



THE MIRROR

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The Vajra Family Gathers at Namgyalgar

Easter Retreat, April 1997

by Eleanor Loudon



Sang offering at Namgyalgar

P. VALENCICH

The lights are on. Someone is home. Walking the track between eucalypti and makeshift tent dwellings, a warm glow spreads from the house above, tucked into the bush.

The Easter retreat at Namgyalgar begins. The family gathers. On the mountainside Rinpoche, Rosa, Yuchen and Yeshe move into the house and spontaneously the house becomes home. Across the saddle and through the forest Vajra kin arrive from near and far. Many recognized faces, many new with wide-eyed curiosity. All settling in. All becoming familiar. A sense of opening and the happy sound of friendly conversation pervades.

During the teachings of the first night Rinpoche reminds us that although this would be a relatively long retreat of nine days, tomorrow we would have done two sessions, and before we knew it, the time will have come to a close. Needless to say, he was right.

The retreat which was to follow was uncanny in its timeless nature and as is often the case with retreat, it was a journey of myriad dimensions.

The days unfolded flawlessly in our temporary Namgyalgar home. The sky was our only TV and it never ceased to be captivating. From the coral tree, prayer flags waved good morning to the sun as shyly she exposed her colorful waking face. Streaks of gold and apricot heralded her arrival from behind a watery horizon, illuminating the crescent moon on his way behind the mountain. The sky assumed a shade of deep blue to see the day through.

Inside the Gonpa the dancers began to dance out the Three Vajras with Prima Mai, arms spreading lights reminiscent of the earlier solar display. Mandalas were full and people waited patiently around the

outskirts, going through the movements. Around the Gonpa people would mill and gather anticipating the mornings teachings.

Throughout the retreat Rinpoche taught on the practice of Vajrapani and the Longde Series. It had been a year since he had last taught at Namgyalgar and even the glorified memory in my hazy mind did him little justice. As soon as he began to speak, a floodgate released and a feeling of relief swept through me, and I sat besotted. In the mornings he gave transmission and explanation of the practice. Rinpoche explained in detail the history of these practices tracing them from the origins of the lineage and then bringing us up to the very moment as we sat receiving the transmission now. He spoke of the benefits of the practice, giving us detailed instruction on the various aspects of Vajrapani and then the Longde practices. In the afternoon, he kindly returned to lead us through these practices.

Rarely was it mentioned that we were presently in this most extraordinary situation, although everything was taking on a new light. Eyes were gleaming, but it felt to articulate such a delicate experience would be like breaking a spell.

In the afternoon, under the watchful eye of Fabio, Jeannie courageously taught beginners Yantra Yoga followed later in the evening with a class of more experienced students. Fabio helped us brush up on our drumming for the Chod and for the Ganapuja. Tsewang gave us much needed instruction on correct pronunciation. Elisse answered questions and gave detailed explanations of a number of practices to beginners. All of this was interspersed with Santi Maha Sangha study groups, culminating in an intensive session by lamplight

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View of Senghe Namdak

A. DELL'ANGELO

ASIA: Sponsorship Project

by the ASIA Working Committee

The ASIA Activities Report, which began in The Mirror issue #39, documents the development project. We continue here.

S PONSORSHIP PROJECT There have been two ASIA missions to the Tibetan Children's Village of Dharamsala, one at the end of August and another at the end of October. In August we brought a show called "Go Go and the statue in the land of the future" which was offered both to the children of the TCV in Dharamsala and those of the TCV of Bir-Suja. This story was about three characters (a clown, a statue and the narrator) who in various stages and overcoming many hardships reach the land of the future in which only children live busy studying and chanting. Nobody had ever brought them a show and the spectators were more than 3000; 600 at the first show, all between 3 and 6 years of age.

In the month of October there were festivities in the village for the 36th anniversary of its founding: representatives from all the villages met on the sports grounds where in the presence of the Prime Minister of Himachel Pradesh there were processions, sports games, dances, concerts and competitions in individual creativity. It was very moving to see in each of the boys and girls on the stage the deep awareness and pride for the experiment being made in these villages: from the time of the exile and through all the traumas and pain of separation there is always the quest for a better world.

It is very important to understand that in the Tibetan Children's Villages as well as in the school of Bir and in the monasteries of Sherab Ling and Kathmandu sponsorship from a distance is the only way to safeguard Tibetan culture. This system is a minimal instrument, very

flexible and effective both for the one who gives and the one who receives. Sponsorship from a distance means entering a real relationship, simple and intimate with a child who thanks to us will become a representative of that culture which we love so much. Our hope for the future is that the stable and solid nucleus on which to build up sponsorship from a distance of Tibetan child refugees in India and Nepal and of those resident in Tibet will be composed of the Dzogchen Community. Only in this way can sponsorship from a distance become a real cultural initiative, whose potentialities can be fully developed instead of being limited to an individual act of generosity. The expense is minimal and the contribution very big. ASIA takes care of all the technical and administrative work in order to give to the sponsor the possibility of a free and rich relationship with their child. We believe that everyone should know this and I hope that everyone will want to know more about this.

Our projects in the field of sponsorship from a distance are: The Tibetan Children's Village of Dharamsala At the end of 1996 ASIA initiated the sponsorship of 178 children.

THE TRITAN NORBUTSE MONASTERY In May we defined all the procedures for an optimal management of the project with the monastery directed by the Venerable Lopön Tenzin Namdak. In July we received confirmation about our request of sponsorship for 10 monks and in December we began sponsorship of 9 monks. Notwithstanding his numerous engagements abroad and within the monastery, the master Lopön Tenzin Namdak has decided to correspond with us personally about this. This is a decision which honors us very much and allows us to make choices in the management

of the projects in harmony with the rules of the monastery. Lopön Tenzin Namdak let us know that he has given orders to build guest rooms which will be ready in a short time. All the sponsors will be able to use these rooms and Lopön Tenzin Namdak will be very happy to receive them personally. ASIA is trying to raise funds to buy some

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SPECIAL FEATURE:

Easter Retreat in Merigar with Lopön Tenzin Namdak Rinpoche

by Jakob Winkler

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Today I would like to introduce Dzogchen Longde practice, followed by empowerment and instruction. Today it is better that we learn a little about what the characteristic of this teaching is, and how it developed. Dzogchen Longde was transmitted by Garab Dorje. Originally the Dzogchen Longde root text is called the *klong chen rab 'byams rgyal po'i rgyud*, the Tantra of *klong chen rab 'byams*, which means Universe. There are also two very important tantras called *nam mkha'i mtha' dang nnyam pa'i rgyud*, the Tantra of Space. These are root tantras of Dzogchen Longde which were transmitted originally by the teacher Ngondzong Gyalpo (*mngon rdzogs rgyal po*). Ngondzong Gyalpo is a Nirmanakaya manifestation. This Nirmanakaya manifestation existed some 5000 years before Buddha Shakyamuni. It's a very, very ancient teaching. These teachings did not exist in the time of Buddha Shakyamuni. The only thing that remained were a few oral teachings.

You know the meaning of nyengyud (*nyen rgyud*); it means only a few words. There are many teachings called oral teachings, particularly in the modern Bönpo tradition. Some Lamas and practitioners have visions of teachers and then they receive teachings from the visions, and that is called nyengyud. In the Nyingmapa traditions, or other traditions, this kind of teaching is called *dag snang*, pure vision. The Bönpos called it nyengyud. And in many Buddhist traditions the nyengyud was considered something very secret and important, not to be diffused for all people. It was to be taught in a limited way. There may be a text and everything, but the method of teaching is very secret and limited. These are given the title of nyengyud. Therefore today we have a little confusion; when we say nyengyud we don't really understand the meaning.

In the Dzogchen teaching when we say nyengyud there is a very precise sense. In ancient times not only Ngondzong Gyalpo (one of the last of twelve teachers) taught, but before Ngondzong Gyalpo there had been many, many teachers teaching different teachings and different tantras. These teachers lived in very ancient times and did not only live in the human dimension. Then slowly, slowly the teaching disappeared because times changed. That is the circumstance. Many had also lived and transmitted in the human dimension. After Ngondzong Gyalpo there was only Buddha Shakyamuni.

There have been many, many changes in the world. After thousands and thousands of years everything has changed and all the teachings disappeared. Even though most of the teachings disappeared, some kinds of the nyengyud remained. For example, in the tantra of Manjushri there is a word called *ye shes mig gcig dri ma ded*. We use this word in the symbol of Shang Shung Editions. I chose this letter. But in a real sense, this is one of the nyengyud originally. Even though there is no book, even though it has disappeared, the tantra of Manjushri is the kind of nyengyud people can have in memory. Particularly practi-

tioners. So some practitioners kept these concise teachings in memory during circumstances when it was not so easy to speak the teachings or give transmissions or explanations. It couldn't be done. Some people secretly knew something like a key. The nyengyud is some words like *ye shes mig gcig dri ma med*, *ye shes* means wisdom, *mig* means

It was the same way also in the time of Garab Dorje. There were many of these nyengyuds. We use these nyengyuds still today, particularly when we transmit Dzogchen Semde. The people who have done Santi Maha Sangha training know this already. They have received this transmission of nyengyud, so they know. We still have many

not so long. It's a short tantra, but considered one of the most important. Dorje sempa, you know, means Vajrasattva, which means our primordial state, and vajra means our real condition. *Nam mkha' che* means total space. Total Space of Vajra. That is the total integration of the universe, everything, everybody in their real self perfected state. So

and one of the most important pandits of that time at Nalanda, Manjushrimitra, and one called Rajahasti, etc., a group of these pandits travelled together to Oddiyana, a long way from Nalanda and arrived in Oddiyana to meet Garab Dorje. When they met him, they started to argue with Garab Dorje in a philosophical debate style. Garab Dorje replied with only a few words, and Manjushrimitra, who had a very good connection maybe from a previous life, understood immediately what the teachings of Garab Dorje meant and really woke up. Immediately he became a student instead of discussing and he became the leader of the group. Then all of the scholars and pundits in the group became students of Garab Dorje. They didn't return to Nalanda and spent a long time in Oddiyana. Garab Dorje's first teachings started with Manjushrimitra and this group. Then Manjushrimitra, from that time on, became one of the most important students of Garab Dorje.

Manjushrimitra was very upset and regretted his bad intention. He felt badly for thinking there was something wrong with Garab Dorje and for coming only to argue with Garab Dorje. Manjushrimitra wanted to know how to purify all this bad action he had accumulated. He felt sorry. Garab Dorje told him not to worry and that he was one of the best pandits, particularly in the Yogachara school, in that period, so Garab Dorje told him to write a book for explaining Dzogchen through the language of Yogachara. Garab Dorje asked him to communicate the Dzogchen principle and knowledge through Buddhist philosophy. Manjushrimitra purified his bad intentions and actions by writing a book called *rdzola gser zhun*. It is considered very important, something like a tantra. When we are learning Dzogchen Semde we consider it one of the most important books. If you read and study, it is not so easy to understand because it is written in very philosophical Yogachara language. But it's a nice book and it is translated into English by Kennard Lipman. I collaborated with him on this book. In any case, this is a very important book. So, this is the history of Manjushrimitra.

Then Manjushrimitra spent all his life following Dzogchen teachings and receiving all the teachings of Garab Dorje. Garab Dorje's manifestation was something like a Nirmanakaya manifestation, not an ordinary scholar. Garab Dorje repeated and taught all tantras, all the tantras that existed in the ancient times but had disappeared from the earth. And mainly Manjushrimitra and other students wrote down the tantras and that is why we have all these tantras. But it doesn't mean we have all the tantras. Many of the tantras which we have are not the original books, so we have what is called the lung. Lung means some chapters of the main points of the tantras. Some were mainly introduced by Garab Dorje, and later by Manjushrimitra and Jnanasutra, also Shri Singha, etc., who also introduced. That means they were realized beings in the state beyond time. They can go beyond time and distance. They can have contact with the rigzins, the realized beings

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Dzogchen Longde Tantra of Space

Teaching in Namgyalgar, Australia

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu



E. YONEDA

eye, *mig gcig* means unique eye, which means altogether that the unique eye of wisdom is pure. That means that the unique eye of wisdom is our consciousness, the nature of mind, our potentiality. Then we can go more deeply. If some people are interested they talk secretly, and the teacher can give something like a key: "You remember these words *ye shes mig gcig dri ma med*, these words are something like a key, their meaning is like this. There is also something to do like a practice, or integrating, etc." These kinds of teachings that remained are called nyengyud.

In the time of Garab Dorje there were many, many nyengyud. Nyengyud that was not taught by Buddha Shakyamuni, but very, very ancient nyengyud, for example, in the Dzogchen teaching in the Bönpo. When I say in the Bön there exists Dzogchen teachings most Buddhists are very upset. They criticize me. "Oh, you are saying that Dzogchen origin is Bön because Bön is earlier than Buddhism." It doesn't mean that in the Bön only nyengyud exists. That is not how they present Dzogchen today. Today they present all Dzogchen Semde, Longde and Upadesha, not only Dzogchen, but also tantra, prajnaparamita, everything. That is modern Bönpo, not authentic Bönpo. In authentic Bönpo there is a nyengyud called *zhang zhung nyengyud*. There are twelve specific nyengyuds; verses that communicate the base, path and fruit, all *tawa, gonpa, chodpa*; point of view, meditation, application, attitude, and how one must apply. There are always these kind of nyengyud, so people can learn.

nyengyud, but not the original books. They have disappeared. When we are speaking of the history of Dzogchen, we say there are thirteen solar system-like dimensions called *thalwas*. And in the thirteen *thalwas* there are Dzogchen teachings, Dzogchen tantras, Dzogchen *rigzins*, realized beings, etc., in the universe, not only on the earth. We are saying that there are a quantity of Dzogchen tantras that exist. We are saying that, but we don't have all these tantras on the earth. We have maybe sixty or seventy main tantras of Dzogchen, but not only that, some thousands of original Dzogchen tantras exist in different dimensions in the universe. In the time of Garab Dorje Dzogchen teachings had disappeared and the only thing that remained was this kind of nyengyud.

Garab Dorje is considered a manifestation of Buddha Shakyamuni because Buddha Shakyamuni gave some indications that in the future there would be a teacher who teaches a teaching that is beyond cause and effect, etc., and that indicates Garab Dorje. Particularly in many tantras of Dzogchen it indicates that Garab Dorje is an emanation of Vajrasattva, or of Vajrapani. For that reason Garab Dorje is not an ordinary person, a child who followed a teacher and then did meditation and became enlightened. It's not like that. Garab Dorje, when he was 5 or 6 years old, still hadn't changed his teeth, and was always chanting a Dzogchen tantra called *rdzola gser dpa' nam mkha' che*, one of the most important in the Dzogchen Semde, a root of the Dzogchen Semde. It is

this is the title of this tantra.

So, this small child Garab Dorje is chanting this tantra. We understand this is not an ordinary child. Then later, when Garab Dorje was seven years old, he told his mother that he wanted to discuss with Buddhist teachers, the royal teachers of the King of Oddiyana. His mother told him it wasn't possible. "Still you haven't changed your teeth, you are very young, it is impossible for you to argue with all these teachers", she said. Many teachers were surprised and curious and were listening when Garab Dorje chanted this tantra. They were surprised and some were upset, because this tantra is not speaking of the gradual path, and cause and effect, etc. It's explaining beyond cause and effect and explaining the real nature, etc. Then the people worried that it could be a very dangerous teaching, contrary to the way of Buddhism, because the Buddha taught in a gradual way about cause and effect, karma, receiving vows and following them, controlling our existence. All of this is different from the principle of Dzogchen.

So they were worried and talking and discussing. And the fame of this small child, Garab Dorje, spread to India. In that period there was a very famous university called Nalanda University where there were many, many pandits and learned people. They received this news and they were worried. Here is this small child, something already very abnormal, chanting this tantra, and the meaning is beyond cause and effect and they say "We must check and control this small child, otherwise it can be very dangerous!". Then they talked with each other

Looking Forward Without Ever Looking Back

Liz Granger, Andy Lukianowicz, and Giuseppe Baroetto

An Interview with Lopön Tenzin Namdak

Born in 1926 in Kham in Eastern Tibet, Lopön Tenzin Namdak is the principal master of the Bön tradition today. With the exodus from Tibet he founded the Tibetan Bönpo Foundation, a settlement and monastery at Dolanji in Himachal Pradesh to preserve the Bönpo culture and traditions for the future. Recently another Bönpo monastery and college has been established under the Lopön's guidance in Nepal near Swayambhu, Kathmandu. Author of *The Nine Ways of Bön* in collaboration with Prof. Snellgrove and the recently published *Heartdrops of Dharmakaya*, Lopön Rinpoche has taught in Europe and the US several times and represented the Bön tradition at the Kalachakra Initiation given by the Dalai Lama in New York.

The Mirror: Could you say something about the general characteristics of Bön and the characteristics that distinguish it from the Buddhist tradition?

Lopön Tenzin Namdak: Well, first of all I've already said before that Bön is the original Tibetan culture. In very early times there was shamanism or primitive religion which was called Bön. The second tradition is Yungdrung Bön which goes under the name of Bön too. The third stage is also called Bön but it is mixed with the Buddhism which came to Tibet. When Buddhism came to Tibet some people were trained in both the Bön and the Buddhist traditions and they composed texts. These were not



GIORGIO DALL'ORTO

taught in a widespread way at the time but later, in the 14th century and after, they were spread and have been widely followed until now, and that is called the new Bön. So there are these three kinds of Bön.

They are quite distinct and you cannot mistake one from the other, yet there are many things in common between Bön and Buddhism and there has been a lot of integration between them because they developed in one country, with the same language and culture. In the early times there was some sectarianism but not so many people were sectarian and they would practice whatever was convenient for them. So there are differences and in some cases they can be clearly distinguished but in other cases it's not so easy to distinguish them. So it's not so easy to say what the distinguishing characteristics are because certainly Bönpo culture is integrated with Tibetan culture in general.

The Mirror: Is it possible in Bön to practice Dzogchen without

practising sutra and tantra?

Lopön Tenzin Namdak: Basically you cannot do without common practices such as taking the refuge and bodhicitta vows. It is impossible to practice without these because whether you practice in a way that is visible externally or do rituals, your practice has to be based on the refuge vows because if you don't trust Buddha, if you don't believe in Buddha, then even Dzogchen cannot work because you haven't integrated with Dzogchen right from the beginning. The Dzogchen teaching comes from the Buddha and sometimes in Dzogchen there is no overt visible use of rituals or making offerings or taking vows or reciting texts or so on, that's not necessary in Dzogchen. Why? Because in early times people practiced in very simple ways without all these more visible practices.

The Mirror: I remember you once said that according to a Chinese survey in Tibet that the biggest group were the Geluggas and the second biggest group were the Nyingmapas and the Bönpos.

Lopön Tenzin Namdak: Yes, this was a calculation by the Chinese. In early times we don't know how many Bönpo or Nyingmapa followers there were. But the Chinese have calculated that among the Tibetan population there are two groups: practitioners and non-practitioners. Within the group of believers in the Dharma or practitioners, the majority of these are Gelugga. But the second biggest group are Nyingma and Bönpo. This is mainly because they are based in the far east of the country. And there are more or less similar numbers of Bönpo and Nyingma. The third biggest group are the Kagyupa and the Sakyapa are the smallest group. It may be true because there were not many Sakyapas who went to the far east as far as I know.

The Mirror: Could you say something about the projects and work you are doing in your monastery in Nepal?

Lopön Tenzin Namdak: Well, it's very kind of you to ask me about my work. First of all my program is to try to preserve our own culture which includes Bön because it is the indigenous Tibetan culture. For this reason I tried for many years to set up a settlement in Himachal Pradesh in north India where I organized a settlement for the people, a handicraft center, a simple medical center and a monastery. This monastery was not founded for us to live in luxury, having many cars or huge buildings and elegant decorations. But in fact among all the Tibetan refugees, our situation was the poorest of all. The main thing that we focused our intention on was to preserve our own culture, which is related with Tibetan culture and to preserve the tradition I set up an education center and a dialectics school so that

RETREATS WITH
NAMKHAI NORBU RINPOCHE

Beijing, China

JUNE 12-14, 1997

The retreat will be held about 80km from Beijing. In this area there are different categories of hotels and prices. The monastery there will offer food for one day of the retreat. On the other days participants will have to pay for their food. The location is:

Wan fu si
Yu shi zhuang
Panshan, Ji xian
Tianjing 301915, China.
Tel/fax: 0086-22-9141190
Contact person: Mr. Han Zhen

New Delhi, India

NOVEMBER 7-9, 1997

A three day retreat on Dzogchen meditation will be organized by Tibet House. Apart from teachings on Dzogchen meditation there will also be courses on Yantra Yoga and Vajra Dance. Further information from:

TIBET HOUSE
THE CULTURAL CENTRE OF H.H. THE DALAI LAMA
1 Institutional Area
Lodhi Road, New Delhi
110003 India.
Tel. 091 11 4611515, Fax 091 11 4625536.
E-mail: tibet-house@tibet.net

through them all the general knowledge about Tibet could be taught.

Then later on I saw that Dolanji was only surrounded by Indian peasants and there was no possibility for us for the future. The older Tibetan refugees were passing away and when their children grew up and finished school they had to look for a job. They had to go to town to do this because there was no possibility in our Tibetan village for them to get any work. In this way the village would have emptied and it would have been impossible to preserve anything there for the future. So I thought it would be better to move to Nepal.

Why is it better in Nepal than in India? The reason is that at Bodha and in the Mustang and Dolpo areas for many centuries the local populations have preserved their own culture and religion, right up to our own time. They have had many difficulties because they were living a very poor life; wherever there are Bönpos they are always very poor although they keep their own culture and beliefs quite strongly. I thought that if I could set up a center in Nepal with a monastery, maybe these people would come because we didn't know what the situation in the future of Tibet would be. I hoped that these people would hand on their culture to the future. In fact half of the monks we have there are from these populations and half of the people gathered there, children and adults, are Nepalese from these local populations. I think that this is the only solution we have for preserving our culture for the future. That's why I moved there.

But we've also had a lot of difficulties there for living conditions and for food. For example every day I have to feed all of these sixty monks without any income I can rely on. I don't know where tomorrow's money will come from. When this month's money is finished I don't know where the next month's income will come from. All I can do is look forward

without ever looking back and just continue in this way. So it's very kind of The Mirror to inform people from time to time about my situation in Dolanji and in India so that they can help. Our organization is very poor because we didn't expect so many people to come. We have to provide for them and look after them. Also those who came to us from Tibet are still arriving. They are not able to bring anything with them. If, when they started their journey they had something, they get stopped at the border, they have to pay money there, and they lose so many things. Some of them even lose their lives on the journey. So when they do arrive, we can't turn them away. We just have to accept them. They are the same people as us, the same religion and many people have relatives among us.

At Dolanji we carry on the tradition of handing on the culture and tradition of my monastery in Tibet, Menri monastery, founded in the 14th century. And there continuously since that time the teachings have been handed down within the education system. Five main subjects were studied as well as the five sciences.

The whole program took nine years and it was very hard to complete it within that time. I have also started up the same structure in Nepal. Besides that we have eleven monks and then there are students. That is my work.

The Mirror: When you were teaching you mentioned your connection with Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche through your beliefs and your friendship, but also through his master Chang Chub Dorje. Would you say something about that connection?

Lopön Tenzin Namdak: Well, I myself don't know much about how this connection is but both Norbu Rinpoche and his pupils have said that Chang Chub Dorje was connected with Shardza Tashi Gyaltsen, a Bönpo master, who was also a master of our own Dzogchen

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Dzogchen Longde

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of other dimensions. They can also be in other dimensions. For being in another dimension, we must have such realization. Concrete realization can be beyond time and distance. Then there is possibility. So this kind of realized being can introduce some chapters of tantras.

They couldn't introduce all in complete form, they memorized or, I don't know how they did it, but they somehow presented some essentials of these tantras, some chapters, for example. So these are called lungs.

Part II in the next issue of The Mirror, June/July, #41.
Transcribed and edited by Naomi Zeitz

NAMKHAI NORBU RINPOCHE'S SCHEDULE UNTIL JANUARY 1998

June 3rd to 5th:	Conference on Tibetan Ancient Culture and History	August 25th:	Leaves for Lhasa
June 12th-14th:	Dzogchen Retreat near Beijing	Sept. 5th:	Leaves for Raling visit
June 17th:	Leaves for Chinghai	Sept. 8th:	Leaves for Nepal
June 19th:	Conference on Tibetology in the Western world at Chinghai University, Shining, China.	Sept. 19th-21st:	Kathmandu-weekend Teaching
June 20th:	Visit Kokonor	Sept. 26th:	Leaves for India to visit many places
June 21st:	Leaving for Danche, Khrika	Nov. 3rd:	Leaves for New Delhi
June 23rd:	Inauguration of the new school built by ASIA in Danche	Nov. 7th-9th:	Weekend Teaching in New Delhi organized by Tibet House
June 26th:	Leaves for Chentu, Sechen, China.	Nov. 10th:	Leaves for Goa or Kerala for resting
July 7th:	Leaves for Galendeng, East Tibet	Dec. 4th:	Leaves for New Delhi
August 7th:	Leaves for Jomdazong (where the hospital is being built)	Dec. 8th:	Leaves for Singapore
		Dec. 12th-14th:	Weekend Teaching in Singapore
		Dec. 15th:	Leaves for Sydney
		Dec. 19th-21st:	Weekend Teaching in Sydney
		Dec. 22nd:	Leaves for Namgyalgar
		Dec. 26th-Jan. 1:	Namgyalgar Retreat

Ven. Lobsang Gyatso, Principal of the Institute of Buddhist Dialectics in Dharamsala, India, passed away in the evening of February 4th, 1997 at his residence in Dharamsala. He was killed along with two of his students while they were working on a manuscript in Chinese of a teaching on the Heart Sutra. Police from both the State government of Himachal Pradesh and the central government of India are still trying to track down their killers. On February 15th the Institute of Buddhist Dialectics organized a commemorative prayer service for them in McLeod Ganj which was attended by thousands of people including monks, nuns, lay people and former students of the Master.

The late Ven. Lobsang Gyatso was born in 1928 in Kham province and joined Loseling College of Drepung Monastic University in Lhasa at the age of seventeen. In 1959 he followed the Dalai Lama into exile in India and, sensing the importance of educating Tibetan refugee children for the future of Tibet, joined the first Teacher Training Course at Kangra. After this he served as the Tibetan lan-

guage teacher, house master and religious instructor for the Central Schools for Tibetans Organization at Mussoorie.

In 1979 when His Holiness the Dalai Lama visited Mussoorie, Lobsang Gyatso expressed to His Holiness his desire to renounce everything and go into retreat for the rest of his life. His Holiness requested him to continue his work in the field of education as that would bring more benefit. Accordingly, he gave up all his personal dreams and continued to work in education until the final moment of his life.

At the second general Tibetan teachers' conference held in Dharamsala and chaired by the Dalai Lama, Lobsang Gyatso brought to the attention of His Holiness the strong desire of many of the senior monk students in the Mussoorie school to go on to study Buddhist philosophy and dialectics in depth. Accordingly in 1973 His Holiness founded the Institute of Buddhist Dialectics and instructed Ven. Lobsang Gyatso to come to Dharamsala and take charge of the new school both as its principal and

The Late Venerable Lobsang Gyatso



as philosophy teacher.

In the next twenty-four years, he worked tirelessly, caring for both the spiritual and physical needs of his students: he taught, administered the school and even joined his students in doing ordinary manual work.

The main focus of the Institute has always been the study of Buddhist philosophy in the thorough traditional way, but not in isolation. A distinguishing feature of the curriculum is the inclusion of Tibetan grammar, poetry and other more modern subjects. His Holiness

made the Institute a non-sectarian one with a student body drawn from all four schools of Tibetan Buddhism. Places have always been reserved in every class for students from the Indian Buddhist Himalayan regions and many students have also come from much further afield, Mongolia, Japan, North America, Europe and Australia for instance. Altogether the number of students who have already graduated or who are currently studying at the Institute comes to over five hundred.

From 1986 onwards when large numbers of Tibetans started to arrive in India Ven. Lobsang Gyatso organized Tibetan and English language classes for newcomers for whom there was no place in the schools and in the 1990s the Institute of Buddhist Dialectics organized three two year Teacher Training Courses which enabled 90 students to receive degrees thus greatly reducing the difficulty of not getting enough qualified teachers for the Tibetan schools in India.

Over the years Lobsang Gyatso visited many countries around the world both in an official capacity

as the representative of the Tibetan government and to teach at the invitation of various religious groups. In 1992 he participated in the Second International Seminar on Tibetan Language organized by Prof. Namkhai Norbu and the Shang Shung International Institute for Tibetan Studies held at Merigar and in the same year *The Mirror* published his paper, *Beyond mere learning and intellectual qualifications*.

In the little free time he had, he wrote poems, critiques, analyses, children's short stories, commentaries and even songs. He wrote on Buddhist metaphysical subjects, Tibetan literature, in total around forty different titles.

He was a staunch supporter of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and never hesitated to challenge or criticize anybody if they opposed His Holiness' advice for the good of Tibet and the Tibetan people. His sudden death has caused shock and grief to all those who knew him in India and around the world. He will be remembered as an eminent educationist, a tireless social worker and for his altruism and devotion to His Holiness. ■

Allen Ginsberg 1926-1997



Within days of the official news that he had terminal liver cancer Allen Ginsberg unexpectedly died on April 5, 1997 at his apartment in Manhattan amid friends and dharma practitioners. At the time of his diagnosis, it was believed that he had at least several weeks, if not longer, to live. But the day before his death, on the 10th anniversary of his root Guru, Chogyam Trungpa Rinpoche's death, Allen entered a coma. At 2:30 AM on Friday, he briefly opened his eyes, slowly looked around his room and then died.

For several hours, his friend and spiritual advisor, Gelek Rinpoche did the sadhanas of Yamantaka, Chakrasamvara, Vajrayogini, and Mahamudra—Allen's principal practices. Rinpoche ascertained that the dissolving of the outer and inner elements occurred smoothly without impediment with Allen able to remain in samadhi for about 22 hours after his outer breath ceased. Around midnight on Saturday, April 6, his body was transported to New York's Shambhala Center where further ceremonies were conducted by members of the Jewel Heart and Shambhala sanghas with whom Allen had been affiliated. An intimate memorial service for family,

friends, and practitioners was held around his casket draped with the Shambhala flag on the morning of Monday, April 8, 1997 before its removal for cremation.

By Saturday April 6, throughout the world news of Allen's death reached millions of people whose life had been touched by his presence. Media coverage was extensive which is how most people came to hear of his death. Among the many friends who knew him intimately his kindness was legendary and deeply appreciated. Meeting him for the first time people were often struck by his humble life style, polite manner, and gentle inquisitiveness. He could also be quite irascible in the face of any kind of inauthenticity as most close associates sooner or later experienced. He will be remembered and missed not only as a great public and artistic luminary, but as a magnanimous human being whose candor influenced generation after generations of young people to an extent almost unprecedented among world figures.

It's said that one of the four main emanations of bodhisattva activity is that of the artist. At the age of seventeen Allen recorded his vow to relief the suffering of humankind which he actualized tirelessly through his dedication as a poet, humanitarian statesman, and world citizen. Up until the final day of his conscious life he wrote poems, and called some friends including myself — conducting business as usual. That day, barely audible on the phone, he said that he "was pleasantly surprised to feel a ripple of bliss when he heard his death sentence." As a fellow practitioner and good spiritual friend, it was so generous of him to talk frankly of his impending death thus allowing me the space to say good-bye.

In his own words, some thirty years after he wrote *Howl*, the signal poem which catapulted him to fame and notoriety in 1955, Allen noted that the "appeal in *Howl* is to the secret or hermetic tradition of art justifying or making up for defeat in

worldly life (ie. samsara) to the acknowledgment of an

*Unworldly love
that has no hope*

*of the world
and that*

*cannot change the world to its
delight*

Thus William Carlos Williams in the above lines appealed to the "imagination" of art to reveal our deepest natural ground: love, hopeless yet permanently present in the heart, unalterable. The unworldly love hypostasized as comradeship through thick and thin in *Howl* rose out of primordial filial loyalty to my mother, then in distress. Where mother love conflicts with social facade, the die is cast from antiquity in favor of sympathy. Blocked by appearances, love comes through in the free play of the imagination, a world of art, the field of space

where Appearance — natural recognition of social tragedy & world failure — shows lesser sentience than original compassionate expansiveness of heart."

Now bereft of Allen's mortal presence among us, it seems that the endless accomplishments, awards and accolades surrounding his life all pale in the face of his enormous capacity for compassion — his own original expansiveness of heart which touched us all so deeply. I say this because, although Allen was a strong practitioner for many years, and very devoted to his teachers, being among the first Westerners to connect with Tibetan lamas as early as 1961, his approach to Buddhism remained extremely pragmatic and free from artifice. He just lived it.

Looking among my papers after his death, I found this whimsical card Allen sent me after I left

his employment a couple of years ago which is so typical of his communications. It is addressed to me "c/o Buddhafields/ Boulder, NYC, Vermont/Planet Earth and outward /zip: infinity 00000," he wrote, "...whatever comes, at least this artifact (his last published book of poems, *Cosmopolitan Greetings*) somewhat dharmic won't do anyone any harm and may even cheer up a soul or two. But what if we do the rest of our lives? More mental postcards? Retreats? Loves? AH — Thanks Allen."

Thank you, Allen for your example. Your vajra brothers and sisters will miss you.

Written by Jacqueline Gens.
Jacqueline Gens worked with Allen Ginsberg for 12 years, first at the Naropa Institute where she was an administrator and then for 5 years in his New York office. ■

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Easter Retreat with Lopön Tenzin Namdak Rinpoche

by Jakob Winkler



PHOTO BY MAUREZZO MENGOTTI

Imagine the beautifully painted Temple of Great Liberation at Merigar and Lopön Rinpoche sitting on the throne below the depiction of the great Bönpo Dzogchen master Tapihritsa, who looks just like a white Samantabhadra floating in a sphere of rainbow light in the sky. On the same panel is a painting of Lopön Tenzin Namdak, as the main lineage holder of the Bönpo transmission today.

Speaking about rainbows, most of the time the weather was sunny, just the cutting cold winds and a few snow storms reminded us of the altitude of the picturesque land of Merigar. It is springtime in Italy and the flowers are blossoming and the new leaves are shooting. Around three hundred and fifty people attended the retreat from Italy, Austria, Germany, the Netherlands, France, Spain, Poland, Switzerland, the USA and Russia. Besides the teachings of Lopön Rinpoche, Yantra Yoga, Vajra Dance and Karma Yoga — making tsas for the new stupa — were offered and introductory instructions for the newcomers were given.

During the Easter period Lopön Rinpoche taught for six days, morning and afternoon, on Dzogchen according to the Yeti Tasei (*Ye khri mtha' sef*), a teaching deriving from the Dharmakaya which is contained in the Bönpo Kangyur. Rinpoche based his explanations on the commentary of Drenpa Namkha (*Dran pa nam mkha'*) who was one of the twenty-five disciples of Guru Rinpoche. Rinpoche used Drenpa Namkha's commentary called "The Offering of the Explanation of the Base"; in Tibetan "She Zhi Chö" (*dGos 'Dod gSal Byed bShad gZhi'i mChod*). It was the first time this teaching has been taught in the West.

First Lopön Rinpoche thoroughly explained the difficulties of obtaining a human birth, impermanence, karma, the nature of suffering of samsara, refuge, and the practice of bodhicitta. Rinpoche continued by teaching the view of Madhyamaka on the emptiness of subject and object. In this context we have received the "direct introduction to the state of ignorance" as Rinpoche said.

As the means to overcome that state of ignorance Lopön Rinpoche elaborated on the practice of concentration by fixing on the letter A and spoke about the semdzin of Phat and the overcoming of disturbances

to the natural state.

Rinpoche taught in depth on the view of Dzogchen and that pure and impure vision are part of the natural state which led him to explain the practice of Tödgäl, mentioning again and again the importance of, and the need for a stable base in the practice of Tregchöd.

After teaching the guruyoga of Tapihritsa and the power of devotion, Lopön Rinpoche explained the four bardos: the bardo of this life, the bardo of dying, the bardo of the empty nature and the bardo of existence, concluding this teaching by explaining the practice of consciousness transference, phowa, at the moment of death.

Rinpoche gave the reading transmission, lung, for Drenpa Namkha's commentary *She Zhi Chöd* and his recent book *Heart Drops of Dharmakaya*, interspersing it with the answering of questions. He finished the retreat with advice on practice especially for "beginners" which was appreciated just as much by the "oldies".

All the participants in the retreat were very touched by the humility, kindness and openness Rinpoche showed and felt blessed by being able to receive such profound and essential teachings.

Before leaving sunny Merigar, Rinpoche consecrated the new Stupa with the rab ne (*rab gnas*) ceremony. ■

Looking Forward

continued from page 3

master and he himself achieved the rainbow body (in 1935) and some of his pupils too. I didn't have so much experience directly of him because I left my country in the east when I was fifteen and went to central Tibet where I was living, and had many responsibilities and had no chance to go back to my home until 1986.

The Mirror: Do you think that any of your practitioners will achieve the jalu (rainbow body)?

Lopön Tenzin Namdak: It's not easy to say. As far as I know nobody yet is ready for jalu but I don't know. It's hard to say.

The Mirror: What is the relationship between the Bön and the Nyingma which both have Dzogchen teachings?

Lopön Tenzin Namdak: Dzogchen in general exists every-

Born a Frenchman, Lama Denys received a western university education, then travelled to India in the sixties where he met his master Kalu Rinpoche to whom he became interpreter. In 1976 he helped found the first center in the West for three year retreats which he himself fol-

Bodhicitta, the Six Paramitas, and within that context an authentic Mahamudra-Dzogchen transmission becomes possible.

The Mirror: Interestingly, yesterday you translated "thugje" as sensitivity. What exactly do you mean by sensitivity?

ence free of the reference point of the observer. This is the spontaneous experience that occurs when we don't inhabit our experience, when we don't own it. (Laughs)

The Mirror: Last year you came to Merigar. Do you have any projects with Namkhai Norbu

Interview with Lama Denys Tendrub

Rome, January 1997

by Andy Lukianowicz for The Mirror

lowed. In 1984 Kyabje Kalu Rinpoche appointed him Vajracarya, a master who is qualified to teach and transmit the Vajrayana, in particular the Shangpa Kagyu lineage. He is currently Superior of the Dachang Rime Congregation and President of the European Buddhist Union.

During a well-attended weekend teaching seminar in Rome, Italy on *Working with the Emotions*, Lama Denys Tendrub graciously found time for a short interview for *The Mirror*.

The Mirror: Can you say a few words about your lineage?

Lama Denys: Well, in brief, I received from Kyabje Kalu Rinpoche the Mahamudra-Dzogchen transmissions, especially within the Kagyu and Shangpa filiation.

The Mirror: You are a Westerner teaching the Dharma in the West; are there any teachings which are more applicable in the West, and do you see any difference in the way Dharma is taught in the West and in Tibet or India?

Lama Denys: Yes, in the West we shouldn't mix tradition and Eastern culture. We definitely need the fundamental traditional approach, which means respecting the heart of the lineage transmission; but we don't particularly need the cultural aspects, whether they be Tibetan or whatever. The traditional, universal and transcultural heart of the Dharma requires basic understanding of the Dharma, Shamatha and Vipassana experience,



PHOTO BY PAOLO RENNA

Lama Denys: Well, this is one way to express "thugje". "Thugje" can be translated in different way, (such as) "the energy of compassion". In this case compassion means the fundamental non-dual spontaneous energy, which is the quality of sensitivity. Sensitivity refers to the quality of receptivity and responsiveness, free from blockage, inherent in the state of authentic presence. In different ways sensitivity matches well with the notion of "thugje".

The Mirror: And of the quality it has, as well.

Lama Denys: Yes, we use openness, clarity and sensitivity to express the nature of the three kayas.

The Mirror: Yesterday you said that the natural state is the state of the mind before we live in it. Could you say more about this?

Lama Denys: The natural mind, the state of presence, is the primordial experience of original mind, before the observer dwells in that experience. It is primordial experi-

Rinpoche for the future?

Lama Denys: Yes. It's a long story. We first met a long time ago, something like twenty years ago when Kalu Rinpoche came to Italy. It has been a long-term heart connection. First, in the approach to Dharma transmission, I became familiar with Rinpoche's teachings a while ago through reading some of his books and meeting some of his disciples in Russia and other places. This inspired me to establish a further connection with Rinpoche and between

our Sanghas. Incidentally, there was an advertisement in *The Mirror* about retreat facilities at Karma Ling Institute! Also, a vision inspired me to ask Rinpoche for the transmission of the Vajra Dance practices, and we invited Rinpoche to come to Karma Ling Institute and he said he would when he comes back from Australia, most likely in September 98.

The Mirror: Was the vision in a dream? Rinpoche received the Dance through dreams.

Lama Denys: Yes. Within the Shangpa lineage we have a very close connection to Jnana Dakinis, Niguma and Sukhasiddhi. In this case it was an inspiration from Sukhasiddhi. She is a kind of sister of Komadevi. (Laughs)

The Mirror: So we are cousins.

Lama Denys: Something like that.

The Mirror: Thank you very much.

Lama Denys: You are welcome. ■



Inspiring a revolution of the mind

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David Schneider,
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VIEW

Lives of the Great Masters



Biography of Mandarava until Maratika

A talk given to those on the Tara Mandala Mandarava Pilgrimage in March 1996 by Khamtrul Rinpoche in Dharamsala, India

From Volume 4 Spring 1997 of the Tara Mandala Newsletter

In order that the mind to reach the state of Buddhahood, we go on pilgrimage to purify negativities. In order to do that, we must get to the root of negativity. Through prayer, meditation, and pilgrimage we accumulate merit and our negativities are purified. We can not purify everything at once. We can do so slowly and pilgrimage is a great help. If we look at pilgrimage it could seem like just visiting places, but by going to these places and overcoming the difficulties in getting there, offering meditation, prostrations and prayers to Guru Rinpoche and Mandarava and believing in their deeds, we accumulate merit and diminish negativities. Our sicknesses, and things going against our wishes are from our negative deeds. Through pilgrimage those negative results are decreased and we will go towards Buddhahood.

Tso Pema is your first place of pilgrimage. It was one of many small kingdoms in ancient India, called northern Zahor. The King of Zahor (present day Mandi) had 360 wives and thousands of attendants but no sons.

Padmasambhava through his vision saw that Zahor was a place to benefit many beings. So, he went to Zahor in the form of light, as a letter HRI. This light blessed the queen and also the king. The elder queen dreamt that Buddhas from all directions merged into her body, and all the people were circumambulating her. Many sons were merging with her.

When she told him the dream, the king said, *Your dream is auspicious. The sons merging mean that all the negativities of the three worlds will be eliminated. The*

Buddhas dissolving into you indicate that a bodhisattva is coming. The beings circumambulating indicate that we should honor and 'take good care of the child and keep it very clean'...

Shortly afterwards the queen realized she was pregnant, so she tried not to engage in inappropriate activities for the baby and to take care of herself carefully. She stayed on the highest level of the palace to protect herself.

They were all expecting a boy, but a girl was born. In those times Indians were unhappy with the birth of a girl, so the king and queen were also upset and worried. According to the Indian royal custom, they called for a sadhu (wandering ascetic) to predict the future of their daughter by looking at her palms and fingers. The sadhu requested the baby be washed, wrapped in a clean white cloth and put in the sun. He also washed and started to read the child. As he looked at the baby he began to cry. The king and queen were worried and asked him not to hide what he was seeing.

Finally the sadhu spoke, *Do not worry. I am crying because I have seen thousands of babies and read their signs, but never have I seen a child with all the signs of the Buddha. I have never before seen a child like this with all thirty-two signs. When she grows up and marries she will have a baby with all the signs of the Buddha. I name her Mandarava which means 'best flower.' She will become the consort of Guru Rinpoche when she grows up.*

The king and queen were very happy and they took very good care of her. Good clothes were brought and delicacies were served

to everyone.

Mandarava grew up very quickly. For every month of her life, she seemed to grow almost a year older, when compared to other children. So when she was twelve she seemed to be about sixteen.

The reputation of Mandarava's beauty and elegance spread everywhere. At that time the countries from China and Burma sent requests for the hand of Mandarava for their princes. The ministers of the king were very worried, because if they gave Mandarava to any one of them, the others would be very jealous and might cause trouble. The king said, *If all the queens could have a child like Mandarava we would have no problems, but since there is only one, we have a lot of problems.* Then one wise minister advised the king to let Mandarava decide for herself who she would marry. Then, whoever she chose, the king and ministers wouldn't be blamed.

So the king, queen and minister told her she would have to decide if the prince would be brought from another country to live with them or if she would go to live with a prince of another kingdom and who it would be.

She decided not to get married. She said, *Kingdoms are an ocean of suffering, like an ocean of fire. Once I enter one, suffering will not stop. I will not marry.* The king pressed her saying, *Since you are young you might feel this way, but later you might have second thoughts and later we will have even more trouble. So please choose and, if you want to, choose even a common person.* Mandarava said, *Even if I had to think this for a thousand days I wouldn't change my decision. I will not leave the household.*

Since her decision was so clear, the king and queen rejoiced and Santideva was called to cut her hair, and she became a nun. Five hundred maid servants were also ordained and sent with her to Tso Pema to create a small nunnery in that quiet, beautiful place.

Guru Rinpoche came from central India appearing to be sixteen years old, flying through the rays of the sun into the garden where Mandarava and her attendants were walking. Seeing Guru Rinpoche, Mandarava and her attendants recognized him without effort as their root teacher. They immediately invited him into the hall for teachings. Everyday from then on he gave them teachings. This was observed by a cattle herder nearby. Due to his previous karmic connections with them, he saw Guru Rinpoche descending on the sun ray, being invited to teach, and continuing to teach them everyday.

The cattle herder told a few people and the word spread to every part of the kingdom. People started to say that first Mandarava said she wanted to be a nun, but then a young elegant man, looking like a sadhu descended from space and all the nuns and Mandarava were receiving teachings. They also implied that Mandarava was having a relationship with the young sadhu.

When this news reached the king and queen, they were upset. They were still unable to believe the news, so they issued a proclamation. The minister spread the

word that whoever was a direct witness should come to see him personally and he would give that person many gifts. During the day no one came, but that night the cattle herder came and told his story. The king was very angry and sent the minister to get Mandarava and to bury her in a dungeon where she would not see even the smallest amount of light. When the minister arrived at the nunnery, looking through the window he saw Guru Rinpoche teaching on a throne and realized he was either a Brahmin or a divine being. Returning to the king he reported what he had seen. He said that this was not a common person but a great teacher. The king was still afraid of the rumors spreading through the country, so he sent a group of Buddhist hating ministers (not all of Zahor was Buddhist at that time) to capture and punish Guru Rinpoche. The ministers entered and seized Guru Rinpoche. Mandarava and the nuns said, *Please stop, he is not an ordinary person, he is a manifestation of the Buddhas of the Three Times.* They did not listen and stripped him and beat him with thorns.

Guru Rinpoche and Mandarava were then brought to the Rani Jail in Mandi and stayed there together for several days. The king then ordered each household to bring wood and oil. The wood was piled up and Guru Rinpoche was taken from the darkness of the Rani Jail to be burned alive.

Normally, the worst punishment was to be burned alive, and when this was done the smoke would last only 2-3 days. However, after two weeks Guru Rinpoche's pyre was still burning. Then the water began to appear and the place became a lake; trees started growing and birds singing songs. The wood had turned into living trees, and some saw a child on a lotus. So the king came and saw a lake with a lotus and Guru Rinpoche on it. Light was making an umbrella over his head. The king didn't believe his eyes and started rubbing them, looking away, and looking back, but he kept seeing the same thing.

He suddenly experienced great remorse for what he had done. He went to Guru Rinpoche and asked for his forgiveness. He did everything he could to get pardoned.

The king then sent for a chariot and all of his kingly robes. (The clothes we see on Guru Rinpoche statues are the king's clothes from that era.) Then he drove Guru Rinpoche to town in the carriage. Once in town he proclaimed Guru Rinpoche to be king. He offered him his kingdom and Mandarava.

After this Guru Rinpoche thought, *Being born again and again is difficult, but if I could live a long time I could be of benefit to more people.* He then decided to go into retreat at the cave of Maratika in East Nepal. Mandarava wanted to go with him, but he said she couldn't go, because she would have a hard time with the difficulties of the journey. The four dakinis came and placed lotuses and seemed to invite him to another place. So he flew on a dorje and landed on a hilltop in East Nepal where Maratika Cave lies. The hill had many flowers, birds, and species of animals with nice voices. The sky above the hill was shaped like a moon disc rising. From the day Guru Rinpoche descended, Mandarava was so sad she didn't want to stay in Mandi. So she ran away without knowing where she was going. Seven days passed as she walked through mountains, encountered wild animals. During this time her mind thought only of Guru Rinpoche. After seven days Guru Rinpoche appeared in front of her. He said, *You have had many difficulties. She replied, I need these problems to purify, so I don't feel like they are difficulties.* Guru Rinpoche replied, *This is the way of a real disciple.* So with his power he transported her to Maratika. There they practiced Amitayus (Buddha of Long Life) and after three months and seven days Amitayus arrived and poured water on their heads. Then Dorje Phagmo and Hayagriva blessed them. So they were both blessed and attained the vajra body, which does not diminish in the future. Even these days Mandarava and Guru Rinpoche are there, and highly spiritual people can see them. If you can visit this place it can drive away obstacles and negativities and you can accumulate much merit.

Even today, on the lunar eighth, tenth, and twenty-fifth, the dakinis come to Maratika. The shape of the hill is like a half moon. The place gives a joyous feeling and when you practice there, your practice will get better and better. It is a seat of Avalokitesvara. The southwestern end is the cave of Maratika. The place is showered with flowers during every season. When the sun comes up it shines into this cave and shines into the lower cave in the evening. There are many rainbows there, and without incense burning the whole area smells of incense. This place is a place blessed by Avalokitesvara, Vajrapani, Amitayus.

Mandarava continued on with Guru Rinpoche to Oddiyana and became a great yogini. ■

First Poem

As I look upward toward the sky,
I wonder with a longing sigh,
how things might look from way up high.
How would it feel if I could fly?
Do you think birds wonder too,
as they soar in the blue,
how would it be if they could do
people things like me and you?

Tatiana Tara Shannon, age 7
New York City

BOOK REVIEWS

THE HEART OF THE MATTER & FINAL WORDS

by Tsele Natsok Rangdrol
Introduction by Chokyi Nyima Rinpoche
Translated by Erik Pema Kunsang
Edited by Michael Tweed and Marcia Schmidt
Published by Rangjung Yeshe Publications, 1996. 111 pages



Erik Pema Kunsang has issued another in his excellent series of translations of the works of Tsele Natsok Rangdrol (*rTse.le rGod.tshangs.pa* sNa.tshogs Rang.grol), a seventeenth century Dzogchen master. *The Heart of the Matter* is Erik Pema Kunsang's brief title for, *The Unchanging Convergence of Vital Points that Shows Exactly How to Apply the View and Meditation of the Definitive Meaning*. "Convergence" is the key word here.

After a brief homage to the "spontaneously present guru of natural awareness," the author cuts to the chase with a response to his student's question, "Please expound upon the key points of essential training in the view and meditation of Mahamudra, Dzogchen, and the Middle Way." The author points out that all dharma paths have the same purpose, viz. "to establish sentient being in the state of buddhahood." After very briefly outlining the different paths and schools in an almost-formulaic manner, (as though bowing to the conventions of his genre), he undercuts the importance of this standard enumeration by exclaiming, "So what is the use of someone like me explaining them [all the stages of view and meditation] here?" Tsele Natsok Rangdrol is after different fish here.

He writes that "there are some who claim a huge difference" between Mantra and the Philosophical Vehicle. However, he claims that "any difference merely lies in forming or not forming a conceptual attitude..." As becomes clearer later in the text, "not forming a conceptual attitude" is quite different from some modern twists on the practice that I am sure someone of us have encountered such as:

1. A nuanced intellectual and emotive response of "duuh..." to anything of difficulty.

2. Viewing "thinking" as bad and absence of thought as "good"

3. Feeling one is superior because one's butt is on a meditation cushion rather than buried in a book.

Tsele Natsok Rangdrol then shows through quotation, argument and declaration that the Middle Way, Mahamudra and Great Perfection "are all in agreement on a single identical meaning." Weaving together the terminology of Mahamudra, e.g. *thamel.gyi.shespa*

or ordinary mind, and Dzogchen, e.g. rigpa or awareness, and using examples from many lineage masters, he repeatedly focuses in on this basic view without which all the tantras and sutras are chicken scratches on paper. "This mind that is present in all beings is in essence an original emptiness, not made out of anything whatsoever. By nature it is unimpeded experience, aware and cognizant...Spontaneously present since the beginning, yet not created by anyone, this self-existing and self-manifest natural awareness, your basic state, has a variety of different names."

Having laid out the ultimate view in several ways, he then rhetorically asks, "How then should one practice?" Implicit in this type of question is a model where a vehicle will have a "view" which is then discovered or realized through a "practice" yielding the fruit. As though you have all this high-falutin' non-dual talk, followed by some nuts and bolts tinkering which if you tinker long and hard enough will produce a hot tamale (minus the nuts and bolts on which you might choke.) I know this sounds crude but often this model is behind many approaches to dharma. Tsele Natsok Rangdrol will have none of this. "The practice of Mahamudra and Dzogchen...is not at all like these other teachings in which their meditations and the view remain disconnected. Here the view and meditation are not kept separate but are simply an indivisible unit: the view of seeing your basic state, not by fabricating it, but by allowing it to resume its natural flow." This is no little point. This means the view, the *Ita.ba*, is the practice. There are no nuts and bolts. And this is not other than the fruit, the result. The ultimate path does not go from here to there.

Through page after page, he points to this baseline practice. Why "baseline?" Because it is contacting the base, the "ground," the "core" of what being a sentient human being is. All of what you are arises from this ground as the "unobstructed play of your own mind." without separating from this self-same ground. "Allow your present wakefulness to look directly into itself."

In one sense the entire book is a showing "how" to do this. In another sense, there is no "how" at all for this because "how" is an instrument in the realm where "doing something" and "slacking off" rule. "That realm has never heard of such a path. 'It is not some 'thing' to be cultivated, so don't mentally form it.' It cannot be pictured because both the picture and the observer of the picture are already within it. At the point of pointing it out, the pointing is already included. One need not add anything else. A prudent reluctance to say more than is necessary pervades this text."

His comments on mistakes in practice reveal by contrast what this practice is about. "When too concentrated, you manufacture a state. When too lax, you diffuse into the undercurrent of thought." Sound familiar, anyone? He is especially concerned to correct the common mistake of confusing non-thinking

with this practice. Why? Because it inhibits experience. "Shamatha of cessation by suppressing sensations is ineffective due to the fault that it blocks off vipashyana." His explanation of the relation between shamatha (calming) and vipashyana (insight), which are often presented as a progression or two radically different practices, has an unusual twist. "Even that which sustains the meditation state of shamatha is nothing other than vipashyana. This which sees, notices, or feels whether there is stillness or movement, distraction or no distraction, is also the cognizant wakefulness of vipashyana. There is no other vipashyana superior to this which needs to be separately accomplished." In other words, unlike other approaches, here, one doesn't do shamatha and then switch or change to vipashyana. "That which sustains shamatha" is itself vipashyana.

After his explanation of shamatha and vipashyana he then discusses how "to proceed on a daily basis with the actual practice." Don't expect a Dzogchen time-management course here with "helpful hints" to deal with failed relationships or toe fungus. "The crucial point in the practice is not to get involved in deliberately projecting or concentrating upon the state of your present naked mind, but rather, simply to recognize your nature in whatever you experience, no matter what it is." "Never separate yourself from the training during any daily activity, simply recognizing your nature, while remaining undistracted." All this presupposes, as he makes clear, that the student has received the pointing out instructions wherein a glimpse of this "ordinary mind" (*thamel.gyi.shespa*) has been put in his hand. "This basic state of originally pure natural awareness is unseen by oneself, like the treasure in a poor man's house. Once you realize it through the guru's kindness, you personally know the indivisible three kayas to be your own nature."

In reading this, I had this nagging question — "Is this really all? Does he really mean that this and only this is sufficient? Tsele Natsok Rangdrol writes, "To gain confidence in the indivisible unity of the essence of the training and your mind, is called the 'dawn of realization' and is itself enough." The training in itself is your baseline existence. "The uncorrupted awareness, your natural state, is itself the single aim of practice." "Condensed to the essence, this ordinary mind should be left as it naturally is and nothing else. Striving for an eminent view and meditation, training in artifice, desiring experiences and realization, and to progress through the paths and states of the yogas while fearing going astray or taking sidetracks, and so forth — totally abandon all such pursuits." But what about all those other practices and teachings? In this text at least, he doesn't address them except to indicate that there are lots of other approaches. Aren't there many implicit beliefs and attitudes involved in becoming a Dzogchen student that it is necessary for us to acquire, especially since we come from a non-Buddhist, post-modern culture? Maybe, maybe not. But Tsele

Natsok Rangdrol has no discussion of supporting practices at all in this text, no "prep" work, no discussion of build-up to naked rigpa. He is quite uncompromising. In this sense, if read correctly, his text challenges us to step off a cliff. Many would like to "bracket" this work by saying "it's for advanced practitioners" or "it's the sort of thing you should read after you have done many other practices" or "it's useful when things are going well but when I am freaked out, I need something easier" or "What a high teaching but you need to supplement it with XYZ" but the author doesn't support any of this. That is a challenge. He ends with some humbling comments about the degeneracy of the age and practitioners that ring all too true even today.

What are we to make of this? One important point is the distinction between experience and insight. There are "truth claims" made here over and above the pointing to formless practice. "Rather than holding a view of mind-made assumption, realize your indescribable and unformed innate nature, through nakedly recognizing self-knowing wakefulness, as the basic state of what is." (*emphasis mine.*) What sort of claim is this, that this self-knowing wakefulness is the basic state of what is? He writes, "once you know it.....you personally know the indivisible three kayas to be your own nature." How is that possible unless one already has a notion of what the three kayas are? Is that important? There is this frequent sliding from psychology to ontology in this text that one encounters also in much Dzogchen literature. It's not just about "your" mind or "development." A serious (and I would dare call it "confrontational") claim is made about the nature of reality. It may be beyond words but that doesn't mean it is not there or is some fuzzy blank out. The text may sometimes sound as though it's just go-with-the-flow but there is more to it than that. There are errors in practice and his text identifies them. "As long as you maintain that the practice in which you train is separate from mind, the meditator, or that the sustainer of mindfulness is different from the object sustained, you have still not glimpsed the heart of realization." Mouthing Dzogchen talk means nothing but self-deception without entering into the practice. "Not holding views" means more than hiding from them. A recognition is central. Without understanding this cognitive element, especially in the West, it is all too easy for practitioners to employ formlessness as a cloak to hide deeply set social and cultural conditioning even while, on a superficial level, aping Eastern cultural trappings.

Though this text mentions nothing of asceticism, even at one point stating, "It is not at all necessary to live in scary solitudes or to engage in the yogic disciplines of pursuing confrontations," yet after rereading it several times, I feel it is quite an austere teaching. There is nothing here to hang on to, nothing to feed our "self-esteem," nothing about which to construct a spiritual enterprise. *Thamel-gyi-shespa*, this ordinary mind, naked rigpa, inescapable and choiceless. That is a very "scary solitude" and you who dwell therein

and traverse the space at those elevated altitudes, invisible to dim-sighted people like me as you dance on the clouds, I deeply and reverently honor.

The second text, *The Final Words: Oral Instructions Given by the Great Vidyadhara When About to Depart into Dharmadhatu*, is a meditation on the inevitability of death, the transiency of all we use to define ourselves, and the compassion of the lineage. With these reminders he exhorts us to "hasten....plans to practice the Dharma" and focus on what is important. "Unless you realize the key point of natural awareness — that knowing one thing liberates all — you won't find any certainty in pursuing endless seemingly "important" information."

This innocuous looking, little, brown book is an act of love by Tsele Natsok Rangdrol reaching to readers unseen by him. As we turn the pages, he invites us to turn our mind. Handle it with care. It might go off in your hands.

by Tom Garnett



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The Dalai Lama Teaches in France

by Iacobella Gaetani

On the invitation of Karma Ling Institute and the Tibetan Buddhist Federation, His Holiness the Dalai Lama gave teachings for four days from April 26th to 29th at La Rochette, Savoy in France. More than six thousand people were present and seated in orderly rows for the teachings which took place in a large tent. On April 30th, an inter-traditional meeting dedicated to peace took place at the same venue in the presence of the Dalai Lama with representatives from the so-called great religions and the ancient traditions.

The subject of the four days of Teachings was the Four Noble Truths, the foundation of the path of the Buddha. With great ability, His Holiness presented the founding principles of Buddhist philosophy, dwelling on the point of view of the Madhyamika school. To understand the cause of suffering inherent in the concept of real existence, His Holiness spoke at length on the teaching of the Two Truths: the Relative and Absolute Truth. Real happiness is the understanding of the Absolute Truth which is hidden under the veils of illusion, the ultimate nature of all phenomenon, dharmata which is synonymous with emptiness. He also presented the object of refuge: the Three Jewels and the four Kayas. Regarding the Path he taught the three trainings: morality, meditation and wisdom. Talking about meditation he clarified the practice of shine (*chi gnas*) and of lhagtong (*lhag mthong*). He also spoke for a morning about the consciousness that perceives the self. Ignorance is the architect of Samsara. It is ignorance which grasps the inherent existence of phenomena and after that attachment to the reality of phenomena follows. From this attachment arises the erroneous perception of the reality of the self, the notion of oneself as an identity.

At the end of each session of Teaching, with great openness and readiness, His Holiness answered questions dealing with the most varied subjects: cloning, euthanasia, from the donation of organs to the principles of modern physics and, of course, doubts and questions related to the Dharma. After he finished answering the questions, His Holiness dedicated a few minutes to meditation, emanating a state of profound calm and peace which surrounded those present.

At the end of the morning session on April 29th he announced that in the afternoon he would give the transmission of the Bodhicitta only to those who do not practice the rituals dedicated to Shugs lden. He also urged us to verify that his words had real meaning for us before becoming his disciples. As the Buddha said: "Oh monks and wise ones, in the same way you test gold by rub-

bing and melting it I ask you to judge my word: if you accept it it should not be only out of respect". In the afternoon during the very inspiring teaching on Bodhicitta he said that it is easy to understand the principle of Bodhicitta at an intellectual level but it is more difficult to have a real experience of it while, on the other hand, it is more difficult to understand the conceptual meaning of Emptiness but easier to have an experience of it. He then explained the practice of "Taking and giving" (*Ton len*) in which one takes on the suffering of others in exchange for one's own happiness through breathing. His Holiness communicated to the heart of those present with great simplicity and at the end of the Teaching many of us were moved to tears. Taking part in this Teaching was a way for me to deepen the teaching of the Base of the Santi Maha Sangha and an inspiration to carry out the practice and the trainings.

The inter-traditional meeting competently organized by Karma Ling Institute was a contribution on the part of the Institute to the

International Decade for the Autochthonous Populations decreed by the UN in 1995. According to this world organization, these populations which have been colonized, exterminated, mistreated and ignored, are in danger.

This Decade is intended to make known the richness of these traditions and to consider some of the values which contribute to the cultural and spiritual diversity of which our world has a great need: values of peace, connection with and respect for the planet, the role of meditation and dreams, etc. Lama Denys, spiritual director of Karma Ling Institute and organizer of this meeting presented the initiative to His Holiness who gave his support and replied that according to his personal experience a meeting such as this should have two main objectives; the first is that the principal world traditions (religions) should consider how to participate in order to improve the world and humanity in general, by means of promoting fundamental human values such as compassion and secular ethics. The second objective is that each of these great world traditions consider how to contribute to the preservation of the different ancient traditions that work for the maintenance and the survival of their own communities.

The aim of the meeting was to find universal common values among the various religions and ancient traditions. Accordingly at the inter-traditional meeting at La Rochette there were representatives of the great religions and delegations of ancient traditions representing the different continents.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama was seated at the center of the stage as the representative for

Mahayana Buddhism. On his left were the representatives of Judaism, the Catholic Church, the Protestant and Orthodox Churches, Islam, Theravada Buddhism and Hinduism. On his right were the representatives of the Autochthonous Traditions. For Africa the monotheist Rendille Tradition (Kenya), and the Vaudoue Tradition (Benin). For North America a Purupeska and Aztec (Mexico) delegation, delegations of the Onandaga, Tlinquit, Cherokee and Apache (U.S.) as well as a Mohawk representative, grandmother Sara Smith (Canada). For South America a Shuar representative (Equator). Immediately on the right of His Holiness for Asia was the representative of the Bönpo, the new Lopön of Dolanji, Thinle Nyi ma, who was visibly moved. For Australia a representative of the Aborigine Tradition and finally from Siberia for the Shaman Tradition Nadia Stepanova from Buryatia and a shaman from Tuva. The representatives from the Autochthonous Traditions wore richly colored costumes and transmitted energy, pride and determination for in spite of persecution and colonialism they are the living repositories of an ancient wisdom linked to the earth, to the elements and to nature. In their rituals which were almost all dedicated to the Dalai Lama they addressed their benedictions for peace to the new generations. Together with Nadia Stepanova on the stage was Costanzo Allione in Buryatian dress holding the milk for a ritual of blessing and purification. The supreme head of the Voudou who wore a majestic hat told us that Voudou means joy. From the United States a delegation of Native Americans which included Sparky Shooting Star, came to Merigar in the days that followed. Many of the traditions absent at the meeting were presented in a film projection. The Nobel prize winner Rigoberta Menchu from Guatemala sent a message of peace on film.

During the week the representatives of the various traditions and religions hosted at Karma Ling met, exchanged knowledge and carried out their rituals under the dome-shaped tent erected on a square adjacent to the Institute. The main building which constitutes the Institute, erected in 1176, was a monastery dedicated to St. Hugon in the heart of the Alps of Savoy. Each day His Holiness received a delegation. For security reasons, since His Holiness was staying there, access to Karma Ling was limited to those who had been invited.

We thank Lama Denys, Marise and the Karma Ling Institute for having invited the representatives of the Dzogchen Community to participate in this special event. ■

Shang Shung Institute Conference at Tseggyalgar

March 1997

by Roger Levin

The Shang Shung Institute in America convened a conference March 14th-16th at Tseggyalgar in Conway, Massachusetts for planning the future development of the Institute. About thirty participants braved severe winter travel conditions on the 14th to attend. The conference opened with introductions of participants at dinner Friday night. Saturday morning, the first working session began with a review of the history of the Institute by conference moderator and Institute president, Lauri Marder. Lauri recalled that while the Institute began with great enthusiasm for the task of preserving the endangered culture of Tibet, especially in light of the increasing materialism of modern Western civilization, the founders had little idea about how to proceed concretely with their mission.

Two programs, one in translation and the other in art, both central to Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche's intention to develop institutional support for scholarship dedicated to the preservation of Tibetan culture, were relatively easy to implement because they were grounded in practical knowledge of Tibetan cultural forms and the specialized skills for preservation work in both of these areas already existed within the community of practitioners. The Vairocana Translation Project, headed up by Jim Valby in collaboration with the Italian Dzogchen community, attends to the translation of essential Dzogchen teaching texts and the Arts Project, headed up by Glen Eddy who currently still works alone, produces and teaches thangka painting according to traditional methods.

Lauri reminded participants that the direction of the Institute, like any other, necessarily evolves natu-

rally. She recalled the vision initially expressed by John Shane at the founding of the Institute in America of a well-being center to complement the mission of basic scholarship and cultural preservation. A well-being center could take up the wider task of exploring the ways in which Tibetan cultural traditions can inform modern living. Such a center might provide an expanded base of support in the general population for the Institute's mission of cultural preservation as well as more fully utilize the considerable professional resources of the worldwide Dzogchen Community. Lauri suggested that planners consider the appropriateness of such a direction for the Institute at this juncture.

Jim Valby, as Treasurer, presented a brief financial report. Jim then reviewed and commented on his thirty-one page March 1997 Progress Report on the Vairocana Translation Project submitted to the conference. The Project is a joint initiative of the Italian and American seats of the Shang Shung Institute with the goal of translating into English roughly three thousand pages of Tibetan Dzogchen texts by the year 2004. The Project develops translations in parallel with Santi Maha Sangha Training to make essential texts available for practitioners with pre-publication starting in March of 1998. Publication for a general audience is planned for March, 2000 but will not include footnotes explaining meaning or practice. Currently, Jim serves the project as general factotum, doing his own fund-raising as well as administrative support.

Glen Eddy followed with a report on the status of the Arts Project. He detailed his long-range goal of developing a Golden Vajra Guild of independent artisans

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A Preliminary Archaeological Survey of gNam mtsho and Dang ra g.yu mtsho

by John Bellezza

The first part of a series about the lost city of Shang Shung

This paper reviews archaeological discoveries made at gNam mtsho and Dang ra g.yu mtsho in the last few years. During the course of seven expeditions to gNam mtsho and Dang ra g.yu mtsho the author has documented a variety of archaeological sites which with few exceptions are attributed to the pre-Buddhist period in Tibet. The chronological and cultural attributions associated with these sites are primarily derived from oral histories obtained in interviews with a wide variety of people at the source locations.

As a rule, it was found that only local people of advanced age and highly educated ecclesiastical figures were aware of many of these archaeological monuments. Their obscurity is typified by the fact that only a very small fraction of the population at Dang ra g.yu mtsho and gNam mtsho are conscious of their existence. Most of these sites are liable to be consigned to near total cultural obliteration in the next decades if current trends in social, political and economic development continue. It is because of this decline in awareness that a certain urgency exists in reference to revealing and documenting the archaeological treasures of the Byang thang. At the same time, however, by publicizing the discovery of ancient physical remains, the door to economic and cultural exploitation may be opened as much as the portals of scientific enquiry. It is the author's earnest hope that these additions to the archaeological register of Tibet will exclusively serve to elucidate the exceptionally rich cultural legacy that was found in prehistoric times in Tibet.

In total the archaeological sites in question number at least 12 at gNam mtsho and no less than 24 at Dang ra g.yu mtsho. In the present article only a synopsis of the sites surveyed will be presented, excluding ones whose existence was verified through oral histories only. It is important to note that his tally of archaeological sites is almost cer-

tainly less than complete and that other discoveries are liable to come to light in the ensuing years.

None of these sites have been previously documented, with the exception of Dangra khyung rdzong and Do ring. A perusal of primary and secondary literary sources has not uncovered evidence of them, at least by name or location. Moreover, the Administration Commission for Museums and Archaeology Data in the Tibet Autonomous Region could provide no data on them and neither could members of the Provincial University. Apart from the aforementioned exceptions, these discoveries represent a new



Intact structures at the Phug. 'tsho.grog po rdzong

PHOTO BY J. BELLEZZA

chapter in the study of Tibetan archaeology in terms of Byang thang antiquities.

A major question of importance at the onset is why haven't these archaeological sites been revealed earlier? The answer seems to be that no one was looking for them. The exigencies of the geography and climate of the Byang thang are such that it proves to be an inhospitable environment. The difficult weather even in the summer must have deterred people from tarrying long enough to properly survey the region. The remoteness of the archaeological sites probably proved another obstacle as they are often located in inaccessible corners of the northern Plateau.

The methodology employed to

document the sites is often called surface archaeology. At no time was even a handful of earth or stones excavated. Without the proper tools and preparation, excavation is inconceivable if the scientific integrity of the discoveries are to be retained. Another pertinent consideration in only carrying out surface archaeology is the desire to respect the prohibition Tibetans often traditionally have against disturbing the ground and the chthonic beings said to reside in it. Documentation obtained includes photographs of all the sites visited and the preparation of maps of sev-

eral of them. By no means are the sites pristine or undiscovered. Without exception each of them is known to at least a small handful of local people and in some cases to virtually everyone in the region. The archaeological sites fit integrally into the economic and sacred geography of the region. For example, some of the sites are grazed by the livestock of the 'brog pa on a periodic basis, and occasionally they may serve as encampments or exhibit other signs of habitation. Virtually all the sites fit into the scheme of the regional sacred geography. They may be the residence of an elemental deity or demon, or may manifest specific qualities of the Divine Dyads.

The archaeology of the sites is

still a great mystery. The chronology, culture and function of each of them remain enigmatic. Frequently, local people conversant with the sites called the ruins "Bönpo" at gNam mtsho and Dang ra g.yu mtsho and considered them to be the vestiges of pre-Buddhist culture in the regions.

Furthermore at Dang ra g.yu mtsho the archaeological sites were often labelled as belonging to the Zhang Zhung civilization which is said to have flourished in the period before King Srong btsan sgampo. Only on several occasions were ruins at gNam mtsho ascribed to the Zhang Zhung civilization, although they were called Bönpo or pre-Buddhist, this contrast seems to have to do with the religious orientations of the respective lake regions. Dang ra g.yu mtsho is predominantly Bönpo and it is a matter of religious pride that the local residents connect their ancient sites with Zhang Zhung, a civilization where it is commonly believed that Bön enjoyed a position of supremacy. At gNam mtsho, on the other hand, Buddhism is the dominant religion and thus Zhang Zhung is of marginal importance to their religious history. Consequently, there is little incentive to cite this ancient semi-legendary kingdom.

Notes: 1. gNam mtsho (Heaven Lake), situated 150 kilometers north-west of Lhasa as the crow flies, is a maximum of 85 kilometers in length and covers nearly 2,000 square kilometers. Dang ra g.yu mtsho is located 350 kilometers west of gNam mtsho on the central Byang thang. Like gNam mtsho, Dang ra g.yu mtsho exceeds 80 kilometers in length, although it is much narrower. These two lakes are among the most sacred in Tibet and economically are among the most important on the Byang thang.

2. Special thanks are due to sLob dpon bstan 'dzin nam dag and rGyal ba sman ri mkhan po and Bya do rin po che who, over the

course of the past few years (1991-1996) have unstintingly shared their time and expertise. These eminent scholars have helped to orientate the author to the possible locations of archaeological sites and have assisted in the interpretation of the finds. Many thanks are also due to my Tibetan sources who have provided their invaluable time and knowledge on these sites. Their assistance was positively essential to the process of discovery. This chapter in archaeology has been opened because the 'brog pa were willing to share their profound sense of environment and history.

3. For a description of the term "pre-Buddhist" see, for instance, Stein 1972; Tucci 1949; Tarthang Tulku 1986; Nebesky-Wojkowitz 1956; Haahr 1969; Chayet 1994.

4. The Divine Dyads refer here to male and female counterparts in the sacred geography of the two regions. They assume the form of husband and wife (yab and yum) or brothers and sisters (lcam dral). The primary female elements of the dyads are gNam mtsho and Dang ra g.yu mtsho and the primary male elements of the dyads are gNayan chen thang lha and rTa sgo rin po che respectively. In what appears to be the most ancient substrate of legends associated with these sacred geographic entities, gNam mtsho is married to Thang lha and Dang ra g.yu mtsho is married to rTa sgo rin po che. However, in the relevant bskang ba and gsol kha texts a number of other relationships between the divine mountains and lakes are possible, although the basic male-female dichotomy is preserved in each case.

5. Zhang Zhung is the name of a pre-Buddhist civilization centered around far western Tibet but perhaps including (through a system of vassalage) vast areas of the Great Western Himalaya and the Byang thang. Documentation of Zhang Zhung is still sorely lacking, leading some scholars to question its very existence. Increasingly, however, a factual foundation favoring it is coming to light, although the character of its language, polity and material base is not well understood. For top Bönpo scholars such as sLob dpon bstan 'dzin nam dag, rGyal ba sman ri mkhan po and Nyi zla tsho dbang, Zhang Zhung was very much a reality, although the evidence they offer does not necessarily hold up to academic scrutiny. For a discussion of Zhang Zhung see, for example, Ramble 1995; Karmay 1972; Beckwith 1987; Stein 1972; Namdak (rNam dag) 1973. ■

The Vajra Family

continued from page 1

into the night.

The nights ambled by. Gourmet dining was provided under the stars at the lantern-lit Sky Dance Cafe. Further up the hill, no musical stone was left unturned by a morphing collective of beaters, strummers and wailers by the glow of a raging fire, in the newly constructed fire gazebo.

After seven perfect solar cycles had passed, the transmis-

sion and the instruction on the Longde was completed and we could no longer be contained. Though mere words could barely describe, many tried to express their joy and their relative understanding of the precious nature of what had just passed. The cafe that night was abuzz. This feeling carried us through to the auction which was, as usual, a night of fun and surprise, a night of letting go and generosity.

The following morning the retreat came to a close and many said their farewells with the sad-

ness that is usually associated with farewells, replaced by intoxicating gratitude and mutual appreciation.

In the days which followed the Easter retreat at Namgyalgar, a number of students walked the land with Rinpoche, readjusting and reformulating plans for the Gar's development as a retreat center. There have been many interesting and useful suggestions and it was invaluable to have Rinpoche present to guide us with his vision. We hope to have plans into council in the next few months.

The following morning, once again led by Rinpoche, a small group walked up the mountain to the top of the land. Here, where below us the mountains stretch down to embrace the lake and lap the sea, we had the incredible opportunity to watch a treasure finder bury a treasure. The peace vase, (a terma of Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo, made by Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche and distributed by Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche) was placed deep inside a rock and with prayer flags flapping, we did a small sang offering.

These days are like wishfulfilling gems. There is nothing more to ask for. The family gathered with eager smiles and dispersed armed with Longde sticks and belts, in the beautiful Australian bush of Namgyalgar. They do not know when again each will see the other, but are joyous in the knowledge of an indestructible connection. If this retreat was any indication of the future of Namgyalgar as a center for the Dzogchen transmission, we may all rejoice. Boundless, thanks to our precious master. ■



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



PHOTO BY NICOLE BISH

Sunday Afternoon on the Buckland Land

by Lauri Marder

A big group of practitioners had spent the weekend clearing land for the stupa, burning brush, and doing collective *nagapuja*, *sangchod*, and *ganapuja*, and at the end, many went up to the hilltop. While prayer flags were nailed onto tall, trimmed tree trunks, evenly laid out around the Mandala, and a dazzled baby in a blue hat sat on a white triangle and watched a dog wagging its tail, the sun shone down.

The first flagpole to be lifted is the yellow one. People circle around it from all angles, offering advice, "a little more this way, a little more that way, yes! perfect!" and then it is stabilized. Then another pole is hoisted up by the string of men. "Does this look like WWII?" says one, imagining the raising of another type of flag in very different circumstances. They strain together, lifting the long tree, arms pushing upwards, working towards the lower end, and the base of the tree nudges

into the hole, and the slender trunk and the waving flag stand higher and straighter — then in it goes and the dirt's tamped down, a few rocks added. Five colors around the Mandala, pure and vivid, five colors. "But in the wrong order!" someone says, and a couple of women who have not been struggling to raise them up have the energy to begin digging them out. It's only two, the neighbors fire and air, which have to interchange. Despite some hope they'd do it themselves if left alone, the error was corrected then and there. Then the three women danced the first outdoor Vajra Dance of the season on the Mandala which was too fresh to have lines. People drank the rest of the bottled water and went home.

The hilltop with prayer flags, the trees and the rocks, the beings of the forest, the sign on the bark, the vast Mandala — all there now, and the wind has been doing the rest.

Shang Shung Institute Art Projects

The Golden Vajra Guild or thangka painting studio under the direction of Glen Eddy has moved into its new space in the Shang Shung Institute at Tsegylgar. The space is on the second floor with wonderful light and warmth.

There are a number of projects being worked on by the Guild. One project is painting the decorative rafter tail fittings for the Guardian cabin and a decorative center piece to be placed on the roof ridge. This is a regular Saturday project under the guidance of Joe Zurylo, who has been the main and sometimes only energy keeping the Guardian cabin project moving forward. These decorations will be installed on the cabin in the spring as soon as the winter snows recede allowing us access.

The main thangka projects are two large paintings. One is a refuge thangka for the Dzogchen Community, which has been

sponsored by an anonymous donation and the Community. Posters will be made and distributed throughout the Community. The painting is coming along nicely. Angela Goettinger, a Guild apprentice, has for the last few days been painting some of the second and third coats of paint, bringing life to the painting and also bringing life to the Guild ideal of practical learning.

A large cloth is being prepared for the second painting which has been requested by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu. The subject of this painting is Garab Dorje surrounded by the Twelve Primordial Masters with Dharmapalas. The main figure has been drawn and we are beginning to draw the Twelve Masters. The size of the painting will be approximately six feet by eight feet.

Alongside the projects already mentioned there are a number of smaller thangkas and ink draw-

ings to be worked on. These are mainly smaller commissions for regular supporters of the Guild and for those who have requested something and given a donation.

The Guild offers traditional Tibetan drawing and thangka painting instruction. We train in the ancient methods of hand ground mineral pigments and we will accept students at any level.

The Guild depends on commissions and donations. If you would like to participate in any way please contact:

Glen Eddy, PO Box 208,
Conway, MA, 01341, USA
or by telephone: 413 369 0013,
Fax: 413 369 4165, email:
74404.1141@compuserve.com.

ANNOUNCEMENT

20 people participated in the First Level Santi Maha Sangha training and 17 in the Second Level Training in Namgyalgar.

Dzogchen Community of America 1997 TSEGYALGAR PROGRAM Spring and Summer

JUNE 14-15:
NEWCOMERS' WEEKEND
with Ganapuja on Saturday, Guru Rinpoche day. (Free of charge, necessary to book a bed in the dorm if needed).

JUNE 21-22: SUMMER SOLSTICE
Long life practice weekend.

JULY 6-15:
YANTRA YOGA COURSE
with Laura Evangelisti.

AUGUST 8-9-10:
TIBETAN MEDICINE TEACHINGS
by His Holiness
Lungtok Tenpa Nyima, abbot of
Menri Monastery in Dolanji.
Sponsored by Shang Shung
Institute.

AUGUST 26 - SEPTEMBER 2
RETREAT WITH ONTUL RINPOCHE

DANCE OF THE VAJRA COURSES

with Stoffelina Verdonk

AT KARMA LING
IN FRANCE

JUNE 28-JULY 4
Dance of the Vajra (first part)

AUGUST 30-SEPTEMBER 7
Dance of the Vajra (second part)

NOVEMBER 8-11
Dance of the Three Vajras

Karma Ling Institute,
Hameau de Saint Hugon, 73110
Arvillard, France.
Tel. 33 4 79257203.
Fax 33 4 79257808

I decided to become a thangka painter when I retired. It took me about a year to find a teacher. Now I am student of Glen Eddy's. It's hard to realistically describe what it's like to study with a master thangka painter. In the Dzogchen Community few people seem to understand that he is, in fact, a master thangka painter. That's because he's really just a 'guy'. Maybe it's the unassuming 'guy' part that makes him so great. No, it's his work. He creates a technically and historically perfect thangka using only ancient methods. More importantly, he is a master because he can "open the eyes". The eyes bring life, spirit and mystery into the painting. They are the last detail of the thangka that is completed. Glen's work has life!

My studies with Glen began last fall before the retreat in Tsegylgar. Gene Baliceck, from Texas, and I spent ten days learning how to grind minerals, make glue from rabbits' hide, frame cloth, draw Buddhas in *riske* (the traditional proportion

lines), make paint brushes out of goats' hair, and copy pencil drawings in India Ink with a tiny paintbrush. We got the basics down and went home again to do our own work.

In February I came again, this time expecting to continue on with my own work under Glen's patient guidance. This didn't happen. Everything changed. Glen's studio is now at Tsegylgar. It's spacious, warm and full of light. Two huge thangkas throw off rainbows of color, one is a refuge thangka commissioned through Shang Shung Institute, and the other is Garab Dorje surrounded by the Twelve Primordial Masters with Dharmapalas which is for Rinpoche. To my horror, I was not to do my own work. As a student in an ancient tradition, I was expected to participate in the master's work. Me, the

The Golden Vajra Guild

*Working with Glen Eddy in the New
Thangka Painting Studio at Tsegylgar*

by Angela C. Goettinger

Grandma Moses of thangka painting, the old lady whose shaky hands couldn't even conceive of a straight line made with a tiny paintbrush, fell into a silence of fear. Traditionally a thangka is painted by a group thus avoiding the vested ownership of ego. This is not my painting, it is simply a didactic image to educate and inspire practitioners. Its creator is of no more importance than the keeper of the candles, the cook, or the builder of the meditation hall.

Each color already on the refuge thangka was the first of many layers. My job was to complete those layers. We began with green. Green and blue are always done first. They are known as "muddy colors"

which is to say, they can muddy up the other colors most easily. If they are completed first, there is less chance of mixing them into less forceful color. So I

stepped up to the thangka with my brush and a little dish of warmed, ground malachite, water and a rabbit hide glue. As I covered Glen's layer of green with mine, holding my breath while painting along an edge as I was taught, it was obvious that what Glen had done was soft, even and luminous while mine was mottled, thick, splotchy and generally totally unacceptable. I was ruining it! The patient master showed me over and over again each thing that I was doing wrong. We even spent five hours regrinding the malachite to help the color be more consistent. In the end, several days later, I could do it. Such a sense of accomplishment! I was

inspired to get on with the next color; red, cinnabar. Same mess. This mineral has entirely different characteristics from malachite. Glen said if I worked consistently on the thangka for three months I would be familiar with each mineral. Great! Give me three years!

Now that I'm back home I realize how much I learned. I certainly learned more about painting technique. I also learned that painting on the master's work brings out the very best in one. If it had been my own work, a little blob here and there wouldn't have mattered. No need for perfection. In working toward accuracy and speed I could become proficient. And if I didn't Glen could not invite me back. He wouldn't have the time to keep training me and complete the thangka!

If you would like to join the Golden Vajra Guild please contact: Glen Eddy @ POBox 208, Conway, MA 01341, USA or by telephone @ 413 369 0013. E-mail: 74404.1141@compuserve.com ■



Rinpoche and HH Sakya Trizin

PHOTO BY C. BRAUD

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu Met with His Holiness Sakya Trizin

for lunch on Monday, April 14th, in Canberra, Australia, where His Holiness was giving teachings. After the meeting His Holiness accepted an invitation to teach in Merigar in the early summer of 1998.

Fund Raising Plea for the Twelve Primordial Masters Thangka

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu has invited us to join him in sponsoring the completion of the Twelve Primordial Masters thangka that Rinpoche has commissioned of Glen Eddy. A matching grant has already been pledged, so that whatever you give will be doubled. Send funds to Tsegylgar to qualify for

the match. Make checks payable to: Tsegylgar, PO Box 277, Conway, MA 01341 USA.

Please indicate clearly on the check *Twelve Primordial Masters*. We also accept Mastercard and Visa, which as well require a clear indication of the destination of payment. Thank you.

Dzogchen Community of Italy 1997 MERIGAR PROGRAM Summer and Autumn

JUNE 5-8
RETREAT WITH SEY RINPOCHE
(see announcement)

JUNE 13-15
PURIFICATION RETREAT
(PARTICULARLY TO STOP SMOKING)
held by Laura Evangelisti
The retreat starts on Friday at 10am. It will consist of three days of intense purification and detoxification from smoking by means of Tibetan medicine, Yantra Yoga, purification practice, acupuncture and diet according to the instructions of Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche. Participants must have received the transmission of the purification mantra and the mantra of 100 syllables from the Master. The cost is Lit.160.000 with 30% discount for all members and includes one dietetic meal per day plus medical treatment.

JUNE 21-22
USING THE TIBETAN
ASTROLOGICAL CALENDAR
with Rita Leti
Two sessions: Saturday at 4pm and Sunday at 10am.

JUNE 28-29
KARMA YOGA RETREAT
Dedicated especially to making tsas for the stupa. Food and lodging is free for those who work all day.

JULY 11-13
PRACTICE RETREAT
Complete Dance of the Vajra (without teachers). Participants should know the steps of the Dance. Since places are limited it is necessary to book in advance with the secretary.

JULY 25-31
INTENSIVE PRACTICE RETREAT,
PURIFICATION OF THE SIX LOKAS
Four sessions a day: 9am, 11am, 4pm & 6pm. The cost is Lit.180.000

with 30% discount for ordinary members. Free for sustaining members.

AUGUST 11-18
RETREAT WITH ONTUL RINPOCHE
(see announcement)

SEPTEMBER 6-12
TRAINING FOR TEACHERS OF THE DANCE OF THE VAJRA
1st Level with Prima Mai & Adriana Dal Borgo
Participants should know well both the male and the female parts of the Dance of the Six Spaces and the Dance of the Three Vajras. Candidates, who should be members of the Community and whose subscription quota has been paid, must send a written request along with a photo to the secretary at Merigar before July 31st. Since places in the course are limited, candidates in excess of this number will be notified and their request will be considered for the next training course. Cost of the course is Lit.420.000 without discounts.

SEPTEMBER 20-27
THE DANCE OF THE VAJRA
(second part) with Adriana Dal Borgo
The course starts on September 20th at 4pm. Participants should already know the first part of the Dance. Since places are limited, people wishing to participate should make a reservation with the secretary. Cost is Lit.240.000 with 30% discount for members.

OCTOBER 31-NOVEMBER 2
YANTRA YOGA
with Laura Evangelisti
The course will start on October 31st at 4pm. Participants should book before October 10th. Cost is Lit.80.000 with 30% discount for members.

ARGENTINA GAKYIL
RED:
Virginia Avedikian
Horacio Toledo
Alicia Cuballero
BLUE:
Nelida Saporiti-Secretary

Marisa Alonso-Director
Ricardo Sued
YELLOW:
Patricia Feldman-Treasurer
Martin Bortagaray
Adriana Battisti
GEKOS: Hugo Berbotto

Teachings at Merigar

GELEK NAMGYAL SEY RINPOCHE

June 5-8, 1997

Ven. Ngawang Gelek Namgyal, better known as Sey Rinpoche, is the third lineage holder of the lineage of his great-grandfather, Togden Dugu Shakya Shri Rinpoche as well as the reincarnation of Tripon Pema Chogyal, a great tantric practitioner who was recognized as the emanation of Gotsang Gonpo Dorje by the XI Drukchen Rinpoche and named by Togden Shakya Shri holder of his transmissions.

Sey Rinpoche was born in 1963 at Taktsey in Sikkim, India. His father, Apho Rinpoche, grandson of Shakya Shri, was a great tantric practitioner and disciple of Tripon Pema Chogyal. When Sey Rinpoche was two, H. H. Dudjom Rinpoche, head of the Nyingma tradition, recognized him as the authentic reincarnation of Tripon Pema Chogyal and predicted that the child would serve the cause of the Dharma in a remarkable way.

In 1967 Sey Rinpoche was enthroned at the Dalhousie monastery in India. A year later when he was five, he started to

study the complete teachings of Togden Shakya Shri. In 1968 Apho Rinpoche moved with his family to Manali in north India where he founded a monastery. In Manali, the young Sey Rinpoche received teachings from the great VIII

RETREAT BEGINS
ON THURSDAY,
JUNE 5TH
AT 4 PM.

Cost: Lit. 150.000.

Discount of 30% for ordinary members, free for sustainers.

Khamtrul Rinpoche after which he went to Tashi Jong to receive further teachings and initiations from the same Khamtrul and from Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche. In 1974, realizing that he would not live much longer, Apho Rinpoche entrusted his son into the care of Thuksey Rinpoche, another disciple of Tripon Pema Chogyal who had a monastery in Darjeeling. Apho Rinpoche died the same year. Sey Rinpoche remained in Darjeeling

for four years and received spiritual instructions from Thuksey Rinpoche and the abbot Noryang. On Thuksey Rinpoche's death, Sey Rinpoche went to Bhutan and studied for two years with Lopön Sonam Zangpo, a direct disciple of Togden Shakya Shri, practicing the Six Yogas of Naropa. In 1986 Sey Rinpoche married, fulfilling the wishes of his father and masters.

Since then Sey Rinpoche has studied with Adhey Rinpoche and has received the teachings and empowerments of Nyingma Tantra and the oral transmissions including many of Dzogchen from Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche. He also studied Buddhist dialectics and the Prajnaparamita for three years at the Institute of Buddhist Dialectics in Dharamsala.

Since 1984 Sey Rinpoche has resided at his monastery where he continues to receive teachings and transmissions from the abbot Khyentse, and often gives teachings of the Drukpa Kagyu tradition, in particular the transmission of the Six Yogas of Naropa. ■

ONTUL RINPOCHE

August 11-18

Drikung Ontul Rinpoche was born in 1950 in Kham, East Tibet. In 1954 he was recognized as the incarnation of Ontul by H. H. Drikung Kyabgon Chetsang Rinpoche and H. H. Gyalwa Karmapa. Consequently he was enthroned at the Dong Med Ogmin Thuntan Shekdrub Ling monastery the same year. Lama Kalsang Namgyal, assistant to his previous reincarnation, taught him how to read and write, recite texts and so on.

In 1959 he left the monastery with his tutor Kalsang Namgyal and together with many monks they managed to cross the Tibetan border and arrived in India by way of Nepal. In India life was not easy because he had to wander for almost fourteen years without a fixed abode.

In India he met Drikung Khandro Neni Rinpoche (*khandro* or *dakini* is a highly realized yogini) and he received extensive instructions on the Ngondro practice of the Longchen Nyingthig followed by the transmission of many important texts from Khenpo Thubten, a great Nyingmapa master. On various occasions he received Mahamudra

and Dzogchen teachings from H. H. Dudjom Rinpoche, Khunu Lama Tenzin Gyaltan, Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche, Kalu Rinpoche and others. From Khyung Ka Rinpoche he received teachings and personal instructions on the profound five-

RETREAT BEGINS
ON AUGUST 11TH
AT 4 PM.

Cost: Lit. 350.000.

Discount of 30% for ordinary members, free for sustainers. Free child-minding service available on request.

fold path of Mahamudra. After this he went to Ladakh where he received many important empowerments, instructions and oral transmissions of the Drikung Kagyu from H. E. Choje Togdan Rinpoche whom he followed for many years during his travels.

In 1971 he returned to India and bought some land at Tso Pema (Rewalsar, H.P.) with the donations he received from the population of Ladakh. With the help of his monks he began to build a monastery. Tso Pema, which means 'Lotus Lake' is

one of the sacred places in which Guru Padmasambhava manifested his miraculous powers.

It took many years to build the monastery and to furnish it with sacred objects, ritual instruments and all the necessary things. Now that it is almost completed there are about thirty monks residing there who maintain the Kagyudpa Drikung tradition.

In 1983 Ontul Rinpoche returned to central Tibet and Kham. After visiting Lhasa and the Drikung Thil monastery, he arrived at his own monastery, which had been destroyed during the cultural revolution and is currently being rebuilt. In the autumn of the same year he went from Kham to Drikung in central Tibet and at the Drikung Thil monastery he met Drubpon Pachung Rinpoche from whom he received many teachings. During the same period he also met H. H. Drikung Kyabgon Chungtsang Rinpoche who was living in Lhasa at that time.

Ontul Rinpoche is married and lives at Tso Pema with his wife and son. He often travels abroad to give teachings of the Drikung Kagyud tradition. ■

Our Apologies...

to subscribers to The Mirror in Italy. The last issue of The Mirror (no. 39) was mailed from the US in the middle of March. Due to serious problems with the Italian post, subscribers did not receive their issues until late in April. The Mirror apologizes for the lateness in receiving the last issue and asks any subscribers who did not receive it to get in touch with the Italian office of the newspaper immediately for a copy. The Mirror, Merigar, 58031 Arcidosso GR, Italy. Tel/fax 0564 966608. Email: Liz Granger, 105113.1133@compuserve.com.

The Mirror apologizes for the omission of the address of Christiane and Salvatore Fiorito in the last issue, number 39, who are living in Mozambique, Africa.

The address is:

Hospital rural de Chicouque,
C.P. 41 Maxixe,
Inhambane, Mozambique
or c/o Wolff, PO Box 2712,
1200 Nelspruit, South Africa.



PHOTO BY F. ANDRICO

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu Plants Peace Vase at Namgyalgar

by Jean Mackintosh

A few days after the ten day Easter retreat which Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche gave at Namgyalgar, the weather suddenly turned windy and cold and everyone looked for extra blankets. This was the day Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche chose to plant the Peace Vase donated for planting at Namgyalgar by Ann Pickering of Canberra. About twenty practitioners followed Rinpoche up the steep slope to the special place at the top of Namgyalgar.

The Peace Vase is part of a project initiated in Australia by Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche. It is part of a global peace initiative and involves the burying of special vases in many different places. The vases are a part of the ancient Tibetan terma teachings given by Guru Rinpoche in the 8th century and their function is to create the conditions necessary for world peace. The construction, assemblage, consecration and planting of the vases has been coordinated by Siddhartha's Intent, instigated by Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche at the request of his teacher, His Holiness Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche. The instructions for making these vases were revealed in the last century by two tertons and Jamyang Khyentse Chokyi Lodro was insistent that the vases should be planted. His reincarnation Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche is now fulfilling the task at a time when peace is most warranted.

The vases contain various elemental and sacred substances as well as appropriate mantras and prayers, depending on the function of the vase. The main functions of the vases are: To create conditions for peace by pacifying negativities, to create conditions for health and well being by pacifying old and new diseases, to restore the power of the elements and to protect the environment from depletion and destruction.

The vases are to be planted at particular locations that have been indicated by the Tibetan grid system. Australia is one of the first countries to receive a large allocation of vases and they have been planted in many different locations here, including the sea.

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu planted one on Namgyalgar high up on the top part of the Gar on the side of Gulaga mountain. With about twenty practitioners present he planted the vase in a very special rock cave. A small fire was lit in the rocks and the Dzogchen practitioners joined Rinpoche in guardian and sang practice. Looking out over the sea from this high point on Namgyalgar, people hoped that the planting of this vase would in some way contribute to a more peaceful, healthier and cleaner world.

For more information about the Peace Vases, the contact in Australia is: Siddhartha's Intent- Southern Door PO Box 1114 Strawberry Hills NSW 2012 Australia ■

Dear Vajra brothers and sisters,

This article is to tell you about the card game called Calaco, how it was born and about its rules.

In the summer of 1995, we had the pleasure of having Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche, his wife Rosa and niece Phuntsok, as our guests in Sardinia to rest and to enjoy the sea. Since the weather wasn't always the best, we often stayed home and played cards and 'pachen'. One fine day, after a short rest, Rinpoche set to work with cardboard, scissors and felt pens and presented us with a new and unusual set of cards composed of

- three series of numbers from 1 to 9 in yellow, red and blue;
- three concentric zeros in the three colors;
- three jokers in the form of the sun.

Rinpoche gave the name "Calaco" to this card game, from Cala Corallina, the locality where he was staying.

We started to play straight away, learning the rules that Rinpoche showed from time to time. The "Calaco of Fortune" worked perfectly, it was great and exciting.

That night our friend Riccardo did not sleep much with the new playing cards revolving in his mind and the following morning he realized that he had devised the rules for the new game "Royal Calaco". In this way we understood that the new ingenious set of playing cards lent itself to countless combinations of games! Before his departure Rinpoche asked Riccardo to write down the rules.

The following summer, to our great pleasure, Rinpoche and his family returned to Sardinia. In the meantime we had produced by hand a prototype of the cards and we could play again. It was a lot of fun and Rinpoche said that it would be a good idea to get the playing cards printed and give them around. So we got into action and with the generous help of Giorgio Pieraccini of Milan who took care of the graphics and production, the first three thousand packs of cards were printed along with instruc-

Playing for the Stupa

tions in various languages. The costs were borne by Merigar.

The Calaco enterprise has been included in the program for financing the Stupa and, once the costs have been covered, all the profits will go totally for the construction of the Great Stupa of Merigar.

So now there is also a game that belongs to the history of the Community which Rinpoche has generously given us. The Calaco pack really stimulates creativity: with these cards anybody can invent new games.

As soon as he received the new packs from the printer, Riccardo drew up the rules of four other games: "One colored Calaco",

"Calaco Slam", "Calaco with four zeros" and "Calaco with four zeros and four players" whose rules are currently being translated. These games aren't difficult or complicated and do not require much reason-

ing, they are games of luck. The player must entice his luck, his good energy, take a risk and win. You can play free of thoughts with your energy functioning. Playing is a pleasant way to pass time, have fun and release tensions. Since the game has arisen from the mind of the Master, it has much more meaning. Think about the colors of the cards: yellow, blue and red, about the numbers from 1 to 9, and about the zeros which make the numbers of their color 'empty'. This says something to practitioners ...

All we have to do is play! ...and good luck to the whole world.

The Community in Sardinia

CALACÓ



The card game
invented by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu
Two packs of cards in one package.
Cost Lit.22.000 or US\$ 14.

Available by postal order, cheque or bank transfer (to acct. no. 3990 Cassa di Risparmio di Arcidosso) from the Associazione Culturale Comunità Dzogchen, 58031 Arcidosso GR, Italy. Postage/packing per pack: Italy Lit.4.000. Outside Italy (surface mail) Lit.5.000 (US\$3) Air mail - add: in Europe Lit.1.000 (US\$0.65), outside Europe excluding Aust/NZ: Lit.3.600 (US\$2.50), Aust/NZ Lit.5.700 (US\$3.50)



THE ENDLESS KNOT
The peace sign for the next millenium

Buy an Endless Knot teeshirt or pendant,
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The Endless Knot is one of the eight auspicious symbols of the Buddha's birth, representing the interconnectedness of all life. As the peace sign symbolized the energy and commitment of the 60's, the Endless Knot is the perfect sign for personal and global transformation in the next millennium.

The Endless Knot Project was founded to raise awareness of the plight of the Tibetans and to raise money for Tibetan resettlement. A percentage of profits from sale of the pendants and teeshirts are donated to the International Campaign for Tibet.

To receive your teeshirt or pendant, please send check or money order for \$20.00 plus \$2.00 shipping per item to:
Bead Store Cafe, 116 Center Ithaca, Ithaca NY 14850. Ph: 607-277-1729
Make Check payable to Tibetan Resettlement

A DREAM BOOK

Please send in your dreams
of Chögyal Namkhai
Norbu to include in a book
to benefit
The Mirror.

The dreams will be printed
anonymously. Please send them
by email:

102121.130@compuserve.com

by disk

for Macintosh or Dos saved in
text format,
or as a last resort,

typewritten to:

The Mirror,
PO Box 277,
Conway, MA, 01341 USA.

VAIROCANA TRANSLATION PROJECT



Bernhard Ioan Siegel

sings and plays his invention
the Harmonic Mega-Harp

A PRISTINE SOURCE OF SOUND IN THE UNIVERSE

The composer-performer of this CD has dedicated 108 copies to be sold for the Shang Shung Institute's VAIROCANA TRANSLATION PROJECT which aims to translate about 3000 pages of fundamental tantras of the ancient Dzogchen Teachings by the year 2001.

For your copy, please send \$50 US (or equivalent) by postal order or Eurocheque to: Gerd Manusch, Obere Wöhrstr. 8, D-84034 Landshut, Germany or a bank order to acct. no. 952818, Bankverbindung, Sparkasse Landshut, Germany.

SSI Conference

continued from page 8

skilled in traditional Tibetan plastic arts. Current works in progress include decorative work on the retreat cabin in Buckland, the securing of a grant to paint a refuge thangka for the Dzogchen Community, and a large thangka of Garab Dorje surrounded by the Primordial Masters.

General discussion following both project reports pointed out the need, at this time in the Institute's development, for full-time program coordination in order to free up the energies of Jim and Glen, so they may concentrate entirely on their areas of expertise. Tibetologist Janet Gyatso noted the long-term benefit to the Translation Project of networking in academia both to avoid duplication of efforts and secure assistance with translations in progress. Glen noted the benefit of networking the Arts Project with academic and other schools of art. Students around the world could be directed toward the unique resources of the Institute which preserves traditional methods, such as materials preparation, which may be available nowhere else.

Paula Barry reported on progress setting up an integrated web site which will eventually link the Dzogchen Community electronically with ASIA, the Shang Shung Institute, The Mirror and all the Dzogchen Communities worldwide. This will allow immediate dissemination of information on all the community's projects. Carol Shields noted the benefits that an integrated site could also provide by way of an interactive channel for direct fund raising.

Verena Smith reported on the Tibetan Medicine Project. Rinpoche has partially completed the development of a four year curriculum in Tibetan Medicine. Apparently a question shadows the medicine project as to just how much interest can be generated in the population at large in a professional program of traditional Tibetan medical education. Eliot Tokar, a long-time student of Tro Gawa Rinpoche and Tenzin Choedak, both renowned medical practitioners in the Tibetan tradition, reported at length on the history of the rather considerable legal, ethical, and political problems encountered in the establishment of alternative practices like Tibetan medicine in the West. On a more optimistic note though, he pointed out that practi-

tioners in the West are not constrained by the historic political divisions in Tibetan culture and, therefore, have a unique opportunity to preserve the medicine traditions in their entirety. Eliot cautioned that the Institute must address the interface of tradition and modernity in the preservation of medical knowledge rather than uncritically replicate only certain historical forms of practice. He also urged that a solid foundation be built of appropriate scale so that the Project not find itself too far out in front of the economic, political and legal realities which would firmly support the establishment of Tibetan medicine in the West.

Jim Valby reported on the status of the library which houses a selection of Dharma-related books as well as videos, audio-tapes and documents in machine-readable format. Rinpoche has suggested that the library proceed with the photocopying and cataloguing of works currently at Merigar. Jim foresees the need, eventually, for an archivist at the library to carry out such tasks.

Georgette Kelly discussed what has been temporarily termed Integrating Buddhism, reflecting interest in the expanded sense of the Institute's mission referred to in

Lauri's opening remarks. Georgette suggested that the question of just how traditional forms of Buddhism engage with modern culture arises in relation to each of the Institute's preservation projects. She noted, for example, that, while the introduction of Buddhism in the West may be attributed largely to enthusiasms among psychotherapy professionals, the relation between Western psychology and traditional Buddhism is by no means clear. She suggested that participants keep in mind the question of just how Buddhism can be of value to this modern culture.

Steve Korns made the last presentation before lunch break. He described his vision of a curated art event for the year 2000 of a pan-cultural celebration including Tibetan, Native American, Aboriginal, and modernist productions elaborating a theme such as "Nature of Mind." He envisions a mixed-media show which would involve not only the traditional plastic arts but also modes of land-use, architecture, music, and poetics. The show, looking for a wide audience, would travel outside of the standard Dharma contexts. Steve discussed fund-raising issues.

The afternoon session kicked-off with a presentation by Carol Fields on development and fund-raising. She suggested several steps for participants to keep in mind to assist in articulating their visions and grounding projects in realistic goals and essential development skills. Stephanie Scott followed with suggestions for the format of the afternoon's focus groups which further grounded participants in concrete skills for project development. Participants then broke up into five focus groups for the remainder of the afternoon to consider concrete proposals: Integrating Buddhism, Translation/Literature, Tibetan Medicine, Arts, and Fund-raising.

The whole conference reconvened at the close of the afternoon for a brief follow-up session on finance and development with Carol, Stephanie and Cherish Pratt. The biggest problem for the Institute currently, it seems, might be the lack of administrative personnel for support and development functions. Participants strongly recommended professionalizing the business functions of the Institute in the person of a paid, full-time program coordinator whose salary should be provided through a foundation grant for administrative seed money. Steps to securing such a grant were reviewed.

A superb dinner featuring momos and other traditional foods was prepared by members of the Pioneer Valley's Tibetan community. Traditional Tibetan dancing followed dinner. Sunday, a brunch and wrap-up session featured reports from the previous day's focus groups. The Medicine group decided that addressing the licensing of Tibetan medical practice would be pre-mature. The appropriate focus for 1997 is the production of free educational events. The Institute will invite Rinpoche to lay out a foundational instruction in medicine in order to test the interest at large in such a program. A further possibility is a program of instruction in the healing power of the elements by Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche. The

Institute will build a broad mailing list of those who are interested in alternative medicine. Funding needs, as well as the need for translation of basic medical texts, will be addressed. Verena read a rough draft of a statement of purpose for the founding of a school of Tibetan medicine, though she cautioned that building a school will likely be a very gradual process. A suggestion was made that a program for "healing the healers" be developed in the area as a way to simultaneously service local health professionals and begin the transfer of traditional medical wisdom into the wider culture. It provoked the first stirrings of controversy around the question of whether the Institute should be involved directly in programs which seek to mix traditional Tibetan and modern social forms.

The group on Integrated Buddhism supported the idea of a pan-cultural art event. Several working ideas for educational projects on Tibet and its culture in the local schools that would provide opportunities to inform both teachers and students, as well involve members of the local Tibetan community, were also supported. Jonathan Swinchatt suggested producing videos with his broadcast-level equipment on the Institute's projects for the purposes of program development and fund-raising. The first such project might be a series on Glen's work in the preservation of the philosophy and processes of thangka painting. The group was particularly interested in developing projects which would also directly assist members of the local Tibetan community. Networking with other Buddhist groups in the West that already develop projects to interface with modern cultural issues was also suggested so that the Institute could stay informed of opportunities for collaboration.

Some controversy again surfaced, at times heated, but not without some raucous hilarity as well, about the difficulties of managing the interface of the Institute's primary mission of Tibetan cultural preservation with modern social issues. The possibility of a conference specifically on this issue was raised and some enthusiasm was expressed for further exploration.

The Arts Project's goals and agenda are quite clear as already articulated. Glen needs money and students. The Translation Project shelved several proposed works for a variety of reasons to concentrate on the Vairocana project as support for the development of serious practitioners. General publication will be sought only for non-teaching texts such as working dictionaries. Some proposals for collaborative efforts will be shelved until the resources and circumstances are more favorable. A five-year funding plan is an urgent need for the Vairocana project. Additionally, funds are needed for capital expenditures such as an up-to-date lap top computer so that Jim may keep abreast of projects while traveling. A brochure to aid in private fund-raising will be available within the month. Other avenues for fund-raising were explored such as grant-writing and the mechanisms for setting up trusts to benefit the Institute.

TARA MANDALA SCHEDULE

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RADIANT STILLNESS: THE DAWN OF COMPASSION WITH ANNE CAROLYN KLEIN, PhD JUNE 12-15 COST: \$210 - \$185 CLOSED RETREAT

Stilling the mind and opening the heart are skills central to the meditative art of Buddhism. This retreat draws from the mind-training tradition of Jamgon Kongtrul and from earlier Tibetan traditions.

Anne Carolyn Klein, PhD has studied, translated, and practiced Buddhist teachings in the US and Asia since 1970. Currently Professor and Chair of the Department of Religious Studies, Rice University, Houston, Anne's most recent book is *Meeting the Great Bliss Queen: Buddhists, Feminists and the Art of the Self*. She is Co-director of Dawn Mountain, a Tibetan temple, community center, and research institute in Houston, Texas.

STALKING THE WILD HARVEST WITH DIXIE NEUMANN JUNE 19 - 8:00AM - 6:00PM COST: \$35 - \$30 LIMIT: 20 PEOPLE

The morning will be spent exploring the forests and meadows, learning about edible, medicinal, and craft properties of the wild plants and trees of Tara Mandala. Bring good hiking boots, hat, water, snacks, notebook, drawing pen, and clear tape. Lunch will be provided.

Those who wish may come and camp on the land the night before.

Dixie Neumann has been working with the plants and soils of Southwestern Colorado for ten years studying the medical, edible and aesthetic uses of the wild plants. She also grows energetic, organic heirloom vegetables for personal and market enjoyment.

SUMMER SOLSTICE GATHERING AND STONE PEOPLE'S LODGES WITH UTE ELDER GRANDMOTHER BERTHA GROVE JUNE 20-22 COST: \$150 - \$135 OPEN RETREAT

We are pleased to welcome our old friend Ute Elder Bertha Grove to Tara Mandala this year to help us celebrate the summer solstice. Grandmother Bertha works spontaneously with Spirit in response to the needs and interests of the group. Grandmother Bertha, now in her seventies, is a highly respected member of her tribe, pipe carrier, and grandmother. She is an internationally regarded teacher of the ways and ceremonies of her people and was called to "the medicine way" while growing up in her grandfather's medicine tipi.

This retreat will include stone people's lodges (sweat lodges), council circles and time for group and private discussions.

Please Note: We would like to talk to you about traditional offerings to honor the leaders of the Stone People's lodge.

CULTIVATING RIGHT RELATIONSHIP THROUGH MEDITATION WITH TSULTRIM ALLIONE JUNE 26-29 COST: \$210 - \$185 CLOSED RETREAT

From the moment we sit down with ourselves for the first time in meditation to the final moment of Enlightenment, we are always working on relationship, first to ourselves, then to others. How we approach this changes along the path: learning not to cause harm, then benefiting ourselves and others, transforming emotion into wisdom, and then directly experiencing the Great Perfection.

Tsultrim Allione is author of *Women of Wisdom* and founder of Tara Mandala. She has been a student of Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche for 17 years. She founded Tara Mandala in 1993.

FAMILY RETREAT AND VISION QUEST FOR TEENAGERS WITH TSULTRIM ALLIONE, SPARKY SHOOTING STAR, JEFF "WHITE HORSE" HUBBELL, MARIAM HAWLEY, LICSW, CGP AND JEFFREY MCINTYRE, M.Ed., LMFT JULY 5-12

COSTS: \$375 FIRST PARENT
\$325 SECOND PARENT
\$255 FIRST CHILD OVER 5 YRS.
\$230 SECOND CHILD OVER 5 YRS
\$355 TEENS

All children 5 and under are free. Child care costs are paid by parents direct to child care providers.

CLOSED RETREAT

We will offer opportunities for a vision quest based in the Native American tradition and a rite of passage for teenagers and people in their twenties. Vision quest helps young people experience a personal sense of the sacred, a passion for life, and take responsibility for their own spiritual growth. Young people will be guided through a rite of passage ceremony as a group with their families participation a being fundamental part. This part of our program will be guided by Jeff "White Horse" Hubbell and Sparky Shooting Star, who will also spend time with the younger children.

Sparky Shooting Star is of Cherokee descent and follows the Sacred Pipe on the Sundance Trail. She teaches about the Sacred Hoop of the Medicine Wheel and the circle as foundation of the Native American way of life. "Horse" Hubbell is a Sundancer and has lead young people through their rites of passage for 7 years. He co-founded Thunder Horse Ranch, a learning and ceremonial center in West Point, Texas, with his wife Mary Thunder.

This retreat will also be staffed by Tsultrim Allione, Jeffrey McIntyre, M.Ed., LMFT, Vajrayana practitioner and father of 3, and his wife, Miriam Hawley, student of Thich Nhat Hanh, and co-writer of *Our Bodies Ourselves*.

PLEASE NOTE: We would like to talk to you about the traditional preparation and honoring for vision quest ceremony.



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CONTINUED FROM THE PREVIOUS ISSUE

SPECIAL PRACTICE CALENDAR

ASIA Sponsorship

continued from page 1

agricultural land where, in the future, the monks can cultivate the vegetables necessary to maintain the members of the monastery. It costs about \$3,500US to buy an acre of land. Lopön Tenzin Namdak is trying to find the funds to buy at least ten acres.

THE SCHOOL FOR THE HANDICAPPED IN LHASA We are trying to start up a project for sponsorship from a distance of children of this school which opened in 1993. We feel that it is important to contribute to maintaining the studies of children who live in Tibet where their families live in poverty compared to those living in other countries. Children over ten years old study in the school, half of whom are orphans and the other half handicapped, coming from the counties around Lhasa. The study course lasts for five years. During the course the children have lessons and in the afternoons work in the workshops to learn trades such as tailoring, design, traditional painting and making paper. The school is mainly financed by donations from foreign benefactors. The director of this school is currently involved with the restructuring of an orphanage which will be able to house another 240 orphans and handicapped children from very poor families.

RESTORATION OF THE BIR SCHOOL ASIA is currently evaluating a small project presented by the Khampa Society for the restoration of their school. ASIA has to decide whether to manage it as a separate project or as a microproject within the bigger project of sponsorship from a distance, making use of the reserves of the sponsorship fund. The works will include: 1) the dismantling of the existing roof made of thin cement tiles most of which are cracked so that rain leaks into the classrooms creating a lot of inconvenience for the teachers and the children. 2) the construction of a cement roof and pillars in the corridor to support the additional weight. The total estimated cost including

the material is \$16,000US. Project for the Khampa Society of Bir During the last two missions we further developed the project started in June 1996 concerning the Khampa settlement of Bir, three hours from Dharamsala. The project concerns sponsorships at distance and the selection of microprojects to be carried out locally. At the end of December 1996, 31 children had been sponsored.

THE SHERAB LING PROJECT At the Sherab Ling monastery situated in the same area, there are another 40 children waiting for sponsors. This monastery is under the direction of the 12th Tai Situpa, Padma Donyo Nyingche Wangpo, who gave teachings at Merigar in December 1995. His lineage is one of the most ancient: it begins with Maitreya and continues with Marpa, the great translator, whose teachings form the core of the Kagyupa tradition. As of the end of December 1996, we started sponsorship of 2 monks.

PROJECT FOR SENDING MEDICINES The correspondents for our projects in India and Nepal have sent urgent requests for sending essential children's medicines (antibiotics, disinfectants, dermatological cream...). ASIA has contacted several pharmaceutical companies that have undertaken to send medicines free of charge.

INFORMATION ACTIVITY IN ITALY In March 1996 ASIA held a conference at the middle school of Montecchio Precalcino promoted by the local civic library. About 150 children and young people attended silently and attentively. The same conference was repeated in Santa Fiora on April 29th at the Municipal Hall as part of a joint initiative with Shang Shung Institute under the title "Tibet - a Civilization in Jeopardy".

We held two conferences/talks addressing the potential sponsors for the sponsorship at distance project during which we talked about the pedagogy and didactics implemented in the Tibetan Children's Villages (linked to the SOS of Vienna).

During the month of June we had several meetings and exchanges with another important ONG (ASSEFA of Sanremo) which is involved in sponsorship at distance. The meetings very much enriched our knowledge about the management of projects such as sponsorship at distance. We also defined reference points for the creation of a software program that will allow us better control

of all data relative to the sponsors. In this way we will be able to provide them better and more detailed feedback about the development of their contributions to the project. We underlined the importance of starting microprojects that can be executed using the reserve funds of the sponsorship program. These projects adopt a new line targeting the social development of the villages concerned with our initiatives.

PROMOTION OF THE PROJECTS IN ITALY We have published articles in regional newspapers about our of sponsorship at distance project and will try soon to do the same at the national level.

OLGIATA SCHOOL Before Christmas in a kindergarten in Rome we gave a show based on a Tibetan fairy tale. Our aim in doing this was to provide both children and parents with some elements of knowledge of Tibetan culture. We also wanted to take advantage of this chance to talk about our activities and goals in an informal way. Several individuals showed an immediate interest in our projects of sponsorship at distance.

COMMERCIAL DEPARTMENT This year ASIA began importing traditional items both ancient and modern from Tibet, India and Nepal. These items were meant to be used during our shows on Tibetan culture as well as to organize a small commercial activity. The items we have available at present in our ASIA office are thanks, carpets, masks, costumes, jackets, yak wool pullovers, incense, statues, t-shirts etc. The profits coming from the revenues of these sales will be used for financing the projects under way. We are also printing a small catalogue with a list of prices that will be distributed along with the articles to our representatives in different cities.

MAIN OFFICE In order to follow up all the projects we have under way and to improve the coordination among them, ASIA has rented a small two-roomed office in Rome. We have also purchased two computers and a photocopier. The printers have been donated by two sponsors of ASIA. Maddalena Cosso, coordinator of sponsorships at distance, and Fulvio Rossi, administrative and logistics coordinator are working full-time in this office. In order for our office to be fully functional we need another computer. As usual donations are welcome. ■

"...IT IS BEST TO DO THESE practices collectively with your Vajra Brothers and Sisters (at the recommended times), but if this is not possible you can do them personally whenever you have free time. The important thing is to try to communicate with all practitioners linked with the same transmission. In this way you develop the potentiality of your transmission and your understanding and capacity to integrate your daily life into practice ..."

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

The most important thing we can do to help maintain the good health of our precious master, Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, is to keep our samaya as pure as possible and to correct all errors by performing Ganapuja with our Vajra Brothers and Sisters.

10th Month, 15th day Sat. 13th Dec. 1997 FULL MOON. This day is considered to be the day to honor the Lord Buddha in general, and it is one of the best days to do the Long-life Practice with the Dakini Mandarava particularly. Therefore try to do the Long-life Practice, "Cycle of Life's Vajra". Generally the best moment to do this kind of practice is at 7-8 o'clock in the morning. But if you don't have this possibility, then do it in the afternoon or later in the evening when you are free.

10th Month, 25th day Wed. 24th Dec. 1997 This is a Dakini day, and the anniversary of Tsongkhapa (1357-1491), who made a synthesis of the previous schools and founded the Gelugpa school. Try to perform a Ganapuja with your Vajra brothers and sisters or the Medium Tun personally. In either case recite the heart mantra of the Dakini Simhamuka as many times as possible.

10th Month, 30th day Mon. 29th Dec. 1997 DARK MOON. This is an excellent day to practice Purification of the Six Lokas.

11th Month, 7th day (no 8th this year) Mon 5th Jan. 1998 This year there is no 8th day so the 7th is a particular day for the practice of Ekajati so try to do a Long or Medium Tun with intensive practice of the mantra of Ekajati.

11th Month, 10th day Wed. 7th Jan. 1998 This is a special day of Guru Padmasambhava. If you have the time and possibility it is good to do a Ganapuja collectively with your Vajra brothers and sisters, otherwise you can do the Long-life practice of "Universal Wisdom Union".

11th Month, 15th day Mon. 12th Jan. 1998 FULL MOON. This is an important day to do the Long-life practice of Amitayus, "Union of Primordial Essences".

11th Month, 25th day Fri 23rd Jan. 1998 This is a day of the Dakinis in general, so if you have the opportunity practice a collective Ganapuja, with the transformation of the Dakini Simhamuka, and recite her heart mantra as many times as possible. Otherwise you can do a Medium Tun either

collectively or personally.

11th Month, 30th day Wed. 28th Jan. 1998 DARK MOON. This is a special day for purification practices so try to do "Purification of the Six Lokas".

12th Month, 10th day Fri. 6th Feb. 1998 This day is the anniversary of Guru Padmasambhava's coronation as Prince of Orgyen at the invitation of King Idzhabodi. We can perform a Ganapuja collectively or do the Long-life practice, "Universal Wisdom Union" either collectively or personally, according to circumstances.

12th Month, 11th day Sat. 7th Feb. 1998 This is a good day to do extensive practice of Ekajati with a Medium Tun.

12th Month, 15th day Wed. 11th Feb. 1998 FULL MOON. This is in general a day for honoring the Lord Buddha, and in particular an ideal day for the Long-life practice of Guru Amitayus, "Union of Primordial Essences".

12th Month, 18th day Sat. 14th Feb. 1998 This day is the anniversary of the great Dzogchen master Longchen Rabjam Longchenpa (1386-1363). On this very important day try to do the Guruyoga Agar Lama'i Naljor, Guruyoga with the White A, either collectively or personally.

12th Month, 25th day Sat. 21st Feb. 1998 This is a Dakini day, so try to perform a Ganapuja with the transformation of the Dakini Simhamuka together with your Vajra brothers and sisters. Otherwise you can do a Medium or Short Tun in the usual way.

12th Month, 30th day Thur. 26th Feb. 1998 DARK MOON. This is a good day for purification practices. Therefore try to do "Purification of the Six Lokas".

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DEATH:
Reece Smith died on
Nov. 19, 1996 (Guru
Rinpoche Day), two days before
his fifty third birthday.

Reece met Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche in California in 1989. He came to the teachings after many years of study and practice in Vipassana and at the Nyingma Institute with Tarthang Tulku. He had a love for nature that he combined with practice. During his battle with cancer, the best medicine seemed to be going into the Grand Canyon, the Sierra or some wild place and doing Dzogchen practice.

Professionally Reece was an acupuncturist. He and a partner founded the Institute of Chinese

Passages

Herbology in
Berkeley California.

Reece is known as
an innovator in the teaching of
Chinese Herbology and was in the
process of writing a book when he
died. He was also a bodyworker
with extraordinary touch.

BIRTH:
Judy Herzl and Charles Hoy joyfully
announce the birth of a beautiful
and healthy son, Theo Alexi Herzl
Hoy ("Telo"). He was born at home
on Monday, April 21st, at 9:29PM,
in Santa Fe, New Mexico, USA.
Telo weighed 8lbs. 6oz. and was 22
inches long. Labor was smooth and
relatively short. They are having a
great time getting to know this new,
wonderous being!

Tibet Amdowas

Part Two

by Donatella Rossi

This is part two of a two-part series on Tibet.

To go back to marriage, the Amdo traditional system for farmers differs from village to village. Generally speaking however, it is the father of the boy, being the most authoritative figure, who asks for the hand of the girl, by visiting her parents a first time.

During a further meeting, the two parties discuss the size of the dowry which will have to be provided by the groom. The meeting is joined by the girl's parents, relatives, and family friends.

When a family is in a position to do it, the price of the dowry is kept as high as possible, by praising the beauty of the girl, her personal qualities and the good name of the family itself. The dowry should basically cover all the efforts made and expenses met by the parents in raising and educating the girl. Also the milk of the mother is taken into account; in order to repay her kindness, a certain number of animals, garments etc. will be requested. Specifications are also given about the size of turquoises, corals and otter skin — the latter being an item very much appreciated by Amdowas — that will adorn the bride's traditional costume. During these negotiations, the figure of a mediator (Tib. *bar pa*) is considered very useful in order to reach an agreement that will result satisfactory to both parties. The dowry is expected to be delivered to the bride's family before the marriage.

Marriage celebrations can last for several days, where people dance, play games and sing auspicious songs. Even that was not permitted during the Cultural Revolution.

After the marriage has been celebrated, the bride goes to live with the family of her husband. In those rare cases when it is the man who goes to live with the girl's family, no dowry is requested. That happens when the caliber of the family of the man is not adequate, or when the man is not able to find a consort by himself.

As to the division of labor among farmers, men till the land, while women take care of the house and children. Among nomads, women milk the animals, churn butter, make yogurt, spin the wool, weave cloth, collect dung — virtually the only source of fuel they have — and so on. Women are in general not considered quite apt to be engaged in social matters. In very traditional families, their authority is not strong, particularly if they are young. They start to gain some authority after having children, even more, if the children are males, and when they advance in age. We will note that religion contributes quite significantly to this state of affairs.

The present law about national minorities requires local bodies to implement demographic control. According to that law, two children are allowed in big centers and for political cadres, while in extra-urban

areas three children are allowed. But these limitations do not always correspond to reality, both in positive and in the very negative.

The influence of the Hans is inevitably taking bigger and bigger proportions, both in the life-style and in the way of thinking. Some have completely adopted Han ways. This phenomenon is not appreciated by the majority of Tibetans, who have a strong sense of cultural identity. Common people, in order to preserve such cultural identity, make a point of communicating as much as possible using their original idiom.

We cannot really say that the concept of a standard language is thoroughly applicable in the case of Tibet: on one side, we have the written language which is basically the same; on the other, there exist many different dialects, although they may roughly fall under three major groups (Central Tibet, Kham and Amdo). As for the Amdo dialect, we have to distinguish the kind spoken by farmers and that spoken by nomads. The Amdo dialect has not undergone radical modifications in phonetic and morphological terms, as it happened for the language of Central Tibet; so much so that even today there are correspondences between the spoken Amdo dialect and the literary style of manuscripts composed more than one thousand years ago, such as the reknown Dunhuang documents.

Religion has contributed in a certain measure to spread the use of the literary language. The monks who used to go to Central Tibet to learn the sacred doctrine, or to go with the proverb, 'find the best religion', were coming back accustomed to use different forms of expression.

One of the strongest concern of Tibetans who live in China and work for the preservation of their culture is determined by the ever increasing inclusion in the spoken language of Han terminologies, and/or of phonetic transliterations of Han terms, in absence of Tibetan equivalents that have not yet been coined. That happens not only in the case of political words, but also in the case of expressions more strictly connected with everyday life. One instance can be the Chinese phonetic rendering of Tibetan proper names, which being completely based on the transliteration used for ideograms called pinyin, can be very confusing, and makes it sometimes almost impossible to trace back the original, even for Tibetans themselves.

On the other hand, the influence of the Tibetan-Amdo dialect over the structure of the Chinese Qinghai dialect is clearly visible, like for example the verb put at the end of the sentence. In Qinghai, even among the Mongols who are nonetheless very well aware of their own ethnic and cultural origins, a considerable percentage has come to



Nomad's tents

PHOTO BY G. MINUZZO

adopt the Amdo dialect as a means of communication. Contrary to that, some young urbanized Tibetans are completely demotivated with respect to their language, and are somehow convinced that the study of Tibetan is not conducive to a good position in society.

Nomads do want their children to receive an education in their own language, and in fact, many cases are reported of families that withdraw their children from schools, when it is understood that their curriculum will be almost entirely based on the Chinese language.

Schools for nomads are organized at the places where they spend the winter; erring teachers riding horses, spend some time with the children of a certain group, then move to another settlement and so on.

It is maybe an understatement to say that the education of nomads is a serious problem and a difficult issue, as it is that of their access to healthcare. On the other hand, in view of their life-style, a very sophisticated level of instruction is not always considered as a vital necessity. For example, knowledge of the written language is sometimes simply viewed as connected with the reading of religious texts, and in a broader sense, as part of a religious and monastic education. Religious education continues to take place in the monasteries. Many reprints of important texts have in fact been promoted by them. On the other side, 'secular' education at higher levels is concentrated at the Institutes of Nationalities; the curriculum is principally based on humanistic subjects. The study of technical and scientific subjects is not imparted.

Moreover, it may thus happen that the charisma of religious figures be counterproductive to the study of subjects that are not religious in their own right: often the viewpoints of Lamas are adopted because of faith and respect, so that issues that would require a more open and objective perspective are dealt with in a generic way, or are not considered as important in the first place.

Religion

The majority of Tibetan Amdowas is Buddhist. The tradition to which they mostly refer to is that of the *dGe lugs pa*, also called the Yellow Hats because of the color of their headgear. This tradition recognizes its origins in the teaching of Tsong kha pa Blo sang Grags pa (1357-1419), one of the most important figures in the history of Tibet and in the development of Tibetan Buddhism. He was born in Amdo, in a village situated near the capital Xining. It is narrated that already in

his young age, Tsong kha pa showed remarkable spiritual qualities. He went to Central Tibet and studied religion, philosophy and medicine at the site of one of the two most important religious centers of the moment. Soon he started the production of many important doctrinal works, which became the source of inspiration for the followers of a new Tibetan Buddhism heralded by the *dGe lugs pa* school, the relevance and importance of which had very determinant consequences for Tibet, not only from a doctrinal viewpoint, but also from a political one. It was precisely under the aegis of the *dGe lugs pa*, that the system of voluntary incarnations of the Dalai and Panchen Lamas was initiated. In fact, one of the places where Tsong kha pa taught was the hill of Lhasa where later on the Potala Palace was to be erected.

The fame of Tsong kha pa went so far as to reach the third emperor of the Ming dynasty, Yong Le, who invited him to China. However, he declined the invitation and chose to be represented by one of his disciples.

In 1409 he instituted the religious ceremony called *sMon lam*, or good omen prayer, which takes place in Lhasa just after the New Year's celebrations. Even today, after more than 25 years of political interruption, this ceremony represents a very important religious gathering both for the clergy and the lay people.

In 1417 the meeting hall of the temple of *dGa' ldan* founded by Tsong kha pa, was consecrated with a solemn ceremony. This temple became in time an enormous monastic complex, a sort of stronghold of the *dGe lugs pa* school. It was heavily bombarded during the Liberation, and what we can see today is just a shattered fraction of what it was said to be.

During his life, Tsong kha pa was admired for his objectivity and absence of sectarianism, two qualities that allowed him to thoroughly study and assimilate the doctrines of the most important lineages prevailing at his time.

In 1379 the mother of Tsong kha pa sponsored the construction of a Pagoda, called the Lotus Pagoda, as a token of honor for her son. This structure is still extant, and was included in the monastic complex of *sKu 'bum bkra shis 'khyil*, which was established in 1588 following the wishes of the Third Dalai Lama bSod nam rGya mtsho. Situated at about 25 kilometers South-east of Xining, this monastery has come to be the biggest *dGe lugs pa* establishment of the whole region: two of its four colleges are exclusively ded-

icated to the study of Tibetan astrology and medicine, which as we know are very much connected to the Tibetan tradition.

Nomads and farmers constantly visit this monastic complex, not only to honor the memory of Tsong kha pa; but also because in 1935, the XIV Dalai Lama was born in a village very close to this monastery.

At present, although the *dGe lugs pa* school is the most followed, the existence of other Tibetan religious schools in Amdo is not to be underestimated. It is not uncommon to find temples—monasteries of two or three different schools in the same village, as it is possible that even in a single family, parents or children may prefer one school over the other without apparent contrasts.

During the summer, the most important Lamas leave their residences and settle in designated places on the highland for days on end, to meet devotees and impart blessings, name newborns, give teachings, perform consecrations, initiations and so on.

As far as the Bönpo tradition is concerned, we may say that at present the highest concentration of its followers is to be found in Qinghai and in the Sichuan Autonomous Prefecture of Aba (Tib. *rNga ba*). In Qinghai, about twenty thousand individuals follow the Bönpo tradition, of which fifteen thousand reside in the relatively small districts of *Reb kong rdzong* and *Khri kha rdzong* alone (in Chinese these districts are known as the Autonomous Prefectures of Tongren and Guide). One of the most representative and authoritative Bönpo spiritual figures now existing in Tibet lives in the area in *Reb kong*. His name is Lama Bön rGya. He is about fifty years old and belongs to a lineage of Lamas linked to the Amdo teacher *Shar rdza bkra shis rGyal mtshan* (1859-1934) — a great master and extremely prolific scholar who practiced *rdzogs chen*, and as it is known, died without living any bodily remains.

In the overall however, the Bönpo tradition still remains rather unpopular in Tibet. Centuries of religious polemics and political interest have been the cause for this state of affairs. The situation seems to be changing slowly. The works of Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche about the origin and culture of Tibet in general and on the Bönpo tradition in particular have now published in both Tibetan and Chinese. His works do have a catalytic role, since they have the power of stimulating discussions that go beyond mere religious bigotry and have the effect of inspiring more awareness about the real scope of the Tibetan culture as a whole.

Donatella Rossi was born in Rome, Italy in 1958. She met Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche in the year she graduated from High School. She pursued Oriental Studies at the University of Rome and after that lived in Asia for a number of years, doing research, studying, and working. At present she is engaged in her doctoral research on the Great Perfection in the Bön religion. She is presently living in Portland, Oregon, USA. ■

Gerry Steinberg and Verena Smith are both long time practitioners involved in the Tsegylgar Dzogchen Community. Gerry is an allopathic physician and Verena is a practitioner of Chinese medicine and herbology.

M: Both of you have contact with people who are dying. How do the teachings effect you in relation to the dying person, and also can you see your relationship to the teachings impacting that person in terms of their own death, that you are aware of?

G: For me, it's not much different, relating to the people who are dying or the people who are living. I try to bring in my awareness that this all a part of the process of living; not so much by conceptualizing it or talking about it with the patient, but just by trying to have that presence, that natural aspect, and that there's nothing to be afraid of and transmit somehow my sense of death and dying and a certain confidence I have in that. Not in the fact that I know how to manifest in that circumstance, but a certain confidence in knowing what the possibilities are and knowing that I have the connection to the transmission and a kind of objectivity about that process too. When I see someone who is in the death process to not get emotionally messy about it, that doesn't mean to be indifferent, but not to have those sorts of clinging attachments to the circumstances.

and conditions. To be aware that this is an unavoidable circumstance we all have to face and to do it in the best way we can.

V: I work with a lot of people who have cancer and AIDS, a lot of people have died, and when I look back on how many people I've had to say goodbye to, I try to be there with them and depending on what I sense them needing, I try to provide what it is they need, materially or with words, whatever they need. The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying has been wonderful. People have made a connection to Rinpoche and the teachings, and are wanting to meet the teachings, some are to weak to come so I bring a necklace or something to Rinpoche—they see the paintings of Tara in my office and they feel something and ask, so I try and make a connection when I can.

M: Is there a point in the death experience where you have witnessed a surrender or letting go or do people often maintain a lot of fear?

V: What comes to my mind is that really dying is not very easy. I've seen bodies of AIDS patients where I'm just in total awe of how they are still alive, but they are, and

there's a fearful clinging. I remember one person who was in fetal position for days and I wanted to say "Let go, it's all right", but they can't and that's all right. I have witnessed more fear than not. With drugs the death process becomes more complex, when we try to prolong life and we've lost the person a long time ago, and they are still hanging on with this fear of not knowing what's going on. I wish that people could just die and when it was time to go, just go. That doesn't seem to happen too frequently. It's hard.

G: Those circumstances are similar or me, I've seen many people who have been close to dying and right after they've died, not so many at the exact moment of death, except in the emergency room and people have died very quickly, which is different. It's very variable. I've seen some people who have done very well and were able to let go a bit, and some who were very fearful, right until the very end. Many people have a very hard time letting go because in the Western view, there are so many who don't have faith in anything, there are some who have faith in Western religion, but there are many who don't believe in any-

thing, they're very nihilistic, all they have is their life, so it's very difficult. There is a large amount of denial. One thing I have found is that some of the very old people are very relaxed about it.

M: Do you think there is more of a tendency in this age to prey on the vulnerable and desperate? Do you think there was a time when people had more integrity about caring for the sick, or is that some kind of romantic fantasy?

G: I think there are some very strange counter tendencies in Western medicine. I think it's a big business. By the same token there are allopathic practitioners who are more aware and sensitive then they might have been years ago. Both of these things happening concurrently.

V: I have had much more contact with Western doctors in the last few years, and they are more open to talk, they even refer patients to me. In the complimentary field of so called "alternative" medicine, I think there are a few very hungry ghosts out there, but they get found out. Certainly there are predators, but I don't think that's avoidable as long as we have human nature.

M: So it seems there is a mar-

riage of Western and Eastern medicine beginning?

V: Well, maybe in separate beds.

G: I have a biased view because the Western physicians I have a good connection to are much more open. My sense is there is a much more opening on all sides and awareness of the mind/body connection.

M: In summation, can you share how you juggle your incredibly busy lives that include very active health care practices, families and commitments to the Dzogchen Community?

G: My life is very busy, but at the same time I try and respect my energy and do the best I can. The most important thing for me is to remain relaxed and engaged in my Dzogchen practice; that's my main practice. I have developed certain efficiencies in my medical practice in order to do that. I do a lot of management in my work, managing the team, and that kind of work allows you to conserve energy.

V: I think that the Om A Hung and the Vajra breath helps me a lot and I find that over the years the more hectic it seems to be; the more double appointments I have or emergencies, the slower I actually get and that's one method of efficiency I have discovered. That is respecting my energy, because if I spin with the wind I'm lost. I've also recently cut my work week down as well.

M: Thank you both very much!

Windhorse Associates is a therapeutic action group committed to working with psychologically disturbed persons in individual households in a natural community setting in Northampton, Massachusetts, USA.

Jeffrey and Molly Fortuna are the co-founders of Windhorse, Inc., in Northampton. Jeffrey is the Executive Director, and Molly the Director of Nursing.

M: What kind of disorders do you find prevalent in the people you see?

JF: Acute and chronic disorders like severe anxiety disorders, psychosis, depression, schizophrenia, severe character disorders, substance abuse (more secondary); basically we work with anyone who has what we call severe life disruptive disorders.

M: Do you get referrals?

MF: We get referrals from therapists in the community whose clients need a different kind of care, for instance, those who need assistance to bring home what happens in the office. Psychiatrists, social workers and family members refer to us. Also, when a therapist in a residential treatment program feels they are finished with their work with a client but the client may need further assistance to re-integrate into society. That kind of need comes up and they refer to us.

M: What is the actual physical and treatment set up of your program?

JF: There are primarily two kinds of treatment programs. One is that we set up a household with a

live in staff member sharing a two or three bedroom apartment, with a team of attendants spending time with that person in ordinary activities, in three hour blocks of time once or twice a day. There is a team leader also spending the three hour block who is the administrator. And there is a principle therapist who provides individual psychotherapy. Altogether there are six to eight people on the team. Then there is a psychiatrist who meets with clients on the average of once a month. He comes to meetings once a month and isn't involved in the actual team meetings.

M: The roommate is part of the treatment team? Is there someone around the clock with the client?

JF: Yes, the roommate is very much so. There's a lot of contact with the team, two or three hours at a clip, but not necessarily twenty-four hours unless there's a crisis. It's a complete environment, and the person's experience of that is there is someone around all the time.

M: So a client of Windhorse has to have a certain level of functioning?

JF: True. Especially beyond immediate danger. They need to be left alone safely and not wander or



inflict self injury.

MF: I must say it's interesting, when you have a team it becomes a container, a holder, and the client experiences being held in that container even if that person isn't there all the time. There's a feeling of protection that happens.

JF: There's a network of bonded relations and the bonds withstand the comings and goings of the people connected; the bonds are internal so the person can experience them when they're alone.

MF: The other thing is that the team meets together regularly once a week to talk about the relationships that are evolving. The client is also involved. One of the hazards that may be seen is that we're creating a narcissistic person with all this attention focussed on and around him/her. Everyone is devoted to that person and that's where all the energy goes. The antidote to that is that we focus on the health of the team. As issues come up

between team members we allow that to be worked with also. In that way it's more natural; it's the way humans relate. Then there's also the issue of how do I work with my own mind in the midst of this team. We use tonglen practice; taking in the other's pain and giving out light and goodness. This can be of benefit for those in the group who may have reached a stuck point in their relationship. We're very outspoken and open about how we work with our own minds, how we work with a relationship, and in that way we discover the truth. In this way the so called client becomes a full member of the team. They can actually help others in the group. They don't feel like they're just receiving something and in that way the health of the full team is complete.

M: I have read that one of the principles of Windhorse is that learning to care for others is an important part of the healing process in becoming a whole human being.

JF: You should give some credit for that to Harold Searles who was Ed Podvoll's primary teacher, as well as his training analyst. One of Searles' main tenets was that the obstruction of the compassionate

impulse of the child towards his parents is one of the main causes of illness; of psychosis. It is also a root Buddhist notion that a primary aspect of our minds is our compassion which must be expressed in order for us to be fully human. The child is trying to make the parents better parents by sending them compassion. And the non recognition and obstruction of those impulses can cause mental illness. So, we're trying to allow the patient to do that for us. It would be too claustrophobic if we all just focused on the client. It would be like a surgical amphitheater. So we work with that. Ed Podvoll had experiences related to this in the healing ceremonies with the Lakota Sioux Indians in South Dakota, where he lived for two years. In these healing ceremonies ostensibly the healing was for the ill person; get the person in the center and focus all the energy. In effect the benefit of the ceremony is for the Community. That would be the truly fulfilled healing ceremony. Ed remembered that. He thought that was wise and true; so we try to remember and practice that primary truth and try and remember how the healing for this one person is actually the condition for all of us to be healthier and more compassionate.

Part three will be in the next issue of The Mirror. ■

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Relatively speaking

Collaborating Across Organizations

by Cheh Goh

INTRODUCTION Like it or not, our world is shrinking. In addition to the availability of low cost transportation that takes us from a corner of one continent to a village of another one, the advent of electronic communication by means of telephone, fax and electronic mail, means that more than ever we are able to be in touch with other people. The significance of this is recognized by many large international corporations already: it is often possible to achieve better results only from a multi-organizational environment. In the process, co-operative relationships with diverse partners can also be strengthened, and support for each other built up. The Dzogchen Community is not unlike an international corporation in terms of the diversity of participants. Take a look at the number of concentration of Community members: an entire page in the Mirror has been devoted to listing the information of all the major contacts around the world. I believe that diversity in our Community is a strength to be exploited and will explore how.

WHY THE CHALLENGE We all know, "shooting an arrow without knowing where the target is" is a waste of time. That is why we must know the purpose of working across organizations. In fact, if we can find a way to work with people locally in geographical and organizational terms, then we should do so. Herein lies the key point of the mechanism of working across organizations: communication. If a project involves a team of people, then there must exist an effective way for the team to communicate among its members, and to communicate with the outside world. Otherwise, the project is likely to end in failure. Even in the best of times, we often fail to communicate properly with our partners, our relatives, our friends and others with whom we have physical proximity, so it is not surprising that if we have to work with others who belong to a different community, in a different country, with a different culture, and probably operates in a different manner from us, we could have very serious communication problems. These barriers aggravate problems that innately exist in ordinary processes. So, unless we definitely have to, it is really not sensible to try to do a project spanning four Gars in the two hemispheres.

So, why do we do it? It has to be clear that we gain sufficient benefits from such ventures. In our Community, there are examples of such needs. The Shang-Shung Institute, for example, is one. There are activities going on in Italy as part of the Institute's program, but it is not always easy to involve the people in North America. Having a Shang-Shung Institute in Conway potentially brings in the benefits of independence, greater linkage with more local organizations with the same interest and so on. The main

question becomes whether or not the two organizations can achieve more with active collaboration. If this cannot be achieved, it may not be a good idea to proceed with a transatlantic organization. The bottom line is: if things can happen locally, don't create trouble by making it a inter-continental challenge. It's not worth it!

Having declared that we must go into cross-organizational collaboration with care, it is worthwhile remembering that what follows can also be relevant to individuals working within a Gar, and the application of which clearly depends on the circumstances. So, we can adapt the principle according to our circumstance!

When it comes to collaboration we should try to proceed according to the following steps:

1. Preparation
2. Relationship Building.
3. Relationship Maintenance
4. Change Handling

PREPARATION Having decided that there are great benefit to be had or that there are compelling reasons that we must collaborate across organizations, we have to take the plunge. How do we proceed? The first thing to do is the preparation. Preparation involves the following steps.

REASONS. Write a description of the aim of the project to clarify the situation. Ask ourselves if this complicated project structure is absolutely necessary, and whether the extra effort needed to make such a project work is worth it. Try to reduce the number of organizations involved by scrutinizing why any group needs to be involved. Examine advantages, disadvantages, preferences, and influences. Know these reasons to explain them when seeking support from others.

It is really important to know that while there is value in involving many people when it comes to a Community project, there is always a relatively optimal size for a project. It could be a hindrance to involve too many parties. It is very different from doing practice, for which the principle of "the more the merrier" applies. This approach means that some people might feel "left out". While this might be true, it is important to recognize that such feeling is one of ego clinging and insecurity. It is better that we recognize our ability for the appropriate circumstance and not get hung up about having our "ego dented". This is really an opportunity to practice our awareness here!

PURPOSE. Clarify the project purpose. Document the vision of the future we wish to create, our priorities and goals. Make these understandable and desirable so that all participating organizations can understand.

INFLUENCE. Identify all people who are definitely committed in the project. Recognize the people who have the right abilities

and characteristics of enthusiastic conviction and financial resources, and are sensitive, articulate, competent, and socially adept. Network with these people in accordance with the law of karma: giving with a genuine generous attitude will breed good will, and we can gain support through good intention to benefit all. This is an extremely important point, because all projects succeed due to people, and building good relationships by applying the Four Immeasurables and being generous in feelings and in material things is a vital factor. We have a wonderful opportunity in training our attitude here!

RESOURCES. Plan the use of telephones, FAXs, electronic mail, or even teleconferences, and potentially many high-tech software where appropriate. Recognize that collaboration and productivity benefits from direct contact with people when travelling, but also the additional costs to operate across organizations, including travel and time. Plan for the extra costs in advance even if the resources are not available; we should be aware of the needs at least.

CULTURE. Be aware of cultural differences, be it regional (South versus North of a country), national (Britain versus Italy), or racial (European versus Chinese). People's actions, priorities, perceptions of the relative reality, and style are highly dependent on cultural values. Be sensitive to the needs of others by putting oneself in others' shoes. In summary, preparation is about how to be acutely aware of our condition, our purpose and the needs to meet this purpose. When we know who to work with, we move on to the

next stage.

RELATIONSHIP BUILDING Establishing good relationships in a project is like laying the foundation for a house. Without the support of good working relationships, the project which is the construction of the house cannot proceed in a stable way. The most important thing in establishing this foundation is to collaborate in the right spirit. Again, by adopting the attitude of a bee which goes to flowers of all colors to taste the honey, we can learn the many tricks and proven processes which can help us see the relevance of the teachings and the relative world. It is for that reason that the following items are highlighted to help a cross-organizational collaboration avoid becoming shaky later on.

COMMITMENT. Be totally committed ourselves, so that we can turn everybody into supporters. Contact everybody who has strong interest in the project directly to share your knowledge of the project. Solicit their views and suggestions, and acknowledge objections and concerns. Let them know how they are influencing the project and ask for their co-operation.

RECIPROCITY. Recognize the force of karma, that doing positive things for others leads to others bringing positive outcome to us later. Put ourselves in others' position. Develop compelling, motivating reasons for their support. Conduct mutually beneficial exchanges. Build a reputation for fairness and never for exploitation, and do your best to fulfill your promises to prevent letting people down.

KICK-OFF. Get all participants together face-to-face at the beginning of the project. Develop relationships and trust by setting an example of not being selfish or ego-centric. Explain reasons for the cross-organizational project and share concerns so that participants accept others and validate their roles. Recognize differences and seek consensus on the mode of operation.

DECISIONS. Align priorities.

Define a process to raise and resolve issues quickly, including ways to escalate them to the level of, say, the gakyil, where necessary. Agree on who can make what decision and be responsible for it. Let everybody know how decisions are made. Document assumptions.

Be ready to react to changes as part of one's own awareness of impermanent circumstances.

GOALS. Develop working goals and due dates. Because fuzzy goals become even fuzzier over distance, ask all partners to document specific goals that are clear, visible, and understood by everyone. Relate goals to the project aim. Reduce interdependencies as much as possible. Even if we believe in the commitment of other people working with us, it is better to agree explicitly so that all partners know precisely what each is accountable for what results.

PART II in the next issue of The Mirror ■

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REFLECTIONS



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How I Met the Teachings

An Interview with Dieter Denner

Mirror: Dieter, you have kind of an unusual story. Could you tell us what happened in your life that led you to the Dzogchen Community and the teachings?

Dieter: It's a bit of a long story, but as I look back, when I was a little baby, I was born in the war years in Germany and my mother was moving from East Germany to West; I can still remember vividly on this journey that I was laying in a train and to my left hand side there was the light coming through a milk glass and I knew I was on the rail car because I heard the clicking of the train on the tracks, and I had the sensation at that time that we were going to the East, even though we weren't. Also, when I was small and going to school I would always paint on the corners of my exercise books pictures of the mountains and the sun coming up, indicating my interest in the East. Later, about one and one half years later, I had the experience coming past a school classroom where there were poems written about Mongolia, which kind of transformed me instantly and I had a fantasy of that region. Then later when I was about sixteen years old, I was very much interested in

finding the real truth, so I looked up the people who could help me find it. But, of course, I couldn't find it. This went on for a few years. But the flicker of this desire never extinguished completely.

M: So you investigated different philosophers and thinkers?

D: Yes, at that time I became interested in Eastern philosophy. I read books about the Eastern culture, but never made the connection.

Since I was fourteen I was working in the mines in Germany, which I still do in Australia. But I had always been interested in crystals. When I immigrated to Australia I collected crystals.

M: When did you immigrate to Australia and how old were you?

D: I immigrated in 1968 and I was 24 years old. In the 1970's it looked like another wave coming on of seeking "the truth" inside of me. It would come in wave forms. I got more books on philosophy and politics.

Then I got the idea to find a blueprint that occurs in crystals, as they develop in seven different forms, and I was trying to find the blueprint, like the human DNA, of these forms. I thought there must be something there so I began actively looking and reading books and I was involved in geological study and mineralogy, but it didn't explain to me what I wanted to know. In the meantime I found a book supplier in Calcutta. He sent me book lists of different books, Buddhist books, books about the metallic ayurveda, and one of the books mentioned was *The Crystal and the Way of Light*. I

didn't really take much notice of it at the time.

M: When was that?

D: That was in 1987. I ordered three different orders of books since I first saw the title, once a year, and that name kept coming up, it didn't go away and I didn't order the Crystal, but it kept lingering, somehow it reminded of something and I had to have that book. The title didn't give any peace and I couldn't explain it. I would always think, "You must order that book", but never did.

M: How long did that go on for, this debate?

D: About two years. I finally decided to get the book so I ordered it in June, 1989 and it took a long time to come over and I got it on the 24th of December. It was a Christmas present actually. I had about thirteen books altogether in that book order and I started the Crystal in the New Year, in early March, and I read through to page sixty.

M: And when you saw the book you still thought it had some relationship to crystals and this interest you had in the DNA of crystal formation?

D: Yes. From the title. So I went looking for the blueprint. So, then I started reading and came to page sixty, and the funny thing about this was that I never had done this before with any of my books, but with this one I had my red felt tip pen and I began underlining certain sections that were important to me, then I came to the last paragraph on page sixty and on the nature of the mind,

and I stopped there and something clicked and I realized there was something more here than meets the eye. And then I started from fresh, from the beginning and I really went into it. Then I made the connection.

M: And then how did you contact the Community and Rinpoche?

D: I finished the book and there were addresses from England, and I wrote over there and they gave me addresses from the Australian Dzogchen Community and so I wrote to them. That was in 1991.

Then I realized I had to have the transmission before I went any further, so I wanted to see Rinpoche when he came to Australia in 1992, but I couldn't get any leave from work, so I went to America in August, 1992, to Conway, to get the transmissions from Rinpoche.

M: How did the retreat feel to you and how was the experience of meeting Rinpoche and all the people and the teachings?

D: I had a strange experience when we sang the *ngagong*. It sounded very familiar to me. I could not understand the text, I felt completely lost in it, and in the Long Tun practice I was completely lost but somehow it sounded familiar.

I felt very welcome over there. There were some tremendous people there.

At the end of the retreat when I flew home, it was about two hours into the flight and I had time to reflect and all those childhood memories of light, and feeling drawn to the East and all those childhood experiences came flooding back to me, and everything seemed to hang

together and I remembered an old phrase that I had heard in the 1970's: when the student is ready the teacher will come.

M: Do you remember the first time you actually met Rinpoche?

D: I met him at the Paparazzo's house in Conway. It was great to meet him. Rinpoche was showing us the pictures of his trip to Russia. So, now I've known him five years.

At the last retreat in Australia he gave the transmission and teaching on the twenty-five thigles and I got quite deeply into that. It opened up various things to me. Better clarity, more understanding and was tremendous for me.

M: So, at this past retreat here in Namgyalgar, you won the Vajrapani statue in the lottery, the first prize. Were you surprised?

D: It was a great gift to me. I never expected it. I mean, I was dumbfounded. Now I can do that practice. Rinpoche is an unbelievably good teacher with a wealth of knowledge and very fair. I was looking for this for a long time.

M: Can you say a little about how this experience has changed you; how and in what way you feel different?

D: It's hard to describe, but before I always felt a softness or compassion towards people, for people who had some kind of limitations, maybe physical or whatever, more apparent, but now that has expanded to all people. Also, now it seems in life one can see through people like a window glass. And before there was the occasional white lie, but I don't do that anymore. You change completely. I also feel more relaxed, especially in the last two years.

M: Thank you very much, Dieter! ■

The brilliant blue sky was laced with wing-like clouds as I gazed up from picking roses. A band of rainbow colors shimmered in a cloud by the sun, while nearby, five vultures circled in an invisible vortex of air. A sense of spaciousness and stillness filled me and the garden, as if the clouds in the sky were some great being cradling me and my home in her wings. A knowing opened from some corner of my being as I felt a letting go. I took a deep breath.

I walked inside my home where my partner, Reece, lay dying after battling cancer for two years and four months. In the bedroom the roses added to the beautiful thangka (Vajrasattva, Guru Rinpoche) and other Tibetan art.

In the days that followed as Reece traveled through his dying process, many people helped to create a sacred container for his journey. Through the wonders of E-Mail I was able to receive precious instruction and blessings from Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche. "You can make remember him the white A. It could be like a key for him."

These words were a guide as Reece would at times struggle in his

journey. Remembering Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche's instruction and using Sogyal Rinpoche's words, I leaned close to Reece's ear and told him to relax into the white A..... Relax as deeply as possible resting in the nature of mind..... don't be distracted by what is happening in your body, the nature of your mind remains as always, sky-like, radiant, limitless and unchanging..... Trust in the nature of your mind, trust it deeply and relax completely..... There is nothing more to do..... Just allow your practice to blossom inside you and open at greater and greater depths. Feel the presence of Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche and rest your whole being in his presence."

Reece's breath would deepen as his head relaxed into the pillow, his legs still. His hand reached out touching the white syllable A pinned to the wall. He had beautifully painted this white letter on black paper years ago. Now his gaze fell easily onto it as he lay in bed, his body slowly shutting down. His many years of practice and

Reece's Journey

by Ann Clarkson



study of the Dharma now provided a foundation for his journey.

Many blessings and expressions of love from so many hearts came to Reece as he journeyed through his passage. Not only the loving members of our local Dzogchen Community came to practice, but also practitioners from other sanghas. Tsaltrim offered support and wise counsel to connect with local lamas. Jeanne provided that connection bringing Pega Rinpoche (Tarthang Tulku's brother) and Karlzang (a monk from Lingtrul Rinpoche's center nearby). Jigme Rinpoche, Chagdud Rinpoche's

son, also visited offering important insight. "He is experiencing anger. Best to keep him very quiet, no distractions to stir up emotions or create grasping."

On November 19, Guru Rinpoche Day, two days before his fifty third birthday, Reece spent a quiet day with only the sound of Pega Rinpoche's and Karlzang's strong and steady practice. They had come the night before to practice and stay through the duration of Reece's journey. Their chant filled the house with peace. Shortly after they broke that evening Reece made a distinctly different sound. I was amazed to recognize the sound of A. It was a deep, sonorous sound that drew me, Jeanne and the lamas to his bedside. With long, forty second gaps between breaths Reece sounded A three times, and then there was breathless silence. The lamas immediately sat and began Phowa.

Many other lamas, as well as Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche, were contacted by phone and practiced for Reece. Tsaltrim was also contacted. As I sat in the room that

night the top of my head buzzed with intense sensation.

Following the lama's instructions, Reece was not moved for three days while members of the Dzogchen Community and others came and practiced. On the third day Karlzang tugged at the hair at the top of Reece's head testing to see if Phowa was successful. It pulled out easily "as if out of butter." "Good sign," he said.

There were many "good signs" to indicate Reece had transitioned well—particularly Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche's e-mail stating his happiness that "Reece passed with the presence of A. That is all. Of course I do my best for him particularly being in the state of Guru Yoga forever and ever."

Reece was a teacher most of his life. In his passing he continued to teach, offering an extraordinary lesson of how the dharma can aid in this ultimate passage. It was also a demonstration of the incredible container or vehicle for journeying created by the teachings, the Lamas and the love people expressed, the three jewels. May we all be so blessed when our time comes. ■

Still and silent in the morning sunshine I am seated in a kitchen chair in the garden looking steadily at the base of the tall, thick oleander hedge where, among the dense foliage, a stone Buddha sits among the lichens and the ferns.

It's Saturday and there's no school.

A light breeze ruffles my hair, and I can hear the cry of a kiskadee bird coming from a tree in the neighbours' yard where a brass wind chime rings.

Susannah comes and stands beside me: just over three feet tall, five years old, red hair in a golden aureole around her head. A perfect miniature of her mother, she looks at me with her green eyes, her whole face concentrated on mine.

"What are you doing, Daddy?"

"Nothing."

"Are you looking at the Buddha?"

"Yes."

"Are you talking to him?"

"No, not really. Do you see the lizard sitting in his lap?"

"Where?"

"There, look. Just where his robe folds over his knee."

"What colour is it?"

"Grey-green with a little red and orange pouch that he puffs up at his throat."

"I see him! Why does he go up and down like that, sort of bobbing?"

"I don't know. He just seems to raise and lower his whole body on all four of his legs, doesn't he?"

"Yes. He looks like he's waiting for something."

"Could be."

"Is he waiting for the Buddha to say something?"

"I don't think so. What do you think?"

"Maybe."

"Do you think he knows the Buddha is the Buddha? Or does he just see the Buddha as another rock, something to climb over, to sit on?"

"Oh no, he knows."

"How does he know?"

"He can see, can't he?"

"Yes, but how would he know that's the Buddha? After all, the statue is much smaller than a man, isn't it, and quite still, whereas a real man would move about."

"Oh but the Buddha is different."

"How?"

"He just is."

"And the lizard knows this?"

"Yes, because the Buddha is very still, isn't he? Not like a lizard. A lizard is always moving about. Look, see what I mean? He's gone now. He must have heard us talking about him. But the Buddha's still there; he doesn't move."

"Where did the lizard go?"

"Just in between those rocks."

"Is he hiding?"

"Maybe. Were you meditating when I came over here to talk to you?"

"Maybe."

"When you meditate do you talk to the Buddha, like you brought me out here to do when I got angry with Jessie just before my birthday party?"

"No, not really; that's different. That was just playing, pretending we had someone very wise to talk to when we get angry so that we can somehow get to not feel so angry. Did you enjoy talking to the Buddha like that?"

"Yes. It made me feel better."

"That's good."

"Is that what you do when you meditate?"

"No."

"So when you meditate what are you doing?"

"Nothing, really. Just relaxing completely and letting things be as they really are."

"Is it hard? I can't sit still like you do."

"So you're more like that lizard, then?"

Stone Buddha Among The Ferns

by John Shane

"No. I'm not green!"

"You don't have to sit still to meditate. You just have to be really right where you are, whatever you're doing."

"So what is the Buddha doing then, sitting there?"

"The Buddha isn't really doing anything. He's just sitting quietly. And he's not really a statue. That's just something to remind us."

"The Buddha was a man, wasn't he?"

"Yes, he lived in India a long time ago. But really when we say 'Buddha' we mean being really, really awake. When you are really, really awake, that awakens the Buddha in you."

"The Buddha in me? Where? In my tummy?"

"No! Just in the way you are."

Silence. The lizard comes back out of the crack between the rocks and sits sunning himself in the Buddha's lap again. The kiskadee bird sings "kiskadee, kiskadee" from behind the hedge and the wind chime rings.

"Daddy?"

"Yes?"

"I'm sorry about the bowl I broke."

"Doesn't matter."

"I didn't mean to do it."

"I know. It doesn't matter."

"Oh."

"I'm sorry I got cross with you, Susannah. I didn't mean to."

"I know. It's OK."

"I love you, Susannah."

"I love you too, daddy."

"Thanks. I'm glad."

"Me too."

Silence: the sound of the wind chime and a car on the road.

Susannah has gone inside the house.

I'm still sitting here.

Thoughts are arising one by one, in the spaciousness of relaxed awareness. One association fires another, a process without anyone in control, just happening of its own accord, thoughts arising with no one to think them.

I'm thinking back to when Jessie, our elder daughter, who is now eleven, was born in Greenfield, Massachusetts at the nearest hospital to Tsegvalgar, the seat of the Dzogchen Community on the east coast of the United States, at Conway.

When the baby was six weeks old we flew across the Atlantic to Italy. And when we arrived at Merigar, walking into the yellow house that we had helped to rebuild so that it could become the Dzogchen Community's base in central Italy, all our friends were gathered there to welcome the new baby, fussing over her, saying how beautiful she was.

Then we went into the old gonpa where Chögyal Namkhai Norbu was sitting on his familiar seat with his back against a cushion leaning against the wall—the wall I had helped to plaster and paint. He was sitting just where he had sat on so many occasions when we had received wonderful teachings from him, and where in fact he had sat when he performed a marriage ceremony for Jo and I, tying one long white silk scarf around both our necks as we all



did a short Gana Puja together.

A strange thought arose in my mind as I walked towards Rinpoche carrying the baby: 'my blood and sweat are mixed with these floorboards'.

Row on row of rather irregular screws filled the centre of my field of vision as I carefully descended the varnished wooden steps carrying the baby, and in fact there were so many slightly skewed screws that they

immediately brought to mind the days, some years before, when I and several other unskilled 'labourers', all of us translators and Tibetan scholars, had toiled, as was customary at Merigar in those days, to help with the laying down of the floor of the gonpa. Everyone worked at the rebuilding, including and especially Rinpoche, who, with a pick or shovel in his hands, seemed to work with more dedication and concentration than any of his students.

When I finally reached the bottom of the steps and crossed the room I put the baby into Rinpoche's arms for the first time, and he cradled her deep into the rust red folds of the down jacket that he always seemed to be wearing, day or night, summer or winter, and he gazed at her with complete love and attention, without saying anything.

I don't know what expectations we may have had of what he might say, but perhaps we anticipated a smiling comment similar to the ones all our friends had made. Or perhaps we imagined that he would give the baby a blessing or suggest a Tibetan name for her.

But he didn't say anything. He just carried on looking at her.

Then when he finally looked up and gazed into my face, his expression still had the same quality of absolute love that it had when he gazed at the baby.

But still he said nothing: not 'hello', not 'how are you', nor any of those regular forms of greeting that we tend to habitually use after not seeing a familiar person for half a year.

It seemed to be, for him, as if I had just stepped back into the room after going outside for a couple of minutes.

Rinpoche's eyes were wide open and unblinking, and they shone like dark suns burning somewhere far away across a vast, deep ocean of space. And some quality of knowing in his face made that face seem at once both ancient beyond conception and at the same time alive with a mischievous youthfulness. The pale afternoon sunlight that came through a window in the ceiling above us cast shadows that made his high cheekbones stand out in sharp relief to the rest of his face — those cheekbones somehow always make me think of mountains — and he seemed to glow with a fierce energy as his eyes held mine in an intense but completely relaxed embrace.

The silence between us was so complete that I didn't notice until afterwards that everyone else had gathered around us and was watching and waiting. Somehow the whole room itself seemed to have become 'watching and waiting', without anyone there to watch or wait, and my mind became as sharply focused as the lens of a high quality camera

that doesn't even in the slightest way distort whatever image is placed in front of it, so that later every tiny detail of that image can be exactly

reproduced.

Then, in a voice that was so quiet and peaceful and loving that it seemed to somehow barely escape from him with a sound like the sighing of the wind in a far-off forest of sycamore trees, Rinpoche said something that completely broke my heart:

"Don't make her enter into your cage, John, I beg of you...."

The world span away from me as his words sank in, and I seemed to be viewing the whole scene from a distance, as if time were an illusion, as if I were a child again myself, so totally dependent on those who cared for me, so totally open and vulnerable, my mind uncluttered by the fog of concepts.

But then I was suddenly back in the gonpa, an adult, a father, watching my baby daughter in the arms of the person whose wisdom and clarity I had come to trust more completely than that of any person I had ever had the privilege to know so well, and I felt the weight of the adult world bearing down on me with all its heavy injunctions, its 'musts' and its 'must nots', its 'shoulds' and its 'should nots', and I understood myself fully for the first time to be one of the principal mediating agents between this tiny baby and the world that would make such demands on and of her.

Determination struggled with despair in my heart at that moment, as it has done many times since.

"We who are so trapped in the cage of all our dualistic ideas, we who are so confused and caught in the web of non-recognition of the truth of 'what is'" — I thought to myself — "how can we not bring our children into our cage? How can we — who are so conditioned — not condition the ones we so long to love and protect, to whom we long to give only the very best of ourselves and the world?"

Ah, but now I understand that this is something that they teach us too, our little ones, if we listen, if we really, really listen — to ourselves and to them — if we listen nakedly to the moment as it unfolds, without pre-judgment, unconditionally, without expectation, with wonder and openness — yes, in fact, becoming ourselves once again like a child, just like a child, but further than that, beyond mere childishness, beyond merely becoming child-like, letting go of all our cherished concepts to arrive at a completely pure and fresh awareness, uncluttered by ideas of this and that.

Only from such a state can we recognize all the Earth's children as our own, not seeing them as 'other' at all.

Only from such a state can we bring to our encounter with each and every individual we meet — young or old, sick or well, animal or human — the same quality of undivided attention and love that we continually re-discover within ourselves in contemplation, as without effort we respond unhesitatingly, but with clarity and precision, to each instant of awareness as it manifests in the ever-changing flow of our life's arc from eternity to eternity in the present moment's self-perfected dance.

'Give birth to the child of pure awareness in every moment, and in the absence of clinging to a sense of self, love arises spontaneously for everyone you meet'.

I don't know if that's a quotation or not; but it doesn't matter. Let's just say, as Susannah might, that the stone Buddha whispered those words to us here among the ferns in the corner of our garden, and that because we have grown very, very quiet together we were able to hear him.