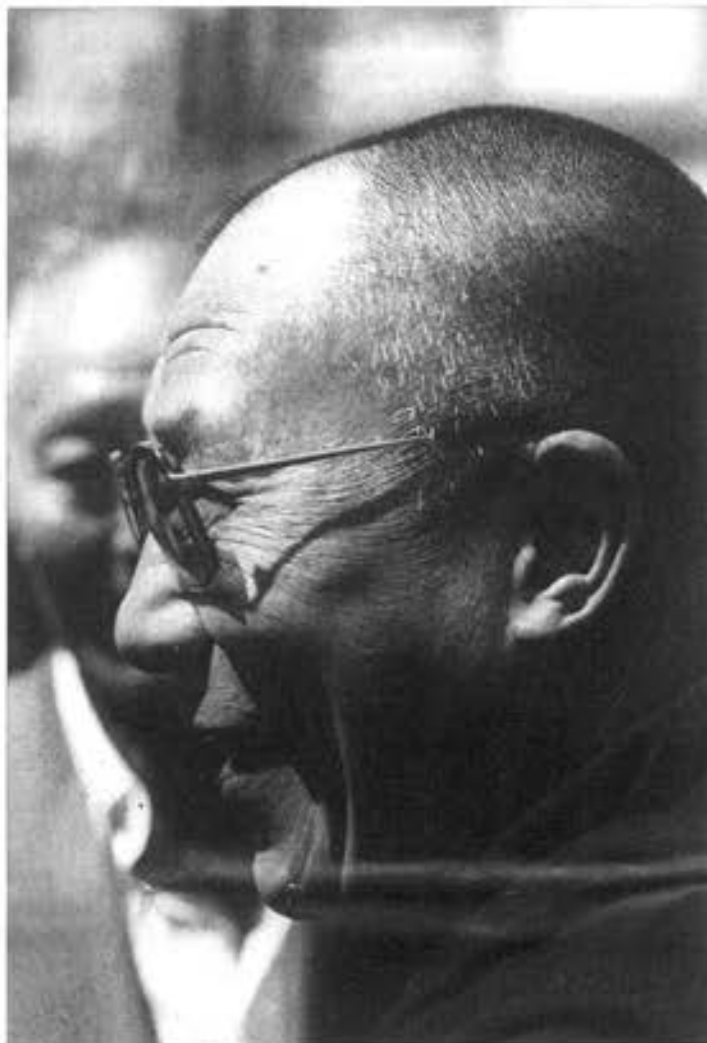


It's a jewel, a jewel in space; the Gonpa at Merigar. It sits on the hillside with its shining copper roof and intricate eight sided lantern top rising delicately from the centre. The copper lotus petals top the lantern looking down to the wooden lotus petals on the ceiling and the wooden inlaid lotus pattern in the centre of the floor. A sun, moon and star hang elegantly from the lightning rod on the top. The Gonpa sits quietly, softly sparkling in the sunshine. It merges with the hillside. When you look down from Monte Labro you can only just make out its presence nestling into the green. This precious jewel has a timeless presence, a quiet, still presence. It is the creation of our Master, Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche; architect Anna Fiori; engineer Giovanni Boni; and all the Dzogchen Community. On the 29th May His Holiness the Dalai Lama came to Merigar and he inaugurated and blessed the Gompas.

He drove up the road from the "Faggio Rosso" which was lined with prayer flags of the five colours. The large prayer flags were especially designed and written by Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche who wrote out the special messages on the prayer flags in Tibetan script. His Holiness drove under the prayer flags that were hung across the road and on the tall poles by the side of the road. These messages were written on the flags to be taken by the wind to all beings but in particular to His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

His Holiness then drove past the Sang Burners and the huge stones with the mantras written on them and down the circular road to the Gonpa past more flags of red, blue, white, yellow and green with their special welcoming messages. His Holiness then got out of His car and with Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche by His side He walked up the short slope into the Gonpa through the crowds of people who were there to welcome Him. He walked into the Merigar Gonpa that is overlooking the whole valley and open space. It seems as though it has always been there and always will be there.

The day His Holiness arrived the weather changed from still sunny days to cold, windy weather. People were cold but the prayer flags were flat to the wind like sails on an ocean of green, in the hills of Tuscany. It was as though their messages were written on the wind. Inside the Gonpa it was also a little cold but the ceremony to inaugurate the Gonpa and the Shang-Shung Institute went ahead with warmth in the hearts of the people. This day



was for invited guests and formal speeches. There were representatives from the Dzogchen Communities of many different countries throughout the world. Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche spoke about the need to preserve Tibetan culture and the Dzogchen Teachings; the Mayor of Arcidosso also spoke as did Professor Gherardo Gnoli. Finally His Holiness the Dalai Lama made His speech of inauguration and after he finished speaking He moved from His chair to a cushion on the dais and began to chant. Quietly and beautifully He inaugurated the Shang-Shung Institute and the Merigar Gonpa with His robes tucked lightly around Him to keep out the cold.

The next day His Holiness gave a Teaching in the new Merigar Gonpa. Upon my soul, how wonderful was the occasion of this teaching by His Holiness. For the first half an hour His Holiness and a small group of monks performed a purification ceremony while the people moved into the Gonpa and sat together on the floor. His Holiness taught in Tibetan with official translation into Italian and also English. He taught about the different schools and traditions in Buddhism and then about Dzogchen. Following this His Holiness gave a special initiation into the Dzogchen Teachings. He gave a special initiation to

everybody using a crystal and a white card. As he could not physically give the initiation of body, speech and mind to all the people present in the traditional manner, he gave the initiation, with the card, touching the forehead, throat and heart of Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche, Geshe Tenzin Wangyal and other monks seated close to him as a symbol of what we all received.

So quickly and it was over and he walked through the crowd of people and out through the front door of the Merigar Gonpa. Slowly the white car pulled away curving up the hill through the prayer flags. People were quiet, silently watching as they realised that the Dalai Lama had left Merigar.

But many people went to the sports-ground in Arcidosso later that afternoon to farewell His Holiness who left by helicopter for Bologna. We sat in the grandstand and watched while His Holiness entered the helicopter on a red carpet. The photographers continued to follow him until the very last minute in their attempts to grasp the moment and hold it still in time forever. But they also had to leave.

The blades of the helicopter began to turn. They went faster and faster like a mantra turning.

The power of the engines increased until the whole

Om A Hum

A A Ha Sha Sa Ma

To the Three Roots, Protectors of the Teachings, and Divinities of the Lungta!

We Beseech You to Put Your Promises into Action! May the Precious Culture of Tibet and of Shang-Shung be Spread in All Directions and Throughout All Time!

Ki So Cha, May the Divinities be Victorious!

May all Illuminated Beings Gather Together Here! Om Dhare Dhare Bhandhare Svaha



powerful machine was humming.

The lights began to flash and the noise became overwhelming. It was hard to believe that this gentle man was inside this powerful machine.

But the power of the Dalai Lama is as strong as it is soft, open and gentle; so much so that it can delight a crowd and capture the hearts not only of the Dzog-

chen Community but also of the whole Community of Arcidosso.

Tears came to our eyes as the helicopter rose into the air and he was gone. I will never forget that He took my hand. He saw me and reached right over through the crowd of photographers and took my hand. He is Avalokitesvara, the Buddha of Compassion.

Jean Mackintosh

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