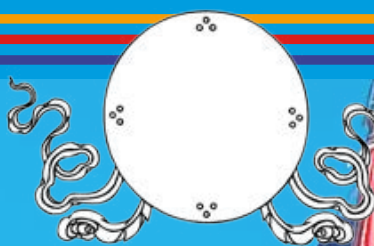


THE MIRROR

No. 155
March 2022



Teaching on Vajra Dance
Doing Everything in a Perfect Way
Portraits of India and Tibet
Pictures from the Past



INTERNATIONAL
DZOGCHEN
COMMUNITY

Contents

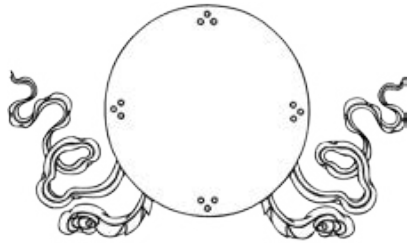
Rosa Namkhai's Losar Greetings for the Water Tiger Year	3
Teaching on Vajra Dance	4
Doing Everything in a Perfect Way	7
Join the Wheel of Solidarity	9
Shang Shung Publications	10
ASIA	12
Portraits of India and Tibet	13
Dzamling Gar	15
Merigar West	22
Merigar East	25
Kunsangar South	27
Kunsangar North	27
Tsegyalgar East	29
Pictures from the Past	30
Artists in the Dzogchen Community	38
Reflections	40
How I Met	42



Photo by Gabriele Siedlecki

Front cover: Hanging the prayer flags at Merigar after the new year, according to tradition some tsampa was offered and there were shouts of "Lha Gyallo!".

Back cover: Lungta at Dzamling Gar.



Rosa Namkhai's Losar Greetings for the Water Tiger Year

On March 3, 2022, after a ceremony to celebrate the new Tibetan Water Tiger year held in the Gönpa at Merigar West, in Tuscany, Italy, Rosa Namkhai shared this inspiring message with all those present.

“Good morning dear friends and practitioners from all over the world. All of us here at Merigar today send you greetings and good wishes. Yes, a greeting, even if making a wish during this period is not easy.

We are all practitioners and disciples of the Master. What have we always done? We have recalled his teachings in our minds, which mainly consist in being positive and in finding within ourselves the strength and courage, the energy to move forward and to overcome difficult moments.

Of course we also do this in a concrete way, not only with our thoughts; in fact we practiced a beautiful Ngagkong two days ago here at Merigar.

It was a wonderful Ngagkong because for a long time this wonderful Gönpa has been empty and instead we took turns practicing together. In this way the Gönpa came to life with all of us and with the presence of our Master and, exactly as he told us to do and as he taught us, we set in motion some positive energy, some strength.

When we set in motion positive energy, our attitude, our strength, and our will at the same time, everything begins to work.

But all this positive energy, our good intentions, and our will must be directed wisely. Emotions must be transformed into wisdom, not letting them go as they come. In this way we will find help for ourselves, for the people who are close to us, and for the whole world because we spread all this positivity, this beautiful positive energy.

We spread this energy to the people who are close to us and they in turn to others, and thus it reaches all beings throughout the world.

This is the wish we can send from Merigar, my personal wish and that of all those present. Let's always keep in mind the teachings of the Master: positive energy, love, and kindness. This is the heart of Merigar which we send to everyone and to the whole world. To all of you a happy new year! ©



Losar Poem by Jacqueline Gens

Year of the Water Tiger

This is not the time for grand
edifices
Nor golden mega images filled with
Hollow jewels taken for real
Formed first by feudal hierarchies?
Then buoyed by those deemed
lesser
With promises of merit, a better
rebirth
This is the time for ferocity of
Pristine
Mind, resting in the pool of
uncertainty
Stripped bare to the bone
The cool waters bathing our natural
simplicity, gazing beyond prey
Of imagined sustenance
Now is the time for sentinel watch
The stark stare of Tigers?
Burning bright in the night Loyal
protectors of our most
Precious Heart Space, our essence
Without shape or form.

Jacqueline Gens

2022 Tsegyalgar East

Water tiger Image by Ingmar Pema Dechen
<https://fineartamerica.com/profiles/ingmarpemakathleen-gutierrez>



Teaching on Vajra Dance

An excerpt from the morning session of day 4, December 31, 2017, of the Atiyoga Teaching Retreat given by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu at Dzamling Gar, Tenerife.

This excerpt was originally published in *The Mirror* in May 2018. It is the continuation of *The Mirror's* ongoing transcription project of the last complete retreat given by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu.

“Somehow, one day, you can discover your real nature.”

If you learn and understand what is contained in Santi Maha Sangha, you might not become a teacher, but even so, you will become a treasure of knowledge of the Dzogchen Teaching. It is very important to understand that. Related to teaching Santi Maha Sangha, I told you already yesterday, it is the same with Yantra Yoga and Vajra Dance. Vajra Dance is something very important. In Vajra Dance we are dancing and dealing with the Song of the Vajra.

The Dzogchen Tantra of the Upadesha says that if you received direct introduction in an authentic way, but you remain in doubt, then what can you do to overcome that? You remember how the Teacher gave direct introduction; you repeat this many times by yourself. And somehow one day you can discover your real nature. Then the Upadesha Tantra says, “If you do not discover your real nature, despite a lot of effort, then what should you do?” In this case, it is not sufficient that you repeat the practice you learned with direct introduction. You should do Ati Guruyoga and be in the state of Guruyoga; you should sing the Song of Vajra and integrate with it.

The Song of Vajra is not like ordinary mantras, it's not the same. For example, in higher tantras such as the Kalachakra, there is a root mantra. The root mantra is HAM KSAH MA LA VA RA YA. That is the Kalachakra mantra. Similarly, maybe you follow Hevajra or Chakrasamvara, or any of these kinds of high tantras. To succeed in realizing the development stage, the accomplishment stage, and the non-dual development and accomplishment stage, you need to chant a great quantity of mantras. By doing this, you can get in the non-dual state called Mahamudra. In order to do this, it is very important to know how it works in general with those mantras. But the Song of Vajra is different from those kinds of mantras, which are for chanting for that purpose. It is explained that there are three ways of learning and knowing the function of the Song of Vajra.

First, the Song of Vajra is from the Oddiyana language, or some language of other dimensions. Those who have knowledge, realized beings, for example, can understand a kind of translation of the words. We have a translation of the Song of Vajra in Tibetan done



Photo by Daniyal Ibragimov

by Longchenpa. This translation shows the meaning of the Song of Vajra – it introduces the knowledge of Dzogchen in a very essential way. This is one way we can study the Song of Vajra.

Another way to study the Song of Vajra is to understand all of the seed syllables. E MA KI RI KI RI, etc, governs our Vajra Body. The Song of Vajra represents our Vajra Body; the principle of the Song of Vajra is very important for understanding the Vajra Dance. When we learn the Vajra Dance, and when I learned this Vajra Dance in my dreams in the beginning, I understood and also introduced that we need to dance on a Mandala.

There is a Mandala that is a symbol of the globe where we live. There is also a Mandala of the solar system, which is a little bigger and is also danced on a little differently. Then there is an even bigger Mandala of the universe. So then we know how the Mandala corresponds to our existence. You see in the center of the Mandala, there are six or seven circles of different colors. After the circles there are many triangles and corners, etc. In particular, the triangles and corners are even more developed in the Solar System Mandala. The Mandala of the Universe is very big. All of this is in our chakras and in our physical body. We have a chakra of the head, chakra of the throat, chakra of the heart and other chakras. These chakras correspond to the circles in the Mandala.

Also we can understand that in the globe, for example, we have the north and south. We have the Northern Hemisphere with a North Pole and we have the Southern Hemisphere with a South Pole. So there are two different dimensions. When it is summer in the Northern Hemisphere, it is winter in the South. We know very well these situations are different. But we know only the idea of this kind of difference intellectually, not concretely. When we are



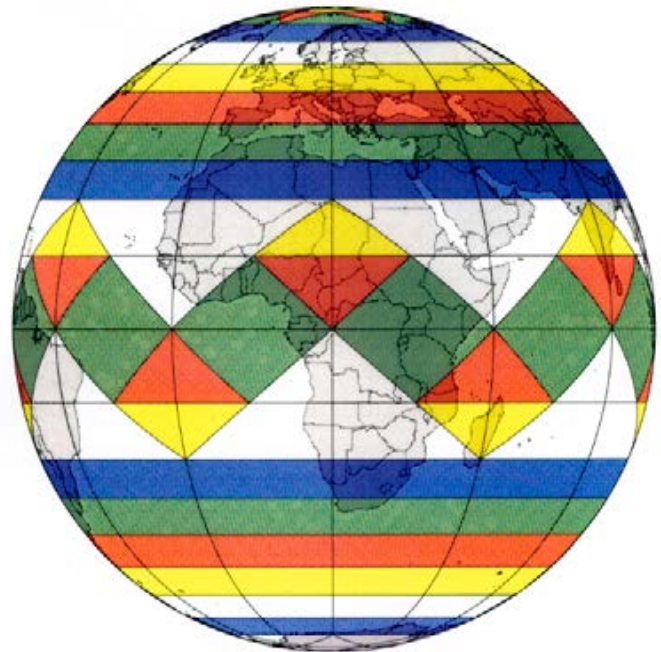
dancing on the Mandala of the Vajra Dance, however, we can understand this completely.

For example, in our dimension, everything is more developed in the North. Our official calendar represents the North more than the South. We say, "Oh this is the period of the Natale - Christmas time" and we know there is falling snow. People who are from the Northern Hemisphere don't need any effort to imagine this – there is always snow at Christmas. In the Southern Hemisphere, however, when they have Christmas, people put out fake snow as a decoration. It's the same moment, but why don't we have two different calendars for the two different experiences in these dimensions? Today we cannot do that because the North dominates the South. We can understand that also the Mandala is configured with a Northern and Southern Hemisphere. Each Mandala has a Northern and Southern Hemisphere can fit on top of a globe. The center of one Mandala is the North Pole, the center of the other Mandala is the South Pole and where they meet is the Equator.

All of this is very important in order to understand our individual condition and this is all related with the Mandala. In the Dzogchen Teaching it is very important. Why is it important? It is important because you know very well when we have knowledge of Dzogchen, beyond doubt, and we have discovered our real nature, what should we do? We integrate. So how do we integrate? I told you already that it is not so easy to integrate on the material level. So we have knowledge of the Vajra Mandala when we are dancing, little by little, step-by-step, we are walking. What does it mean? It is a method of integrating and in that way we can develop much more with the Mandala. This is the second argument and it is very important.

This is the third argument. The Mandala, which is a symbol of chakras, OM A HUM SVAHA, is all governed by seed syllables. Each of these chakras contains secondary chakras for the head, for the throat, etc. All are dominated by the seed syllables of the Song of Vajra. For example, when we are pronouncing E MA KI RI KI RI, there is a shorter sounding KI RI, then a longer sounding KI RI. Our bodies have a right and left side – solar and lunar. We have a front and a behind. Also this is connected with solar and lunar. So for that reason, there are longer and shorter sounds. It is not necessary that we do visualizations for that. We are not working with a Vajrayana type situation of the Teaching where we create something. We don't need to create anything – it already has its real nature. We need to understand and discover that nature. There is this outer Mandala and there is also the Mandala of our inner side. It is not sufficient that we understand this intellectually, in a dualistic way. We are here and something else is there – that is dualistic vision.

You remember, any kind of real realization, high level realization, is with integration. I've explained the teaching of the Four Visions before. I can't explain it all again now, but it is necessary I explain the First Vision to you. In the Dra Thalgyur Tantra it says that for someone fortunate to be able to follow the Dzogchen Teaching, even if it is outer, not the inner teaching, but the Teacher has knowledge of *chönyi ngönsum* (chos nyid nmgon sum) – *chönyi* in Tibetan means "dharmata" in Sanskrit, or how the real nature of the mind is, *ngönsum* means a concrete experience, what we see,



we hear, or we have some experience of through the senses - that Teacher should introduce what that is to the students. It is not said in the Dra Thalgyur Tantra that we need to keep this secret. It is very important that when we have *chönyi ngönsum*, when we really have that experience, then we have a very high level realization compared to experience related to Sutra teaching.

When we are following Sutra Teaching, first we say, *tsoglam* (tshogs lam), which means Path of the Accumulations. We start with the lower *tsoglam*, then medium, and then we arrive at the higher one. After, we advance to what is called *yor lam* (sbyor lam), which means the Path of the Application. First there is *drö* (drod), then *tsemo* (rtse mo), then *zöpa* (bzod pa), and then *chökyi chog* (chos kyi mchog). We are going slowly, step-by-step. By doing practice we are having experiences and we are getting in that level. The third level is called *zöpa*, which means something like patience. This means something like a Bodhisattva in Sutra Teaching. Until we arrive in *zöpa*, this third level of the Mahayana Sutra, we are not free from *samsara*. Normally we are just like a bird's feather floating in space; whether we go west, east, etc., depends on the wind. Here the wind is an example of our karmic potentiality. But when we are getting in this third level called *zöpa*, Sutra Teaching says that we will not be reborn in the three lower states. So we will not be reborn in the realm of the animals, or with the *preta*, hungry ghosts, and we will not be reborn in hell. So this is the concrete fruit, the effects of the three root emotions. So, in Sutra Teaching, this means the arrival at a little higher level, but in Dzogchen Teaching, if you have knowledge of the *chönyi ngönsum* and you are getting in that state, then you will no longer fall down to the three lower states. But just because you aren't reborn in the three

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lower states doesn't mean that you are realized. What it does mean is that you have the possibility to follow the Teachings and develop.

So how is *chönyi ngönsum* explained and how can we have that experience? For example, in the evening, during sunset, you can look at the sunrays. The sunrays are not strong in that moment. It's not necessary to look directly at the sun, but rather you gaze a little lower at the sunrays and you look at the sunrays with half closed eyes. And in these rays there will be many manifestations of many *thigles*; *thigles* of the five colors, sometimes bigger, sometimes smaller, sometimes not only one, can be many. It doesn't matter. Something is manifesting in front of us, but it doesn't mean the *thigle* is physically there. We might think, "Oh this is a production of the sunrays!" Sunrays do not produce the *thigle*. Sunrays are only the secondary cause. The real cause is that everybody has the condition of the self-perfected state of *lhundrub* (lhun grub). So that qualification, which is related to our nature of mind, is now manifesting something like an object. For example, when you are seeing this, its potentiality, you will no longer transmigrate to the lower states. This is called *chönyi ngönsum*. You can have this experience. It's not necessary to gaze only at sunsets, it's also possible when you are looking into the sky, you can have this experience then also.

In the real sense when we are developing the four states, which are called the Four Visions, when we arrive at the fourth level called *chöze* (chos zad), in this state when we are dying, our body will no longer remain. Instead, our body manifests the rainbow body. Why is it manifesting this way? You remember that when we are introducing *chönyi ngönsum*, when you are seeing *thigles* in the sunrays, this is the potentiality of your real nature. And when you are gazing in this *thigle*, and your practice is developing slowly, slowly, you will have the capacity to integrate your impure body production of the five elements. When you succeed to integrate into this *thigle* when you are dying, you will manifest the rainbow body.

In general, in traditions like the Sakyapa and other traditions, sometime people say, "Oh this is a rainbow body, that is a rainbow body." Even some practitioners may have their physical bodies disappear and they consider this a rainbow body. But that is not a rainbow body. In the Dzogchen Teaching this is called *lü dultren du tengpa* (lus rdul phran du dungs pa). That means the physical body is entered into *dultren*, very, very, very tiny atoms, and we cannot see it. Someone is at a high level of the practice and they can reach the state of the *dharmakaya*. That is the reason it is becoming that kind of *lü dultren du tengpa* and rainbow means it is active, something concrete manifests. You see there is a painting of the Guru Padmasambhava and at the center of the Guru Padmasambhava there is a small *thigle*. From this *thigle* the lights of five colors come out, bigger and bigger, until the dimension of the Guru Padmasambhava has become filled with this light. Most people like this than-ka, or painting, very much. This painting was originally painted by someone in the Sakyapa tradition. But whoever painted this has no knowledge of the rainbow body. The rainbow body isn't like that. The rainbow body means our physical body, for example, our nose, our face, our front, everything is integrated with the five elements.

Some people may have the capacity to see someone who has attained the rainbow body. The nature of our bodies, when they are truly integrated with the five colors or five elements in the rainbow body, appear in just the same way for these people as our bodies would appear in the physical or relative dimension. For example, the rainbow body of Guru Padmasambhava would appear to someone with sufficient capacity just as he is, and without his dimension being filled the five colors. So it is very important you should know that. Nobody knows if some one of you will realize the rainbow body. When the rainbow body manifests, only the hair and nails remain. Everything else disappears. This is very good because if there is no body, then there is no problem with the police! So why then do the hair and nails remain? It is because these are the two aspects of our impure physical body. Hair is always growing. We are cutting it again and again, and still it is always growing. The impure aspect of our physical body is like that. It is the same with the finger and toenails. So this is the symbol of the impure. This is very important to understand. If you realize the rainbow body then you have no problems! Ok, now we finish and dedicate merits. ☸

Transcribed and edited by Edmond Hayes

Tibetan editing with the kind assistance of Jim Valby



Doing Everything in a Perfect Way

A short interview with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu during an informal talk with the Gakyil on 4 July 2009 at Merigar East, Romania. Courtesy of the Czech Dzogchen Community.

What attributes and qualities should a good Dharma teacher have and how can you recognize him or her?

A Dharma teacher first of all needs to have knowledge of the teaching, to have received the transmission in a perfect way, and to have compassion for working with students so they can really understand Dharma. This is the main responsibility of the teacher. This is very easy and does not need many words.

What kind of obstacles do you often see in Western and particularly Czech students?

In general, many Western students have the idea that teaching is something like a technique and that they can do everything with this technique. But this is not true. They must understand that teaching is something to learn for living, for realizing, for overcoming our problems of samsara, suffering, and so on.

What is the most important thing you teach to your students?

I teach Dzogchen teaching. Dzogchen teaching is the essence of all teachings. I am not the only person who says this, but it is also said in most Dzogchen tantras. Not only Dzogchen teaching but also many other teachings understand that Dzogchen is the highest and the most essential teaching.

How do you recognize that your students have learned your teaching well? What qualities should they manifest?

When students understand the knowledge of Dzogchen, they do not have many tensions, they do not have many problems of samsara; they can understand how the condition of samsara is and how the real condition is. They are more relaxed and more present, not always conditioned by tensions and emotions.

Do you think that it is good to teach openly?

Yes, but it doesn't mean we go to the city and do some kind of publicity. But if there are people who are seriously interested, we present the teaching openly in front of them.

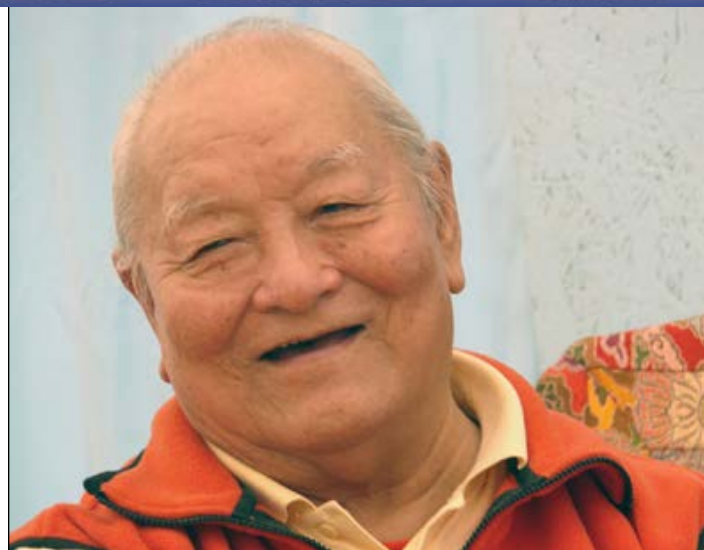


Photo by Greg Ladra

Is it good to talk openly about one's spiritual achievements?

It depends. It is not only speaking that has benefits but it depends on who you are talking to. If someone is seriously interested, we can talk and do everything. This is what I'm doing, for example. I'm not keeping something back. Buddha said: "We should teach the teaching to those who have a desire to follow, who have that capacity." It's not that you talk in public with the idea of converting people. We shouldn't work in that way because this is not the principle of the teaching. The principle of the Teaching is to make people understand, and if someone is interested then we can go deeper in the knowledge. This is what the teacher should do.

Have you, as a teacher, met people who have encountered mental or spiritual obstacles that were impossible to overcome by meditating or practicing? If so, what advice would you give them?

If someone really seriously follows the teaching, the teaching is complete. It's not that the teaching is missing something for overcoming all problems – relative problems and also samsaric problems. Some people don't know this and they also need something different so they add and put something else. But I don't feel it's necessary. I always feel that the teaching is complete. From ancient times till now all realized beings haven't had any problem that something was missing. That means the teaching is complete.

Could you please recommend three Dharma principles which are the most important for cultivating the mind in everyday life?

For example, there is the Dharma principle in the Mahayana Sutra which says that we should check which kind of intention we have and always cultivate good intention and if there is possibility to benefit others we should always be ready to do that. This is what we need.

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What are, in your opinion, the fundamental principles of Buddhist ethics?

It depends. If you are follower of the teaching then you must be present, it's the most important thing in the teaching. If you are being present, you are doing everything with awareness and working with circumstances, helping others, paying respect to others, and so on.

Do you think that celibacy and renunciation are important on one's spiritual path?

This is definitely not the only way. There are many ways, many methods of teachings, but if someone follows the path of renunciation, then they must behave as Buddha taught in the Vinaya, otherwise it is not good.



Photo by Greg Ladra

Do you believe that different Buddhist traditions (Theravada, Zen, Vajrayana) or even other spiritual teachings (Christianity, Yoga, Shamanism, Judaism, Islam, etc.) have the same spiritual goal and result?

I'm Dzogchen practitioner, I know all those Buddhist paths, their conditions and their essence. We unify the essences of all the paths and then apply it. Of course, we pay respect to them, but that doesn't mean I believe that I should do everything they do. Not that way. When we have fundamental knowledge of Dzogchen teaching, we can integrate everything, even Christian or some other tradition. It does not necessarily have to be the Buddhist tradition. All teachings are going more or less in the same direction but in a very different way. That is what I believe.

There are few more personal questions.

What do you wish the most?

The biggest wish for me? Now that I have all the responsibility for my students, [I wish] they would do everything in a perfect way, that they would realize and do the same as I have been doing for the benefit of all sentient beings. This is my biggest wish.

Are you sometimes angry or sad? How do you deal with it?

Of course. You see, anger is one of the emotions. I can have all kind of emotions because I'm still "flesh and bones". I have a normal physical body, I drink tea and I eat food so, of course, if someone makes me angry, I can get angry. But it's not that I'm always angry and think: "This is a bad thing, this is a bad person". Because I'm practitioner, I go with my presence. I integrate my presence as much as possible in instant presence, knowing how our real nature is. This is the principle of the Dzogchen teaching.

Do you wish to be reborn again?

I don't have any kind of wish like that. I wish to have total realization, if it is possible in the bardo of dharmata. I don't need to wish to be like this or like that because it depends on circumstances, on which kind of secondary causes there are, then it manifests.

If you had the chance to meet Buddha Shakyamuni, what question would you ask him?

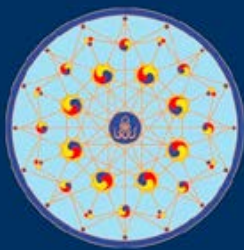
I would ask the Buddha: "What do you think about the followers of your teaching today? How are they doing, what are they doing?" because during his life Buddha taught the path of renunciation, Vinaya. Then in different moments there were also his manifestations of Sambhogakaya, but this is another question. But to be more concrete, since you are asking me "if you had chance to see and meet the Buddha", it refers to the relative condition. In this case I would ask Buddha: "What do you think about your monks today?" for example. I know my idea, I may be wrong, then I would ask Buddha: "What do you think about your students-monks, people who are applying the path of renunciation?" And then Buddha would say something..

Thank you very much for your answers.

You are welcome.



Questions by Tereza Puldová Stárková



JOIN THE WHEEL OF SOLIDARITY

Join the Wheel of Solidarity

Dear Worldwide Dzogchen Community,

For the past few weeks, we have been witnessing the continuous occurrence of extraordinary events in Eastern Europe, for which all of us are unprepared, physically and emotionally.

These dramatic events are also directly affecting our Community in the most difficult ways.

Many Gars and Lings of the Dzogchen Community have responded to this emergency by offering hospitality and other direct assistance, as well as creating a fundraising campaign.

Among all these initiatives, we would like to mention the first one started by Dzamling Gar where a working group of international practitioners was formed immediately, and is doing its best to assist those in the most urgent situations.

IDC, Dzamling Gar, and ASIA invite you to work together to support all practitioners and their family members who are suffering because of this international crisis, regardless of national, political, or geographical boundaries.

If you need our support, please write I NEED HELP to help@dzamlinggar.net

How can you help?

JOIN THE WHEEL OF SOLIDARITY

You can do this in the following ways:

PRACTICE

Join the practice chains organized by the Practicing Together Team, the Gars, the Lings, and the International Gakyil. Practice chains are continuously being organized on the various communication channels of the Dzogchen Community, and you can find information about them and practice according to your circumstances.

DONATE

Join the Dzogchen Community's international fundraising campaign

Here you can find out how to donate to the IDC <http://dzogchencommunity.org/donations/> by specifying "IDC Emergency Support". This initiative assists IDC Community members and their families affected by this crisis, in collaboration with the Dzamling Gar team and other Gars and Lings.

Here you can find out how to donate to ASIA <https://bit.ly/ASIADonateNOW> by specifying "Emergency Fund", to provide humanitarian assistance to all those affected by this crisis (if you are eligible for tax deduction in France or Germany please click here <https://bit.ly/ASIAFranceASIA-Germany>)

Please be on the lookout for updates. Thank you all for your support, IDC International Gakyil, Dzamling Gar & ASIA ©

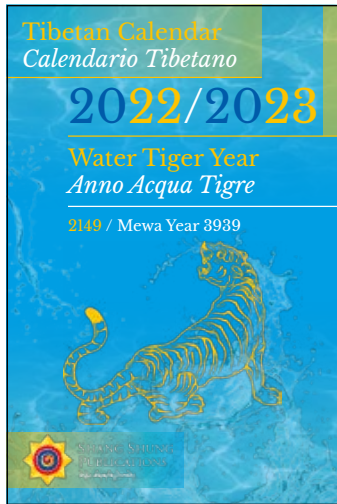


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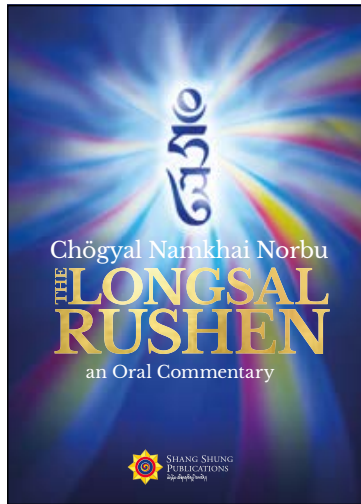
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Tibetan Calendar 2022–2023, Water Tiger Year 2149

This pocket agenda contains concise indications of the practices recommended by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu for special days, astrological aspects from the Tibetan lunar calendar, individual influences affecting those born between 1921 and 2022, and positive and negative days for Naga practice. It is indispensable for identifying favorable and unfavorable days for daily activities and remembering special practice days. The calendar also includes a table with the first days of the Tibetan new year according to the Phugpa system. To better understand the information contained in our calendar, refer to Key for Consulting the Tibetan Calendar, published by Shang Shung Publications.

– new special DC Practices Calendar 2022–2023 (ebook PDF version)



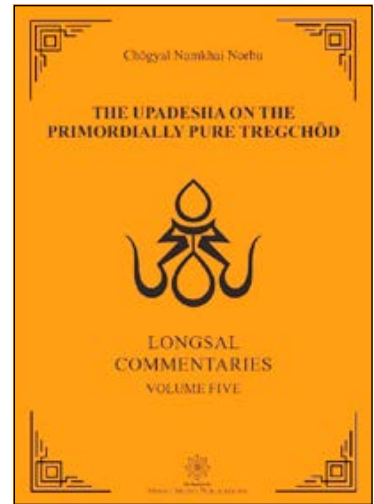
The Longsal Rushen – An Oral Commentary

At the beginning of 2017, Chögyal Namkhai Norbu transmitted the teachings on the practice of Separation of Samsara and Nirvana belonging to the cycle of teachings known as The Luminous Clarity of the Universe, Heart Essence of the Dakinis (Longsal).

These practices allow practitioners to swiftly discover their real nature by separating the mind and instant presence using various methods related to the body, voice and mind.

This book contains Rinpoche's oral commentary to two main texts published in Longsal Teachings, Volume Ten: The Instructions on Outer, Inner, and Secret Rushen and the related commentary clarifying the practices of the voice: The Upadesha on the Four Voice Trainings from the Longsal Rushen, given in Dzamling Gar, Tenerife, 27 January–3 February, 2017.

The book is accompanied by an audio recording (mp3) to facilitate the practice of the voice.



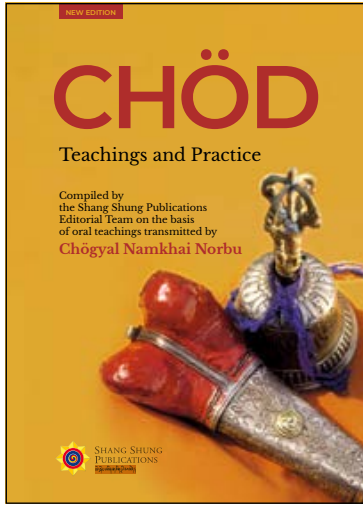
The Upadesha on the Primordially Pure Tregchöd

Longsal, or The Luminous Clarity of the Universe, Heart Essence of the Dakinis (Klong chen 'od gsal mkha' 'gro'i snying thig), is a cycle of Upadesha teachings discovered by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu.

These teachings were mainly received in dreams, and many root texts including the histories of their discoveries have already been translated and published in the Longsal Teachings series, of which nine volumes containing twenty-four upadeshas have appeared so far.

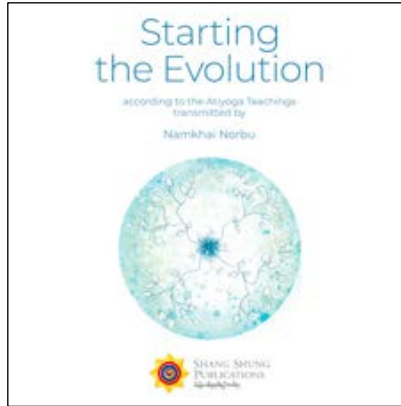
This book continues the Longsal Commentary series, which aside from the histories and root texts includes the autocommentaries written by the Author himself, occasionally supplemented with additional material to gather all information concerning a specific teaching in a single volume.

The Upadesha on the Primordially Pure Tregchöd (Ka dag khregs chod kyi man ngag), originally received from the Fifth Dalai Lama Lobzang Gyatso (Blo bzang rgya mtsho, 1617–1682) in a dream and written down in its final form in 1998, contains special instructions on the practice of the Four Chogzhags, the essence of Tregchöd. It was transmitted during three retreats in Tashigar Norte, Isla Margarita, respectively in April 2002, October 2004, and November 2005.



Chöd: Teachings and Practice

This is a new, expanded edition of the previously published volume on the practice of Chöd, including the teachings transmitted by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu during the retreated devoted to this practice in 2012.



Starting the Evolution

audiobook version

We are very happy to present our first audiobook on Dzogchen Teaching transmitted by Master Namkhai Norbu, compiled by Alfredo Colitto and read out by Michael Velasco, available in the MP3 format.

The question of the purpose or meaning of life is as old as humanity itself. What are we doing here? Why have we been born? Is there some deeper meaning in human existence, something that is very close to us but remains elusive, waiting to be discovered?

The ancient teachings of Total Perfection or Ati Yoga, practiced for centuries in the snowy land of Tibet and recently introduced to the West, help us to discover the answer to these questions. They present the core of our being as being both completely pure and spontaneously perfect. These teachings, presented here by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, also provide a way to move from the level of the ordinary confused mind to the deepest level of the primordial pure consciousness. At a relative level, they can help us overcome existential fears and live a relaxed and happy life.

New Releases in Other Languages

Italian:

- * Bardo – Istruzioni sul Bardo sigillate con la Hum
- * L' Upadesha del Re della Spazio – Commenti del Longsal, Volume quarto.
- * Una visione di chiara luce e i punti cruciali della pratica Dzogchen

Spanish:

- * La lámpara que ilumina las mentes estrechas

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Breathe the Earth

Resilient children mindful of themselves and the environment.

In a time of great uncertainty and stress due to the pandemic, children and young people are among the most fragile categories and those most exposed to psychological and emotional distress. Numerous studies have verified that almost 8 out of 10 people feel stressed at a medium-high level. Among those most affected are young people and children, who have suddenly seen their rhythms, habits of life, and social and emotional relationships vanish at school and in their contacts with friends, and who have often absorbed the worries and sufferings of their parents.

Tension, irritability, sleep disturbances, attention and concentration difficulties, and aggressive behavior are found more and more frequently in childhood.



Merigar and ASIA have been active with projects in schools aimed at promoting the well-being and social-emotional development of children through activities that promote a concrete application of Buddhist principles and values.

In September 2021, the project "Breathe the Earth. Resilient children mindful of themselves and the environment" started in the primary schools of the municipalities of Mt. Amiata and Rome, Italy, thanks to funding from the Italian Buddhist Union.

The goal of the project, which lasts one year, is to spread the values of awareness,



respect for the environment, and the interdependence of all living beings, typical of the Buddhist view, in primary schools, and increase resilience and environmental awareness among students and teachers.

More specifically, the main theme of the project is awareness from two different points of view: on the one hand, awareness of oneself, one's emotions, thoughts and body, and on the other, awareness of the environment, understood both as contact with nature and as knowledge of the delicate phase that our planet is experiencing and therefore learning about the issues of environmental protection and climate change.

The underlying principle is that rediscovering this unity with oneself, with the Earth and with other living beings, and overcoming the sense of separateness is a source of psycho-physical well-being and helps to develop a broader view of citizenship and healthier relationships based on respect for oneself, for others, and for the environment.

Self-awareness is developed through two activities:

- * training in mindfulness with which children acquire the ability to recognize and manage difficult emotions, calm their minds, improve relationships, and increase learning capacity, all benefits confirmed by the growing number of scientific studies and neuroscience experiments that have taken place in recent decades.

The trainings are also aimed at teachers in order to support the teaching staff, increasingly exposed to difficult and stressful working conditions, and to facilitate the mindfulness training for students.

- * Yantra Yoga-Kumar Kumari training: working on the mind, body and energy improves flexibility, coordination, concentration, and balance. As numerous experiences in the school environment have shown, yoga contributes to a harmonious development of children's personalities. For some time now ASIA and Merigar have introduced this practice in schools and been able to see its potential in terms of satisfaction and impact. The activities were in fact well received by students, teachers, and parents who gave very positive feedback. The support teachers, in particular,

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Portraits of India and Tibet (1996–2014)

A photographic exhibition by
Enrico Dell'Angelo
At Merigar, 13 March–1 May,
2022

The exhibition is part of the activities of the "Seeds of Awareness" project, funded by the Italian Buddhist Union, which aims to enhance the socio-emotional abilities of young people to enable them to take part of the creation of a more inclusive and embracing society and to spread knowledge of the principles of awareness and of interdependence.

.....

highlighted how yoga has been able to actively involve even students with particular frailties or needs.

To increase environmental awareness, we focus on these two activities:

* the creation of school gardens, to regain the relationship with nature, with open spaces, with oneself and with the work shared between classmates. The goal is to transfer to children the ability and interest to take care of the environment around them and the living beings that populate and live there. Through experiential learning, observation, and participating in discussions, children have the opportunity to acquire basic knowledge on issues such as the advantages of organic and synergistic agriculture for the health of people and the planet, the importance of biodiversity for protecting ecosystems, the effects and risks of climate change, and urbanization.

* the Earth seen from space: to educate children to be aware of the environment and of issues related to climate change through a series of meetings based on interactive activities and STEAM (Science Technology Engineering Art Mathematics) that fosters the intellectual and reflexive, manual and creative capacities of children by stimulating comparisons with others and a critical spirit, through the use of satellite images from the European Space Agency.

The project will end in August 2022.

For info: info@asia-onlus.org
www.asia-ngo.org



Photo by Mandarava Bricaire

The project was realized by ASIA, Associazione per la Solidarietà Internazionale in Asia (Association for International Solidarity in Asia) and by Merigar, the Italian seat of the International Dzogchen Community.

The intent of the project, now more than ever, also due to the pandemic that has so severely struck our world, is to help young people to understand better their inner world in order to get in contact with what is happening inside them and to relate with others with empathy, by being aware of the interdependence that bonds all living beings together.

The aim of the exhibition is to help young people to meet and know the cultural and spiritual heritage of Tibet, because in the collective imagination Tibet is associated with peace, compassion and non-violence, thanks to the ceaseless work of His Holiness the XIV Dalai Lama, Tenzin Gyatso, holder of the Nobel peace prize. This honour was bestowed on him in recognition of his commitment for the promotion of a spirit of tolerance and collaboration among all the peoples of the earth and of the plea to consider with greater and more concrete attention the legitimate demands of the Tibetan people for their right to self-determination.

The 49 photos presented were taken by Enrico during his stay in Tibet between 1996 and 2010 and during his last trip to India in 2014. Mostly in black and white, we found them among his papers, and are part of a far vaster archive. The photos here are only those which he himself selected, curated and printed in person. They are images of landscapes in Tibet, of people he met during his travels while overseeing development and emergency projects, portraits of his spiritual masters, of wandering yogin, of women and men, of the elderly and of children he used to stop and talk to.

Enrico knew how, through the attentiveness and presence that characterised

him, to capture their smiles, glances and share moments of familiarity. The smiling gentleness of his approach immediately won much trust in the people he met, allowing him to get near to and snap pictures without any trouble, immediately creating a relationship with those he photographed, easily overcoming any mistrust that separates people coming from different cultures.

Enrico was an integral part of Tibetan culture and spirituality, completely immersed in the landscapes and people, and he wanted to leave us a testimony of a world which, regrettably, under the ceaseless and ruthless Chinese oppression, risks disappearing forever.

Andrea Dell'Angelo
Director of A.S.I.A.
Associazione per la
Solidarietà Internazionale in Asia

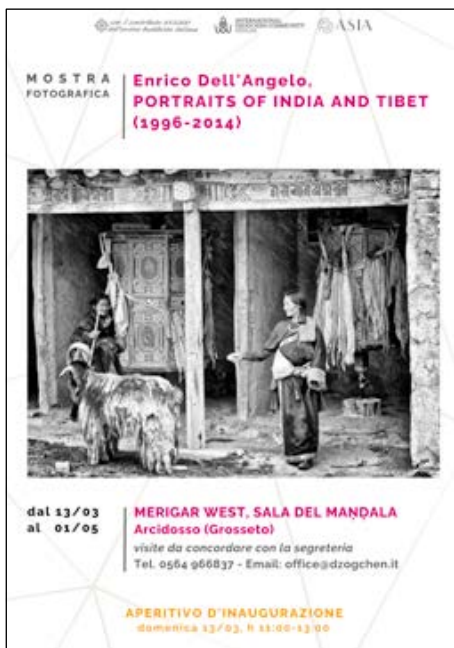


"If your pictures aren't good enough, you're not close enough."
(Robert Capa: Cuadernos de guerra en Espana, 1936–1939).

This photo was taken by my uncle Enrico. When I look at it I have no idea who the subject is, when or where it was taken. In Tibet, but in what place or situation, I wouldn't know. I don't know if Enrico and this person knew each other, if they were friends or had just met. Enrico often photographed people he didn't know, but before taking the picture he always sought and waited for the person to look over, to smile or to nod their consent to his or her picture being taken. I never saw him steal a portrait, but I did often see him capture flashing moments that he then fixed in a dimension beyond time.

You can see his vigilant presence in many of his photos.

» continued on the following page



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Once in the subway in New York I watched how he could enter other peoples' space that he then photographed. In reality it was often actually the others who did this, maybe caught on his hook. He had a Leica with a coloured lanyard that caught the attention of vastly different subjects.

His prompt quips and skill in making compliments, that were never over the top because always light-hearted, just like his ability to tease but never offend because he was always a bit flattering, was another of his great gifts that proved useful when following the advice of the celebrated Robert Capa.

In the last days of his life, in hospital, my Uncle's favourite pastime was to walk along the corridors with his drip-feed stuck to his arm, meeting people. In next to no time he had become someone liked by everybody, patients, nurses and doctors alike. It was Enrico who seemed to be the doctor, always ready with words of encouragement and support for every situation, also for the people who really would have wanted to be the ones to encourage him.

I'm coming to believe that this ability to get close to others enabled him to overcome the distinction between self and others, or maybe the other way around.

Jampel Dell'Angelo

Biographical note on the author

Enrico was born in Rome on 11th September 1954. In 1976 he met Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, a great Dzogchen Master, Professor of Tibetan and Mongolian Language and Literature at the Orientale University of Naples. To attend his lessons Enrico moved to Naples and graduated in 1982 in Tibetan language and literature writing his thesis on "The magical offering of the universe: a study of the Bon teaching of gShen rab Mi bo", based on the translation of the Srid pa spyi mdo, a very ancient ritual text of the Bonpo tradition. To do his research on the ancient Bon tradition he went to India in 1980, staying a year studying under Yongdzin Tenzin Namdak Rinpoche, one of the greatest contemporary Tibetan masters, founder of the Bonpo Community in Dolanji and of Triten Norbutse Monastery in Kathmandu.

In 1988 Enrico travelled to Tibet, on pilgrimage to Mount Kailash and to do further research on the ancient Bon kingdom of Shang Shung in western Tibet. In 1988, together with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu he helped found ASIA NGO for the preservation of the historical and cultural heritage and the identity of the peoples of the Asian continent, with particular attention to Tibet and the Himalayan area. In 1989, he was among the founders of the Shang Shung International Institute of Tibetan Studies, serving as its general secretary until 1996, the year in which he left for Lhasa to serve as Humanitarian Project Manager of the CISP NGO for which he worked until 1998. From 1998 to 2001 he ran the emergency projects of ASIA NGO in the prefecture of Ngari, Nagchu in west Tibet and in Qinghai, to help nomads struck by natural ca-



lamities caused by climate change. In 2002 he was hired by Trace Foundation, first as Programme Manager of the projects in Tibet and then as Executive Director of the Foundation. In 2010 he left Tibet, where he had lived almost uninterruptedly for over 14 years and then moved to New York, where he worked for the Trace Foundation until 2012. On returning to Italy he dedicated his time to the organization and constitution of the International Dzogchen Community at which he worked until his premature death in Rome on 26th December 2016.

Enrico was a passionate Tibetologist, with profound knowledge of the language and culture of Tibet, fluently speaking several Tibetan dialects. He was a great photographer and an enthusiastic expert in international co-operation. He dedicated his whole life to the preservation of Tibetan culture. ©



Photo by
Mandarava Bricaire

Dzamling Gar Update

Losar and Mandarava Retreat

Leading up to Losar we had a well attended Indian music solo concert in the Gönpa and by Zoom on February 25th with Steven Landsberg on sitar. After the concert we had a delicious Indian feast made by Fabian Sanders and his kitchen team in the cafeteria. Since all of the news of Ukraine was very fresh, both of these activities became a benefit for the Ukrainians impacted by the war, and it helped we who are far away feel we could participate with some kind of offering to the victims.

The Losar and Mandarava season started in a subdued fashion due the conflict in Ukraine. But we carried on in the traditional fashion with a very tasty divination soup, made by our "Tibetan" doctors Irina and Medegema, also the fire puja a few days before and then in the early morning of Losar star water dipping, some courageous ones went to the sea before dawn, warm and tasty rice breakfast and chai after in the cafeteria, then the traditional Mandarava practice in the Gönpa, Khaita practice, lunch together, games in the afternoon, then a webcast Ganapuja from Merigar West with Adriano Clemente followed by webcast Khaita practice. On March 5th there was also a live and zoom *sang* and *serkyem* practice. So as you can see, the Losar festivities were very complete!

For the two weeks of the Mandarava retreat that traditionally begins on Losar, there was a very rich program. Every morning we would watch a replay of Rinpoche's Mandarava teachings from the past. Fabio Andrico was ever present and with great skill, endurance and patience, introduced



or reintroduced the *sogtig* and *tsalungs* of Mandarava and led us very kindly through innumerable practice sessions. There were different forms of Mandarava practice, long and short and essential, and in the afternoons alternate days Nina Robinson did explanations and led practices from her home near Merigar West via Zoom. When Nina was not leading, the Mandarava practice was led in the Gar by webcast and zoom by Sebastien Remy and Naomi Zeitz. There were three talks by Menpa Phuntsog Wangmo on Tibetan Medicine and Mandarava related topics, like *sogtig*, *tsalung* and



Left to right: Auctioneers Tim Cabot, Yulia Petrova and Lena Dumcheva.



Fabio and Sebastien leading the Mandarava practice.

Tibetan Medicine, *chudlen*, diet and behavior, and the making of *tseril* pills. For seven days, Fabian Sanders helped us understand the pronunciation and meaning of the Mandarava practice live and by zoom. On the last day we actually did a Mandarava practice with Rinpoche via replay which was wonderful and the feeling was as if he was there with us.

All of the retreat was offered by webcast and zoom, 900 people registered and each day approximately 200 people participated from all corners of the globe. Replays allowed people in various time zones to participate. We owe a debt of gratitude to our Project Manager Vicky Rodriguez, the

» continued on the following page



Yantra Yoga and Pregnancy with Laura Evangelisti and Nataly Nitsche.



Khaita Children's Dance Company with Elena Kalistova.

» continued from previous page

Webcast Team and all the karma yogis who managed the retreat.

Not only were there Mandarava practices, but Khaita and Vajra Dance *thuns* continued throughout the retreat. So there was no lack of activity or practice.

Then on the second to last day of the retreat, there was the grand finale auction, organized and presented by Lena Dumcheva and Tim Cabot with their team of online helpers and lovely Khaita presenters. Before the auction, started there were two wonderful performances by our Khaita children and the Khaita dancers, to warm up the crowd, which they certainly succeeded to do. The auction had many beautiful and special treasures, and thanks to the great skill of the auctioneers and the generosity of the international Dzogchen Community, the auction was very successful. There were also four prizes dedicated to the fund to help Ukrainians.

As for the rest of the activities at Dzamling Gar, we have had Yantra Yoga courses with Fabio Andrico and Max Leschenko, Vajra Dance with Luda Kislichenko and Adriana Dal Borgo, Kumar Kumari Teacher Training (see page 17) and Yoga for Pregnancy with Laura Evangelisti and Nataly Nitsche, some of these courses were broadcast on zoom.

We continue to have our weekly Friday evening dinners in the cafeteria along with our morning breakfasts. There was a special dinner event on March 4th of *vareniki* and *pelmeni*, traditional Ukrainian food, run by the Ukrainian practitioners to raise money for their activities.



The Gardens flourish but also have some challenges with the strong winds of the calima. (see page 20)

This summer the Gönpa will mostly closed for wood treatment and we will use the Gönfino, the underground smaller space below the Gönpa, outdoor spaces and *jya kyip* for activities. ©

Losar Message

Losar Tashi Delegs from the Khaita dancers of Dzamling Gar presented by Adriana Dal Borgo (Italy), Lilya Shashkova (Ukraine) and Yulia Petrova (Russia)

Losar Tashi Deleg to everybody and everywhere! Today we celebrate together the first day of the Water Tiger year. Instead of the usual Losar performance, we'll welcome the new year with the practice of singing and dancing Khaita.

It's a difficult and heavy moment and each of us is deeply touched by the current situation. However, the most important thing is to remain united, all countries and nationalities, keeping our Teacher and his teaching in our hearts. This is the goal of Khaita.

In the Khaita collections we have some beautiful songs such as Thundril which means together. The song says: "Brothers and sisters, look at the unity of the birds! How nice it would be if there would be the same unity among us... the golden cord of unity must not break". <https://khaita.com/songs/thundril>

Other songs talk about having peace in the world, Dzamling Xide. <https://khaita.com/songs/dzamling-zhide>

Now we'll sing these songs, then our children will perform a few dances, representing the joy of being together harmoniously and after we'll join them, practicing all together.

As Rinpoche taught us on different occasions: "Collective practice can also bring benefit to the community and the country. If we coordinate and purify our energy, peace and prosperity can flourish." ©

Kumar Kumari in Dzamling Gar

February 2022

Maria Sevostianova

I'd like to share my impressions about Kumar Kumari course held in Dzamling Gar in early February under the guidance of Laura Evangelisti.

I am quite new to the Yantra Yoga teachings, though being a Chinese medicine practitioner, I've been applying yoga therapy principles and designing practices for my patients following Shri Krishnamacarya tradition.

In this tradition, when we work with children, we never teach any breathing techniques – the practice is built mostly around vinyasas (sequences), and also sometimes we can use a personal mantra with visualization (mostly to help a young student to overcome some psychological impediments.)

So I was fascinated to learn how a great Dzogchen Master of our times, Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, has incorporated a seed mantra of the Six Spaces of Samantabhadra into the sequences for children through breathing.

Actually, ten sacred syllables – Om A Hum, Ham, A A' Ha Sha Sa Ma – are interwoven into the breathing pattern of the Kumar Kumari practice. Both into the inhalation and exhalation, which are done both through nose and mouth. It's all absolutely incredible!! Every element is revolutionary and should be mastered with great care and precision, and not only by a few lucky children. The Master was saying it was the practice for the future generations – and I have a feeling that He meant not only children.

As for care and precision, we were very fortunate to be guided by Laura Evangelisti, who is an outstanding teacher and practitioner, and her life long connection with the Master and His teachings, as well as her loving kindness and humility, made our course a beautifully flowing, intense and enjoyable experience.



Valeria Spasskaia.



Leticia Receptor.

In our exclusively female group we had several experienced Yantra Yoga teachers who also worked with Kumar Kumari teaching children. Nataly Nitsche, Ilaria Faccioli, Valeria Spasskaia and Lena Kalistova held half a day sessions each with our group guiding our practices and sharing their ideas. We really had so much fun in those workshops! I think all of us wholeheartedly enjoyed playing games, showing animals and following quests proposed by our gentle instructors! Letitia did supervision sessions during our course, which was very educational for all of us.

Katia Farrington held a voice workshop with the group that helped us to get connected with a possible scientific explanation behind the breathing/chanting techniques introduced into Kumar Kumari by the Master.

On the last day of our course we were rewarded by Laura's reading of her wonderful story – translated into English by Alessandra – about the adventures of two Tibetan children, Nyima and Dawa (Sun and Moon, to stay in tradition), and their little yak. I think Rinpoche would have been delighted to hear how Laura, his long time dear student, has built a fairy tale around the ten sacred syllables of Kumar Kumari – and thus made them easy to remember and difficult to forget!

I sincerely hope that we'll be able to keep up a joyful and positive vibration of our Kumar Kumari course and of our group, keeping the practice in our bodies and breath and sharing it with the community, children and other kinds of 'future generations'. ©

Mentalizate

Monica Gentile

On the eve of December 17th, 2021, amid a group of residents of Adeje, the beautiful city located above Dzamling Gar, in Tenerife, I had the privilege to listen to the public presentation of a very important project.

Initiated by the Mayor of Adeje, Jose Miguel Rodriguez Fraga, this project is named "Mentalizate": The primary meaning of this Spanish verb is "making aware" and the project aims at making the public of Adeje aware of the many dire consequences of the ongoing pandemic on their own mental health and equip them to cope with their effects in a positive way.

The presentation started with a detailed explanations of the psychological impact of the pandemic on the population by prof. Wenceslao Peñate of the University of La Laguna. He explained how destructive emotions such as rage, sadness and fear, disruption of sleeping pattern, identity and family crisis, substance abuse, have all grown exponentially in the past two years of the pandemic.

The Mayor together with his counselors and coordinators - Maria Clavijo Maza (Education and People), Mercedes Delgado Vargas (Community Wellbeing), Amada Trujillo Bencomo, (Health and Quality of Life) – took turns to describe the various workshops organized to aid the population in managing these diverse problems.

These workshops, held in the public spaces of the town hall of Adeje, are managed by a team of professionals – psychologists, educators, social workers, etc. – who work with various target groups: adults, children and teenagers.

The core concepts to develop throughout all these workshops is Communication, Emotional regulation and Personal and Social wellbeing.

Among the professionals running the workshops, there is also a team of instructors from the International Dzogchen Community who are living in Dzamling Gar. The International Dzogchen Community has in fact been requested to take part in this project and conduct courses of Yantra Yoga, Kumar Kumari and Khaita dances for both adults and children. These courses span the whole school year.



Left to right: Ilaria Faccioli, Mayor Jose Miguel Rodriguez Fraga and Maria del Rosario Clavijo Maza. Photo by Urara Takao



This is for the IDC and in particular for the Atiyoga Foundation, the International Foundation which is registered in Spain and is patronizing the project, a great token of recognition from the Spanish authorities of Tenerife who are acknowledging the value, professionalism and potentials of our Community to work in the field of public health.

A short presentation and demonstration of the workshops was orchestrated by Ilaria Faccioli, the interface between the city of Adeje and the International Dzogchen Community of Dzamling Gar. Instructors and participants of Kumar Kumari and Khaita displayed their skills and colors in front of a public.

The Mayor already took the commitment of renewing and even expanding these workshops next year.

Besides the excellent work already being done with Yantra Yoga, Kumar Kumari and Khaita, other areas the International Dzogchen Community could help with, is undoubtedly the sphere of the mind, through workshops on Presence and Awareness (which is mostly known as Mindfulness in the western world) and the development of positive emotions through the many mind trainings of the Mahayana tradition .

We hope we can continue this collaboration and contribute to benefit the public of this marvelous island by sharing the precious and living heritage of wisdom of which we are depositaries. ©



Closing Talk by Adriano Clemente

Vajrasattva Purification from the Longsal Cycle Practice Retreat December 9–13, 2021
Dzamling Gar

This retreat is finished. I want to thank the Gakyil of Dzamling Gar for inviting me and for making this opportunity possible. I also want to thank everybody who collaborated for this retreat. Usually I am not an active instructor because my main samaya, or commitment, is to be the translator of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu's works. So the purpose of my life is that, I understood it is that. As long as I live, I will try to finish all these books that are still not translated; there are many still to do. And then, of course, on the side, when I have time I try to help according to my capacity. In any case, maybe for older practitioners sometimes what I say is a little boring. I try to communicate mainly with newcomers, even if it is only one person, for me it's more important than anything else because the continuation of the transmission of the teaching depends only on the development of our capacity.

You see, since Rinpoche passed away, there has been much confusion. Somebody started to write a hundred emails, even one month after Rinpoche passed away: "How are we going to do for transmission, continuation, etc.?", creating these useless concepts with their minds. As if somebody appointed them: "When Rinpoche will have passed away, you should check very well how the transmission is going to be continued." But to continue the transmission of Dzogchen of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu there is only one way: you apply the practice, you develop that capacity, you are able to communicate that, you are passing that transmission, and, even if you have three students, if one of them also develops this capacity, this transmission continues. We don't need bureaucracy - this is this, this is number one, number two, number three. We must go into the real principle of the teaching how our teacher has taught.

The responsibility for Rinpoche's teaching transmission depends on each individual, each practitioner. If there are no secondary causes then we should not really be too much involved with that concept. The teaching is guarded by dakinis. It's not that we just need to decide: "Oh, we do that, we should do that way or the other way." This all is our limited view. From the beginning Rinpoche said: "You should keep the teaching you receive secret unless you

have received specific authorization from the teacher or until you have received the signs of realization." Then, of course, anybody can say: "I received the signs, I can teach thödgäl, anything." There have already been cases already in the Community. Or "I can give direct introduction." We cannot judge these people, we have to respect their dimension too. If they are doing something in a wrong way, then they will have their consequences.

We should always follow the same principle, like a piece of gold, you check if it's gold or not, you cut, you purify, you burn. In the same way, if there is any teacher or instructor, you should check the attitude of that person, how their attitude is towards their brothers and sisters, towards the Community; check all these aspects. If it corresponds to the Teaching then you follow, otherwise their capacity is not sufficient, they are lacking this capacity. This is what I believe. I've been following Rinpoche for forty-five years. Of course, I did not understand it all, but just one little drop in this big ocean of Rinpoche's wisdom, and then I am trying to communicate this little drop. That is my only intension and motivation. This is the end. Again, thank you to everybody and I hope what we did can be like a good seed for applying the practice and developing some positive aspect. ©

Continuing the Dzamling Garden Paradise

An Interview with Alix De Fermor, designer and head gardener of the beautiful Dzamling Gar gardens. Dzamling Gar, March 6, 2022

The Mirror: Alix, you are the main gardener and architect of the beautiful gardens at the Gar. How long have you been working to create these amazing green spaces?

Alix De Fermor: We started in the fall of 2013, so nearly nine years.

Mirror: When you began what was your original vision for the garden?

Alix: Rinpoche wanted something special at the Gar and so I tried to do something out of the ordinary. It's not a formal garden with a unity that combines all its parts into one but there are a variety of different spaces so I think it's quite nice because it's very varied. There are many different types of gardens here.

Mirror: For example, now we are sitting in the Moon Garden. What are the names for some of the other gardens?

Alix: There is the Mandarava garden, the Milarepa garden, called this way after we had to take so many rocks out of the earth to make it. Then there is the Longsal garden and also the Corona garden because we created it during the winter of 2020 when there was the lockdown during the pandemic.



A view of the flourishing Gönpa garden planted last year.

Mirror: Now you're at the point where the creation of the last part of the garden is coming to an end.

Alix: Yes, although the gardens will not extend up to the gate at the side of the Gar. At the moment we are working on one of the gardens surrounding the Gönpa and are finishing the left side of the garden. Last year we worked on the right side and it went very well. Now we will soon start to plant on the left side.

Mirror: After that will the gardens at the Gar be complete?

Alix: There is the place where Rinpoche was teaching (where there used to be a large white tent) and I think it is important to create something special there. Rinpoche gave many teachings in that place so it cannot become a parking lot or a basketball court. It has to be something particular. I thought it would be a good place to put a fountain because Rinpoche was the source of the teaching. Then we could put some benches around the fountain in the shade of a few trees, surrounded by per-



The new Gönpa gardens ready to be planted.





The Gönpa garden planted last year showing the phenomenal growth (left) and last year's view before planting.

fumed flowers so that people could spend time sitting there. Looking at the water is also very nice. I actually created a design for this project a couple of years ago but I have already made some changes to it in my mind.

Mirror: What have been some of your biggest challenges with the garden?

Alix: The climate is quite a challenge because sometimes there are very strong winds. Some bring a lot of dust but mainly they just destroy the plants and trees and whatever is beautiful is severely affected. It's a bit of a Milarepa situation – we work hard to create the gardens, the wind destroys them and then we have to tidy up and recreate them.

Another challenge is the lack of water from the sky, the rainfall, or the lack of it. There is very little rain in this part of Tenerife and when we have the rare moments of rain, after a week everything is fresh and blooms wonderfully. The difference is truly amazing. But the rainfall is something very uncommon here.

Then it would really be helpful to work alongside people who are a little more passionate about gardens.

Mirror: What has been your greatest joy about the garden?

Alix: My greatest joy was to see how Rinpoche enjoyed it while he was still alive. Sitting here and there, speaking about different flowers and recounting some interesting stories about the trees.

Mirror: Can you tell us about the most recent gardens you are working on.

Alix: We are working on the left hand side of stairway of the Gönpa garden and have had to move and place a lot of big rocks here because it's an area with different



Alix designing the garden.

levels. There is an enormous difference in levels between the upper area around the Gönpa and the lower part so we have had to make different terraces using large rocks. But actually it has turned out very nicely and we are at the point where we have made the holes for the main plants and trees and have already put some compost and peat and are just waiting for the plants. Once they have been planted, the whole garden area around the Gönpa will be completed.

Mirror: I understand that you have also planted things that people have sent you from other places.

Alix: Yes, many plants from Costa Rica and also from other gardens. What is incredible is that so many trees that you see now have been grown from seeds that I took from different areas in Tenerife and germinated in pots. Some are already nine metres high and it has only been seven years since they have been growing. This is amazing. Even I was amazed because although we water them, there is no water coming from the sky so I think there must be something special in the earth here because I have never seen anything growing so fast.

I'd like to take you around some parts of the garden even though it's not the best season (winter) and many of the flowers are not blooming.

In the Moon Garden we have a big open space where people can do practice or simply enjoy it with barbecues and other collective activities.

We can take a look at the Gönpa garden after a year of growth and also the Corona garden which in summer is very different because there are more flowers and colors. The Washington palms here were practically seeds and are a year and three months old and have grown enormously. The enormous opuntia cactus that are planted along the fence were all grown from tiny pieces that we planted here. They say that the opuntia is the food of the future because it is so resistant and needs little water. We also have a large area of aloe vera that has spread out from one tiny plant.

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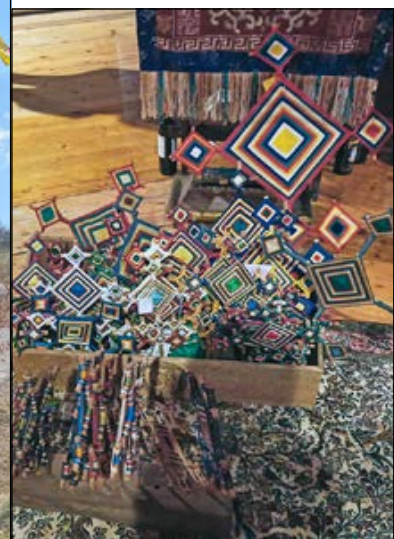
An Update from Merigar West

Losar at Merigar

Merigar West celebrated the start of the new Tibetan Year of the Water Tiger with a variety of activities and practices. In collaboration with the Dynamic Space of the Elements several practices particularly auspicious for welcoming in the new year were organized as well as the preparation of the famous Tibetan Gutug soup. Besides the people allowed to participate in person, in respect of the current emergency regulations still in force in Italy, this year those who wished to participate in the annual festivities could also do so comfortably online from their homes.

On March 1 the day began with a short fire puja to burn old lungtas, Namkhas and so on, while in the evening people gathered to enjoy the Gutug soup. The last day of the Metal Ox year, March 2, there was a purification of the Six Lokas practice in the morning and a short Ganapuja in the evening with thanks and dedication for those who have contributed/worked with the Community of Merigar over the year.

On Losar, the first day of the new year, March 3, celebrations began with the "star water" for washing before sunrise, followed by Mandarava practice, then a Ganapuja in



Left: Raising the lungta.
Photo by Gabriele Siedlecki
Top: Namkhas for authentication.
Other photos by Marija Desal

the evening with a ritual to authenticate Namkhas and lungtas. With the morning practice held at the Gönpa, there was a ceremony with different types of offerings in the presence of Rosa Namkhai who gave a very inspiring message to all those present. [see page 3 for the message]

On the third day of the Water Tiger year the Sang practice was followed by the hang-

ing of the new prayer flags and a presentation by Migmar Tsering on the aspects of the new year according to Tibetan astrology.

Easing Out of the Pandemic Summer

The situation regarding the pandemic seems to be improving and we expect the situation to get better and be similar to last summer. At Merigar there are

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In the Gönpa garden we have several frangipani trees which have all grown from cuttings that were just placed in the ground. They have a beautiful perfume. They are also called the "tree of life" because even though they may be uprooted, they continue to produce flowers. The Gönpa garden is mostly palms and succulents because we didn't have a big budget for this garden and these plants grow quickly and well from cuttings or from a single plant. So this garden was not expensive to create since we already had most of the plants growing here. For example, there are many agave plants, all of which are 'babies' from other plants that we already had. Some of the plants have grown so much in a year that we have had to cut them back or remove neighboring plants.

In the newer part of the garden that we are working on at the moment, we had to make some steep type of terracing because if the earth isn't flat, the water just

flows off immediately. We had to move all the last remaining rocks from the Gar to make the terracing here and also had to take a lot of rocks from outside the Gar. When you make a garden in such a steep area, the stone walls are very evident. However, once the trees and plants start to grow they will not show so much. In the central part of this new garden I would like to plant some trees that give shade so that we can put some benches here for sitting. We will also move the fencing so that it will give protection from falls from the steeper places. This garden is very close to the Gönpa and up to now there has been no area for sitting that is in the shade.

Our first plant growing here came from the seed of a plant that was in Rinpoche's garden which unfortunately died. It's called *butea monosperma* (flame-of-the-forest). It's a very nice tree that makes big red-orange flashy flowers when the branches are bare of leaves.

Mirror: How do you see the future of the garden?

Alix: There is nothing more impermanent than a garden. I hope very much that we find somebody who will have the patience and skill to continue to take care of it in the future because it took so long to create it and Rinpoche really wanted this place to be a paradise that people will be able to enjoy in the future. Let's hope so. Many people who come to the Gar enjoy the gardens. There is also the possibility to develop different activities in the gardens, to offer tours, to have events or educational projects. However with the Covid pandemic all our projects were put on hold. I hope that we can continue with the garden projects and develop some of these ideas in the future.

Mirror: Thank you. ©

Find out more about the gardens and adopt a plant at <https://gardens.dzaminggar.net/>



Losar morning in the Gönpa at Merigar.



Preparing the lungta.

plenty of open spaces and many activities that can also be done outside. Last summer we could do activities inside the gönpa and since it is very open and there is space outside people could participate more easily.

At the moment we are waiting for 31 March when the official emergency situation ends and the government will be presenting new regulations. The green pass has made the situation at Merigar somehow complicated, and we hope that some of the limitations will be lifted after that date.

Merigar and the War in Ukraine

At Merigar we have already considered which actions we can implement in addition to simply sending concrete aid. We also thought of raising some money, provided that a professional organization is clearly identified for managing the collected funds in a safe, effective and well targeted way. We have been in contact with the International Gakyil, with ASIA and the

Dzamling Gar Gakyil in order to coordinate our efforts and obtain the best results.

Several Dzogchen Community Lings from countries bordering Ukraine such as Poland, Czech Republic, and Romania, have offered some help to our practitioners leaving Ukraine. It is important that people in need know that there is a certain path that has been drawn, and to match requests and availability. There is a website with information about the different Lings offering space to refugees.

Projects at Merigar

We are managing several projects that are still active. The most important one at the moment is the multimedia archive of the Dzogchen Community which is now officially the responsibility of Merigar, after the dissolution of the Shang Shung Foundation. We have a clear idea about the hardware and the contents, which are enormous, and we have some ideas on how the various kinds of material can be offered to our Gars, Lings and practitioners, and also in some cases to the general public, and other interested audiences. This needs though to be discussed with other entities of the Dzogchen Community and especially with the Namkhai Family, who are the owners of Rinpoche's heritage.

The Land at Merigar

The project for water drainage, which includes the area around the two small natural reservoirs on the slope below the Yellow House and the drainage system that takes the water from the house, has

almost been completed. The final part of the project that still needs to be done is to create a protective barrier around the reservoirs and the planting of some more trees, plants and grass, to restore the landscape after the works that have been carried out.

We have been working, and are still working, with a geologist to monitor the land and eventually seek some assistance from the provincial authorities or possibly funds from the European Union. With her help we are building an annual check plan to follow a thorough control of all plants and the structure of Merigar's land and buildings. A good and constant control of

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The Sangkhang.

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land and buildings beside being the best way to save money on extraordinary interventions, is crucial to keep everything in good shape and beautiful.

Shared Projects

Together with Fabio Andrico and Pelzom Films we are involved in the development of an app called **Evolve**, focused on yantra yoga and breathing. The app, part of a project with UBI (Unione Buddhista Italiana), is almost ready and at the moment we are investigating how to promote and use it. The app is intended for people within and also outside the Dzogchen Community.

Breathe the Earth is another UBI project that we have been working on with ASIA Onlus and involves working in schools aimed at promoting the well-being and social-emotional development of children through activities that involve a concrete application of Buddhist principles and values. In September 2021, the project started in the primary schools of the municipalities of Mt. Amiata, Rome, as well as in Naples, Italy, thanks to funding from the Unione Buddhista Italiana.

It's important to point out that while the UBI supports several projects, their funding only covers about 60 or 70 percent of the expenses, while the rest has to be covered by Merigar.

Membership

There has been a slight decrease in the membership and it is not easy to increase it as most of the members at Merigar West are getting older and there are not a lot of new members joining. Even though we still have a strong membership, the income from it doesn't cover all the expenses of Merigar so we have to find ways to support the structures at Merigar, compatible with its nature and with Rinpoche's vision.

We are planning to present all of these issues both to Merigar's Lings and at the Annual General Meeting of all members in May/June. It is important that all members are aware of the situation and that we reflect and act on them together.

We are a relatively new Gakyil and it has taken us some time to sufficiently understand the complex situation at Merigar. We are aware that our members would like to have more information, and we are trying to do so, with periodical Newsletters, with article such as this one, and through meetings, when it is possible. It is not easy, but we will try our best to do so. ©



Dina Priymak with children doing yoga in Merigar.

Kumar Kumari at the Schools of the Amiata Area

Dina Priymak

With great pleasure and fun I have been teaching Kumar Kumari, Yantra Yoga for children, to young people in the schools of the Amiata area (Tuscany, Italy)

dren mindful of themselves and the environment", there have been different educational activities for children partly dedicated to physical activity, among them Kumar Kumari yantra yoga.

Starting in 2019, I have been teaching Kumar Kumari to different classes of primary schools in Arcidosso, Castel del Piano, Seggiano and Montenero – small towns on Mount Amiata situated in the beautiful valley of Val d'Orcia (Tuscany, Italy) near Merigar, which is well-known in the local area. So, it was easy for Merigar to propose teaching Kumar Kumari yoga at schools in order to present this project.

I am also very happy that my colleagues, Kumar Kumari instructors Costance Soehnlen, Laura Graci, and Fabiana Esca have been participating in this project and teach Kumar Kumari in other places in Italy (Constance and Laura in Rome, and Fabiana Esca in Naples). I am especially happy that this year my colleague and dear friend Letizia Pizzetti has joined me to teach Kumar Kumari in Seggiano and Montenero.

A project usually has its limits. According to this specific project we performed only eight one-hour lessons of Kumar Kumari with each class, one session per week



Kumar Kumari course in Montenero.

for three years. It became possible thanks to Merigar's organization of special projects in collaboration with A.S.I.A and with the support of the Italian Buddhist Union.

Each year Merigar participates and organizes a new project which later wins the public bid approved by the government of Italy. Usually such projects last only one scholastic year. This year, thanks to the project "Breathe the Earth. Resilient chil-

for two months. In this way, in 2021 I taught Kumar Kumari in September and October to four different classes in Arcidosso, in October and November to two classes in Castel del Piano, in November and December to two mixed classes in Seggiano and this year (half of January and half of March) with Letizia we taught Kumar Kumari to two mixed classes in Montenero. In total, more than 120 children have had an oppor-

tunity to learn and practice Kumar Kumari in the Amiata area this year.

In this time of uncertainty and stress due to the pandemic and terror of war children and teenagers are among the most fragile categories and most exposed to psychological and emotional distress. For this reason, the primary goal of the project "Breathe the Earth. Resilient children mindful of themselves and the environment" funded by the Italian Buddhist Union, is to promote well-being, social and emotional development of children at primary schools through activities that facilitate a concrete application of Buddhist principles and values, starting from the understanding that self-awareness, empathy, non-violence and interdependence are the basis of a healthy life and the social and environmental responsibility of the new generations.

Kumar Kumari is a method of Yantra Yoga designed specifically for children between five and twelve years of age. It was conceived and written by our Master, Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, taking into account the physical size, energy and breathing of children. The characteristic of Kumar Kumari is that it combines movements with breathing through the use of ten syllables or sacred sounds OM, A, HUM, 'A, A, HA, SHA, SA, MA and HAM to teach children to inhale and exhale correctly. For its extremely beneficial potential, Yantra Yoga for children was compared by Rinpoche to a 'great medicine', as these exercises balance the vital functions and all the other aspects necessary to keep children healthy and ensure their perfect growth.

During our lessons the children had fun gradually learning the ten syllables or sacred sounds of Kumar Kumari. Usually, at the beginning of the lesson we would dedicate time to warm up exercises performed in a playful way, games and/or activities with cards, and songs which help the children release the tension accumulated in the sitting position during the school day and warm their bodies up well. I liked the part when, after the warm up routine, we would tell them a beautiful story about Kumar Kumari recently created by our fantastic Italian group of Kumar Kumari instructors in order to introduce the sounds of Kumar Kumari. The children would copy them and the yoga postures with great enthusiasm.

I am really excited and satisfied with this experience as I have noticed the changes in the children. Since I have already known them for three years, I have noticed with



Approaching Spring, We Sow Good Aspirations

Retreats and practice

As a place of practice and teachings, Merigar East is keeping the flame alive. This season, when we have fewer visitors, online courses have allowed us to connect to the world, and to feel that the Gar is loved and supported.

.....
great joy that the seeds we have planted during this time are starting to sprout and to grow – the children have become more aware of their breathing, of the sensations in their body, they gladly relax at the end of the session and naturally express empathy and respect the dimension of others. Every time we finish a lesson I feel an immense joy, beautiful recharging energy and happiness!

I was thrilled to know that this year A.S.I.A and Merigar have also launched a new project for the next scholastic year. I hope it will be approved again by the government. We (Kumar Kumari instructors in collaboration with Merigar) are planning to continue teaching Kumar Kumari to the children of the Mount Amiata area. We have also offered our collaboration to the local Social Cooperative in order to teach Kumar Kumari in the summer camps in the area and are waiting for approval of this project as well. It feels great to be active and collaborate with others! I am sure Rinpoche would be satisfied with this news!

May this positive energy bring peace and love to our world! ©

We took the opportunity to replay Rinpoche's teachings, made available by the Archive of the International Dzogchen Community. We had our second replay, Longsal Ati Nadzer, at the beginning of February, from the 5th to 11th. An especially numerous Chinese community attended, thanks to the translation karma yoga of Jenny from Taiwan. We were happy to have Oliver Leick, SMS instructor, with us, accompanying practitioners to a better understanding and guiding the practices.

The Gakyil of ME is searching for solutions to respond to the sometimes-challenging circumstances of being a Gar whose most active members do not live close by. We have the wish for the center to be useful to the world for years to come. Come to ME! Develop your practice here, in an ideal place for personal retreats, for group practice, and for karma yoga in nature.

It is an immense joy to us to make our space useful by hosting Ukrainian practitioners and their families, who found refuge from the war here. Here they can have some moments of rest from the sorrow and anxiety, in the silence of this huge southern sky.

Yantra yoga instructors, join us in the warm season for a deepening course with Laura Evangelisti and Fabio Andrico, focused especially on the pranayama (24th June–3rd July)! Following it, anyone can practice Yantra Yoga, Vajra Dance and community practices in a retreat with Zoli Cser (6–10 July). The renovation of the Gönpa, guided by Migmar Tsering, will take place up to the end of July. In August, Oliver Leick will guide interested people who are not yet Dzogchen practitioners through an

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understanding of the various Pathways to Spiritual Realisation (6–7 August), followed by a practice retreat on Shine and Guru Yoga (8–15 August). Let's focus our intention on a stable future free of fear!

In order to help the influx of good motivation and to produce merit for positive effects to manifest, we are inviting you to practice the accumulation of Jigme Lingpa Ganapuja. You can practice anytime and send us the number of recitations. You can find more details and register on our website: www.dzogchen.ro/merigar-east/upcoming-events/ganapuja-accumulation-for-merigar-east-3



Rinpoche in Merigar East, Archive photo 2009.

list: <https://dzogchen.ro/donate-for-our-projects/donor-list?view=donors>.

Moreover, from January to Losar, like every year, we were preparing by hand Lungtas: <https://www.dzogchen.ro/donate-for-our-projects/lungta-laboratory>. This year the difference was that the process was even more collaborative and international than before. Practitioners from the Czech Republic joined the Hungarian DC in Buda-



Left: Pruning workshop – ex gekos Greg and Alex are still here to help. Right: Pruning workshop – volunteers.

Our Projects

Gönpa, lhakhang or other types of buildings hosting rituals and practices are typically a central element of any Buddhist center. Well-built and beautifully decorated, they are not only spaces for collective practices, but also objects of reverence, devotion and generosity.

Our big plans for this year also include the renovation of our Gönpa, to take place at the beginning of the summer. The wall reconstruction works will be carried out in the beginning of June, while the painting and decoration, during the month of July.

Our Gönpa Renovation fundraising campaign has reached 58% of its objective!!! 57 donors showed their generosity and appreciation of our efforts here is our donors

pest, where they printed hundreds of sets of Lungtas to hang at Merigar East.

Some other hundreds of sets were printed at Merigar East, but people in different parts of Romania helped, in person or at a distance, with the cutting and the sewing. For the first time, we could also send handmade Lungtas all over Europe, so Sangha members could hang them in their own gardens.

This year, the **Lungta campaign** gathered donations of approx. 5000 €, coming from 70 people. They will also be directed to the Gönpa Renovation project.

Our Oasis is slowly and steadily waking up from its winter sleep. Just this weekend we had the pleasure of hosting 9 volunteers for a second part of our tree-pruning endeavors. The preparations in the ear-

ly spring are crucial for the well-being of the trees, which are forced to grow in the harsh conditions of the Dobrogea region desert, so they need expert care and a lot of nutrition!

Thank you, community, for supporting Merigar East! We are welcoming karma yogis and yoginis, for whom we offer free accommodation in our dormitory (15 places). We also have work exchange opportunities (we offer free accommodation and 300 euro a month) for you to contribute to the development of our gar. ©

Warm Gönpa – Warm Heart

The Gakyil of Kunsangar South

This winter we launched the project “Warm Gönpa – Warm Heart” at Kunsangar South. The winter season in Crimea can be snowy, with strong winds and cold weather, but despite this scheduled Ganapujas, Vajra Dances on the Mandala, and other collective practices continue to take place in the Gönpa.

Most people who participate in the events know that it's better to come to the Gönpa in warm clothes, gloves, scarves, and warm the precious body with hot water. But there are only a few Pamos and Pawos who are prepared so well.

Luckily, it's possible to turn on the underfloor heating in the Gönpa. It takes the floors a long time to warm up, almost a day. But, as experience shows, the pleasure of uniting in dance and practice is unconditional. When the news appears in the Gar



chat that the floors are turned on for the upcoming practice and the Gönpa is heated, this undoubtedly attracts more people who want to unite in practice.

The goal of the project “Warm Gönpa – Warm Heart” was to create the necessary conditions for performing practices in the cold season and attracting close and distant friends to the Gar. With the financial support of the project participants, we managed to pay for the heating in the Gönpa, which made it possible to organize collective practices every weekend.

In the morning we did Sang and Serkyem, before lunch and in the evening we danced the Vajra Dance and Khaita, during the day we performed collective practices: Guru Yoga with the white A and the invocation of Garab Dorje, purification of the Six Lokas with Vajrasattva, Ganapuja, Khorva Tongtrug, the long life practice of Jnanadakini Mandarava, Shitro and the 25 Spaces of Samantabhadra. At the weekends, we prepared joint dinners, which also united people under the roof of the Gar and at the same table. Practitioners from different cities of Crimea, guests of the Gar, and residents of the Gar on a permanent basis took part in this project.

Perhaps those who participated in the events of the project “Warm Gönpa – Warm Heart” would love to share with others their impressions about its organization and wishes for the future. When there is a desire to do something for others, it manifests itself in action and pleases the heart. The development of the Dzogchen Community, the Jewel created and left to us by our Precious Master Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, depends only on us. ©

Update from Kunsangar North

Kunsangar North continues to be an important and active place for practitioners of the Dzogchen Community. On New Year's eve, a practical retreat on the Dance of the Song of the Vajra was held at the Gar with instructor Tanya Gerasimova from St. Petersburg, and on December 31, the Gakyil invited the entire Russian-speaking community to celebrate the New Year. For this occasion about 100 practitioners came to the Gar. Many had not seen each other for a very long time, and Kunsangar once again united everyone. All night long we danced on the Mandala, sang around the campfire, and recalled the precious moments spent with Rinpoche.

In January, Vitya Krachkovsky successfully conducted an in-depth retreat on Yantra Yoga. The Gar also hosted educational and practice retreats under the guidance of our precious Vajra Dance instructors. In February, Anya Neiman came to visit us from Italy, and we were very happy to finally meet her on the Mandala. Together with Tanya Pronicheva, they conducted a training retreat on the Vajra Dance that Benefits



Hangng lungta in Kunsangar North.



All Beings and in parallel, Anya conducted a retreat on the study and practice of steps and timing in the method of contemplating the Dance of Space of the Song of the Vajra (Khalongdorjeikar).

Before the Tibetan New Year, on an auspicious day, we took down all the old lungtas and put up new ones with the inten-

tion that peace and harmony prevail in the minds of all beings. We celebrated Losar with continuous practice, dedicating all the merits to establishing peace and joy on the whole Earth and among all sentient beings, and continued with a very intensive practice of Jnanadakini Mandarava.

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To maintain energy and develop knowledge and understanding of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu's teachings, Kunsangar North regularly conducts practices in Zoom: practice of the Guardians with Sasha Pubants on Tuesdays, practice of advanced pranayamas with Oni McKinstry on Saturdays, practice of Khaita Joyful Dances on Saturdays, led by Khaita instructors from different countries.

There is a very large living area at Kunsangar North: buildings, facilities, a canteen, retreat houses, teachers' houses, and a boiler room. It is very difficult to maintain it all. The task of the Gakyil during this period has been to try to correctly allocate resources for repairs and develop a strategy for preserving the Gar in this difficult time. If the Dzogchen Community stays together and sticks together as one team, then we will definitely manage to do it.

In winter, there was a heavy snowfall at the Gar and our groundskeepers had a very hard time, but they successfully cleared the entire territory. Despite the fact that we have an excellent canteen at the Gar, we decided to restore the kitchen for the members of the Dzogchen Community. Now we have the opportunity to cook our own food and eat it as if at home.

Our Gar also has the second largest stupa in Europe with a height of 14 meters. Inside there is a spacious room with an altar where we can come to do personal and collective practices.



Inside the stupa.



After Ganapuja on occasion of Losar.



Course on the Vajra Dance that Benefits All Beings with Tanya Pronicheva and Anna Neiman.

We try to remember how rare it is to meet a real Dzogchen master, to receive innermost knowledge and how important the Three Jewels are: the Teacher, the Teaching and the Sangha. We are in the same boat until full realization.

We are waiting for everyone to come here for retreats and practices, or just

come and relax. We also invite karmayogis to the Gar. Write to us if you would like to participate in the life of the Gar.

Looking forward to seeing you here!

With love,
Gakyil of Kunsangar North



Tsegyalgar East – Surviving and Thriving During the Pandemic

Celebrating 40 Years of Rinpoche’s Teaching at Tsegyalgar

Greetings to the International Dzogchen Community from Tsegyalgar East. First the good news. After many months of Covid-related restrictions, the virus is diminishing and society is re-opening. Like so many other Gars, most of our interactions in the past two years have been virtual. Now we’re looking forward to planning more face-to-face events during the 40th Anniversary of Rinpoche’s beginning to teach in Western Massachusetts.

Working with our circumstances during the past year, Tsegyalgar East has been transformed to an All-Volunteer Community. We no longer employ a Gekö, Secretary or Administrative Manager. Fortunately, many community members continue to offer their energy, wisdom and support. Without the efforts of Members the Community couldn’t function. As a result we’ve been able to maintain a vibrant schedule of online practices and teachings, complimented by the many offerings of the International Dzogchen Community.

While we’ve experienced a small decline in membership, we continue to have



Tsegyalgar East in Conway, MA March 18, 2022.

Photo by Ellen Halbert

a strong core of active members. And, through the efforts of our online course offerings our budget has remained stable, even improved. This will allow us to undertake a number of maintenance and improvement projects at both the Conway Schoolhouse which houses the SSI-School of Tibetan Medicine and the indoor gompa as well as projects on Khandroling to maintain the retreat cabins and Vajra Hall.

Our biggest challenge right now is to find additional volunteer assistance for the Blue Gakyil. Continuing to offer our online events requires an enormous amount of communication activity both externally with people interested in participating and with teachers to arrange schedules, set up Zoom meetings, share event details and follow-up post retreat.

Now our focus is turning to plans for the Summer Sangha Celebration tentatively scheduled for July 8–15, 2022. The theme for the Celebration is: **Reflections on the 40th Anniversary of Rinpoche’s Teaching at Tsegyalgar: Integrating Body, Speech and Mind.** The Gakyil will soon be meeting with the teachers of Vajra Dance, Yantra Yoga and Santi Maha Sangha to develop the program and schedule. All events will be on Khandroling, “Land of the Dakinis” and in the Vajra Hall. Come join us! ©

Below left: View from Mandarava Cabin at Khandroling, Tsegyalgar East’s Retreat Land, July 2021.

Photo by Wayne Bianucci

Below right: Khandroling – Fortress of Dakinis

(Rinpoche’s Cabin) – Buckland, MA March 18, 2022.

Photo by India Lehr-Ferrier



Pictures from the Past

Part Three – Towards Derghe

Raimondo Bultrini continues his account of travelling in Tibet with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu in 1988 arriving in Derghe, the highlands, and Galenteen.

Returning to Asia from retreats in Japan and Australia, Rinpoche had passed through Hong Kong where he had been greatly struck by the opulence and business frenzy of the island, a model for the China of the future waiting for the concession of the British government to end in '97 to return it under the laws of Beijing after 156 years of governing. The master wondered if it would be possible for Tibet to follow the same model envisaged in Hong Kong of "A country with two systems", but he feared the impact among his people of a model of industrial and commercial development based on the exploitation of the environment and resources.

The same morning that began with the noisy hotel alarm clock, part of the procession that had greeted us upon our arrival sat on the floor in our room and in Sonam Palmo and Phuntsok's. They had opened large canvas bags filled with *tsampa* for breakfast and Rinpoche happily savored that taste from his childhood by showing me how to mix barley flour with butter tea poured from large Chinese thermoses into the wooden bowl that his relatives had given me to take throughout the journey, just like the nomads. Wherever the shepherds of yaks and dri (females) go, they bring one with them to receive the offer of tea from the various families they meet in their white tents during the summer movements of the herds on the highlands, and in the black tents made from animal hair that defend them from the Himalayan winter.

That bowl in which *tsampa* and tea are mixed is a precious object and traditionally every Tibetan carries one in a pocket of his or her *chuba*. Rinpoche's was carried by his sister or niece and mine was tucked into the inside pocket of an anorak and will be invaluable along most of the route in the



less inhabited areas of the highlands, together with the dried yak meat that the relatives of the master had dried outside in the thin air of the mountains. It was just a foretaste because Rinpoche had been invited by the Sichuan authorities to a multi-course banquet lunch, and had to honor them by eating as much as possible between the many tankards of Chinese beer. It was his first close meeting with the state authorities who were to give their decisive opinion on his proposals for practical collaboration on the ground. Enlivened by the many dishes and drinks that included powerful Chinese liqueurs, they went so far as to question the master about his relationship with the Dalai Lama. Rinpoche told them frankly that the exiled leader was not an enemy of China as many imply, and he explained the meaning of the five political points of the agreement proposed by His Holiness to China.

He told them that each of these points is in line with the United Nations Constitution itself, also accepted by the Chinese Communist Party, and that the points that were presented should be discussed instead of dismissing them out of hand. Everyone could benefit from them, he added, and not even China could ignore the need for real autonomy not only for Tibetans but also for all other ethnic minorities. He concluded the conversation – which continued with several toasts – by saying that

one of his main intentions was to preserve Tibetan culture and language before rapid transformation could destroy it. As we had the opportunity to see during our trip, there was in fact the beginning of Chinese colonization, the outcome of which is visible to everyone today. It was easy enough to understand simply by seeing the images of the felled trees transported by huge Chinese trucks that we encountered along the border roads, and the hundreds of trunks seen floating down the rivers that descended from the Himalayas destined for the large Chinese sawmills.

1988 was Rinpoche's first full immersion in the places of his origin and of his education as a "tulku" or reincarnate. While it was easy for the master to understand what was happening in a country he had left before the full Chinese military occupation thirty years earlier, I could only count on my study of history and the experience of two journeys, a journalistic one in the two previous years in Beijing among intellectuals, and another as an assistant to a group visiting the tourist resorts of the south, always accompanied by official guides.

The master didn't always have time to translate or talk to me about the kind of people and places we met, but he did his best using the common Italian language, as well as trying to teach me the basics of Tibetan using a game for children, a series of characters with the Western transliteration of consonants and vowels. He wrote them on a series of cards by hand, folded them with care and placed them in a Tibetan purse and asked me to take out one from time to time and memorize it. Unfortunately, I did not make much progress and this linguistic isolation often weighed on my mood and excluded me from fully perceiving the intensity of the dialogue that took place almost daily in front of my eyes between the master and the thousands of Tibetans who came to meet him wherever we found ourselves.

The still living fame of his predecessors and teachers went before him, but also the esteem of the scholars of ancient Tibet as could be seen. At times huge crowds gathered outside the houses, monasteries or tents that hosted us to see and hear him speak, mainly to receive at least a blessing. Rinpoche listened to everyone and for those



The Derghe Gonchen monastery.

who requested them he created small tokens for protection on the spot, most of the time using the same *khatag* received as a traditional offering of the “pure mind”.

One day, observing grazing nomads and real-life scenes that had not changed over the years, Rinpoche recalled something that had struck us at the University for the Minorities in Beijing. In the local annexes of the National Institute of Ethnic Peoples there was a small museum where Tibetans, Mongols, Uighurs, and other ancient populations were depicted with images and mannequins dressed in their traditional costumes with a model of their typical home in the background. “This is what Tibetan culture risks,” he commented, “becoming just a memory of an extinct people like the Vikings and the ancient Egyptians”. Rinpoche said, however, that faith in religion and in the ancient teachings would not disappear anytime soon among his people, since it had remained almost unchanged among a vast majority of his compatriots during the decades of communist rule. He was more concerned about the fate of the Rimed movement of unity among all Tibetan schools and the increase of false masters in the dharma business, capable – he said – of dividing the community of practitioners and contaminating ancient traditions and lineages that were centuries old if not millennia, both inside and outside Tibet.

Political power and the people

After several days of travel from Chengdu – the capital of Sichuan and the starting point for travellers to Tibet – we reached Derghe, the capital of the province of the same name where Rinpoche was born in the village of Geug on December 8, 1938 and studied with masters from various schools. I had left my job as a journalist for the newspaper of the Italian Communist Party to follow him in what I felt was also an “ideological” turning point, but I was pleasantly struck by the fact that the Chinese “red” authorities themselves shared the same esteem for the master as scholars and academics did. Rinpoche’s reception at Derghe’s oldest printing house of Buddhist texts was the foretaste of what awaited us in other villages and provinces. It seemed just like a scene from another era if it hadn’t been for the master’s anorak which strongly contrasted with the attire of the local Tibetans and the reddish purple robes of the monks who surrounded him. Rows of monks and common people with their hands pressed together were lined up along the entire path while the long ritual horns sounded on the roof and the smell of cypress *sang* mixed with other aromatic herbs wafted through the air.

Rinpoche told me that part of the library had been destroyed and abandoned during the Cultural Revolution, as well as the Derghe Gonchen monastery of the

Sakyapa tradition on which the printing of manuscripts depended. Many of his uncles and teachers had studied and taught here, except to escape its strict and “commercial” rules, which I will talk about later on. The printing house had maintained its fame and was now being restored to the satisfaction of pilgrims, scholars, and monasteries who commissioned texts of Buddhist canons and many other teachings that had been secretly preserved during the Cultural Revolution in the form of wooden matrices often centuries old. That same day the master was expected by the administrators for an official greeting at the assembly hall of the Derghe town hall, but it turned out to be a long and informal meeting with those officials who wanted to know his sincere impressions of Tibet after so many years. “You did well to rebuild monasteries, libraries and temples”, he told them, “but it would have been better in the first place to admit that it made no sense to destroy them. I think that now it is important to create the conditions so that we do not go back to destroying by doing something together. But we must be careful not to mix the two cultures. For example, among the city administrators today there are many Tibetans, but in the Chinese offices they cannot continue to speak their language. Much has already been lost, and much will be lost if one of

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the two cultures superimposes itself or mixes with the other.”

Our group led by Rinpoche had been placed near the mayor and his advisers, seated in Chinese style on the sofas arranged one in front of the other and divided by a table with cups of tea with lids to keep the tea warm. Along one of the walls the portraits of the fathers of Communism hung in a row, from Marx to Engels followed by Mao and Deng Xiao Ping, known for his economic reforms and the first openings to the world. On the other wall, and probably only for that occasion, figures of Buddhist deities had been hung.

Namkhai Norbu soon realized that he had struck his audience – there was a deafening silence – on a sensitive point in the relationship between political power and the population. He must have foreseen this circumstance because it was here that he mentioned his plan to decision makers for the first time: to build schools for Tibetans and in the Tibetan language in the areas where he had grown up and studied. After the meeting, a senior official of the local government who had been his friend during his years in China invited us to drink some wine at the home of a peasant family and solemnly promised to lend a hand to the master to put his ideas into practice. He was surprised when the wine seller in front of him asked for a blessing from the lama who had come from afar and the master threw some rice into the room.

In the evening of that intense day Rinpoche returned to his room satisfied with the promises he had also received from other leaders, but tired, and his tasks were not over. I have already said that Rinpoche accepted his treatment as a “lama” aware of the need not to disappoint people who were more traditional, including his own relatives who had called him Rinpoche since the day of his recognition. In fact, he knew that the arrival of an important *tulku* who was a disciple of many great lamas of the Sakyapa monastery of Derghe Ganchen, would bring crowds of Tibetans to ask for a blessing, filling the hotel corridor in silence, under the incredulous eyes of the Chinese guests. It happened very often at each stage of the journey and the small photo album that Rinpoche carried with images of himself, donated by various Western practitioners, was soon empty.

The presence of the Chinese became increasingly rare as we entered eastern Tibet, at that time still partly uncontami-



The Derghe printing house.

nated and without too many settlers, concentrated only in the mildest valleys, like the gold seekers we met bent over their sieves along the river banks in search of gold-bearing sands.

At the end of a tiring day that began with a premature wake-up call and ended with a crowded room, Rinpoche was kind enough to tell me a story that I connected to the man from Turin in search of a physical blessing, a brother of ours who was neither Tibetan nor even Western. “Once upon a time there was a bat who wanted to make birds believe that he was one of them. ‘Just look. I have wings, I go up and down and where I want.’ The birds believed him and let him fly with them. One day he met some mice and said, ‘Look. I’m just like you. Look at my muzzle, my teeth.’ But the time came that the birds and mice found themselves in the same place and they all realized that he was neither mouse nor bird and he remained alone.” “Now let’s sleep.” Rinpoche switched off the light and before going to bed reminded me about an important duty. “Tomorrow we have to change money.”

The situation with the currency was a delicate operation in a country where foreigners can only use FECs – certificates issued by the government at a high rate – which were almost unknown in the regions we would go to, where only *rennimbis* or *yuan* were used. Some people had come to Chengdu from various continents to meet up with us: the American, Alex Siedlecki (who intended to make a documentary and is current director of the MACO Museum in Arcidosso), Ady from the Greek commu-

nity in Athens, who had come just to meet the master, and Keng and Cheh (now a yantra yoga teacher and SMS instructor) from Singapore. Keng and Cheh, as we will see, will also join us later in Derghe and their presence in Chengdu proved to be providential for the translations with members of the gang of money changers. We were made to wait in a hotel room for the phone call announcing the arrival of the group of men with cash tucked under their jackets and in their bags. They smoked and were very nervous because they wanted to take advantage of us, but we ended up making a good transaction even though they also managed to pass us a bundle of counterfeit bills. There were so many bundles of *yuan* that Rinpoche threw them in the air shouting “We are rich!”

In fact, if the money had not been destined to be donated to the sacred and not exactly profane places of the villages where schools and hospitals would be built, it would have made more than one Tibetan family rich for the rest of their lives.

Towards the highlands

On 11 May, a Wednesday, we left the group of foreigners who had not been able to obtain permits and began the journey towards the Tibetan highlands passing through some Chinese villages that were very poor at the time. There was a road block at the beginning of the first access road to the Qionglai mountains and we stopped for a night in the Chinese town of Ya’an, where the master had already stayed when he was elected as a delegate of the monasteries of eastern

Tibet to participate in the inauguration ceremony for the Chengdu-Lhasa highway. He said that at that time the idea of bringing some progress to a country that had been isolated for millennia infected many young people and that even the Dalai Lama tried to get an agreement with the Communist authorities for a form of controlled development, such as the one he will present again many decades later in his Five Point Peace Plan.

While we were waiting in vain for the opening of the road, we noticed an old farmer's wife selling hard-boiled eggs from a wicker basket. Rinpoche bought some for the whole group and soon other peasant women arrived but without the same luck because we returned to the city to wait for the reopening in the morning. The story of the eggs reminded the master of what had happened when the first Chinese troops arrived in eastern Tibet. "At the beginning the soldiers were very kind, and, for example, they bought eggs at a price even higher than their value and made themselves welcome by the people by fixing roads and paying for food in precious *yuan*. Unfortunately, that period did not last for long and soon they showed a much harsher face and made themselves hated by many."

After crossing the first peaks of the Tibetan range, we reached Kangding where Rinpoche had many acquaintances among his former Chinese and Tibetan students of the 1950s. Before the official meetings, they came to pick us up to go to the sulphurous water baths where as a young man the master loved to immerse himself almost every day between one lesson and another, a unique enjoyment for all of us. During our days there the professors from the local university organized crowded lectures and helped arrange our travels to the "real" Tibet.

On the morning of his departure, May 14, Rinpoche had a dream. We had arrived in a mountain town where the people spoke an unknown language. I had driven the car in which we had traveled there and in the dream he imagined that he had walked away from the clearing where we were parked. Upon returning, he no longer found either the car or the group and began looking for us asking for directions from some people who, however, did not understand him. At a certain point, he came upon a path with several curtains and found himself in a beautiful country. "I forgot I was lost," he said, amused.

In the real dimension, the jeep began to climb between panoramas that changed radically as we met the first Tibetan-style houses and the first yaks. Beyond the city of Garze, already with a Tibetan majority, we will tackle the highest pass of all, the Chola Shan. Rinpoche told me that a large number of Chinese and Tibetan workers had died to build this road that reaches 6000 meters and now many of the resources from Tibet travelled on trucks along that asphalt snake that we will see winding around breathtaking hairpin bends and valleys visible below the great precipices.

There were all the signs of the proliferation of increasingly gigantic and invasive public works that would alter the Tibetan landscape forever and we did nothing but meet lorries and trucks with trailers loaded with timber, especially pine and fir taken from upstream. Today we all know

was not worth destroying an environment that was difficult to rebuild. But for more than 60 years, decisions have no longer been up to the Tibetan people and the havoc continues.

The ancient story of Galenteen or Galingteng

Before reaching Galenteen, which we would become our base for numerous expeditions in the most remote and sacred areas of the pilgrimage, Rinpoche told me about his uncle, Abbot Khyentse Wangchuk, considered the reincarnation of the master of masters Chökyi Wangpo, both *tertöns* (discoverers of hidden spiritual treasures) and yogis known throughout Eastern Tibet and beyond. They remained closed for years in solitary retreat in hermitages and caves on peaks that the master indicated to me by stopping the car to offer *khatag* in the



A group of pilgrims who came to Galenteen for the ceremonies.

the effects of that deforestation, including the increasingly violent floods in Chinese cities also caused by the melting of large glaciers due to the greenhouse effect.

The master observed everything with stern eyes and during the trip in our jeep loaded with people and luggage he told me a paradoxical story about the old local administrators of a village in Derghe before the occupation. He said that a company famous in Japan for its soft and strong toothpicks had offered to buy certain trees from their forest to produce them locally, using only the core of the trunk and throwing away the rest. Fortunately, the local leaders realized that in exchange for a few yen it

direction of the places where he received precious teachings from them, and where he practiced in turn in hidden places in the mountains. We had already been in Derghe for a few hours when, at the intersection of three valleys topped by rugged peaks, he offered some yellow flowers that grew in that season and looked like tulips. He turned to a mountain with a rounded tip, where – he told me – another uncle, the yogi Togden Ugyen Tendzin, practiced in summer and winter and attained the state of the body of light, apparently outwitting the communist guards who patrolled his retreat house.

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In the biography of the Togden, masterfully translated by Adriano Clemente, I found a significant detail to help understand the determination of these masters in pursuing the path of Ati. I knew the legend of Milarepa who threw away his only possession, a bowl to eat wild nettles, and in "The Body of Light" Rinpoche will tell the story of how a wealthy local family offered the Togden a sheepskin suit lined with fur for his icy hermitages and he bartered it for a certain sacred inscription in stone for the protection of beings.

Those inaccessible places at times shielded only by wooden planks were for the young Norbu and his uncle also places

ine this teacher-disciple relationship alternating through numerous generations of sages, I observed their places of retreat in the distance from the road. However, even ignoring most of the events made public by the master in his detailed biographies, I could not start to understand the historical role that these lineages of tulkus of monasteries, even important ones, played at that time, openly breaking the rules imposed by their own administrations. Aware of the degeneration caused by money, many yogis refused to bestow on command a certain number of teachings and blessings a day to monks and devotees.

However, I fully understood the privilege of studying with a practitioner of the path

But being close to him, observing him with his ordinary gestures, and the extraordinary effects of the energy that he transmitted around him, was a constant and unwritten teaching. During his long conversations in Tibetan and Chinese with ordinary people, high lamas, political officials and intellectuals, his voice was to my ears like a mantra that sometimes turned into a lullaby and I would doze off in public, much to Rinpoche's embarrassment. Speaking of presence in contemplation...

We had two stops in Galenteen and I did not know about the biography of Khyentse already written two years earlier by the master, then updated by him and translated in 1999 by Enrico Dell'Angelo with the



The crowd of nomads at the Avalokitesvara initiation in Galenteen.

to practice Yantra Yoga, which the Togden had learned from Adzom Drugpa as one of his closest disciples. Anyone who knows the history of lineages knows that Drugpa was the previous incarnation of Namkhai Norbu. The dying lama entrusted Rinpoche's uncle, the Togden, with the red and white striped shawl, the bell and the vajra intended for his successor. Trying to imag-

of self-liberation, a direct disciple of these solitary *tulkus*, who often only transmitted instructions to a student from mouth to ear. I must admit that Rinpoche never once uttered special mantras for my hearing alone, except for the invocation of Manjushri, "Om arapatza nadi hum phet", after I asked him how I could increase my low intelligence. ("You can try," he said smiling).

title "The Lamp That Enlightens Narrow Minds". I will therefore discover only later the meaning of many things that Rinpoche told me in those days but which I did not understand or immediately write in my notebook. But they came back to life thanks to expert Tibetologists such as Enrico and Adriano Clemente who transcribed with precision the stories recounted from

the same source about those unusual yogis and the places where they were born.

However, I perceived with all my senses the colorful and intense devotion of the nomadic horsemen who came down the main road from Galenteen to welcome us, offering the first visual impact with the people of the isolated valleys. They were primeval-looking men dressed in skins, faces the color of certain red sands of the highlands, and hair that had never seen a brush and often not even water. They rode alongside us as proud and happy as children, shouting propitiatory mantras, waving and throwing *khatag* in the air, and moving back and forth on the backs of their animals as in American Indian films, surrounded by snow-capped peaks and the air rarefied as crystal.

The nomads of the district of Changra, where Rinpoche's uncle abbot had built the monastery around which the religious life of his disciples still takes place today, had reached the road that connects the valley to the capital of Derghe to give a worthy reception to the famous nephew of their master, the man who gave birth to another successor of the lineage, his son, Yeshi Silvano Namkhai, recognized by the Karmapa himself as the *tulku* of Khyentse Wangchuk. Yeshi will visit the monastery and villages many years later, greeted with even longer and more elaborate celebrations than Galenteen had organized for the master's stay.

During the steep climb in the jeep, our Tibetan driver amazed in turn by the welcome, their animals raced past us at speed with a procession that seemed to have no end of men with long hair braided with red cords from the Kham ethnic group and groups from other Tibetan clans. We stopped in a very green clearing where a large group of monks had lit the herbs for the *sang* [smoke incense offering *ed.*] and we were offered a plate of sweets and candies along with butter tea which we shared with throngs of children accompanied by women dressed in traditional clothes with small and large turquoise or other stones in their hair. Finally we reached our first destination, the temple in the heart of the village about which Rinpoche had already had two dreams during the journey. He had seen the original inscriptions, which he will find in reality, that dated back much earlier than those of the three scholastic traditions, Sakya, Kagyü, and Nyingma, that had alternated in that place of practice for at least eleven centuries.



The sang ceremony in Galenteen after Rinpoche's arrival.

Galenteen or Galingteng was founded by the legendary Lhalung Palgyi Dorje, direct disciple of Padmasambhava, considered a hero because he killed King Langdarma, who had become a bitter enemy of Vajrayana Buddhism, with a brilliant strategy. For many years Galing and the Lhalung valley were his safe haven from the king's soldiers who sought him everywhere, and here it is said he obtained the body of light in solitude.

Rinpoche told me the details as we crossed the valley which takes its name from that famous disciple of the great eighth century exorcist responsible for spreading Tantric Buddhism in Tibet and which will become the basis of some of ASIA's projects. "Dorje" – he explained – "had smeared his white horse with coal and wore a two-faced black cloak to reach the king's camp in western Tibet. As soon the arrow struck the heart of the sovereign, he crossed a river where he washed the horse and reversed his jacket, escaping the searches of the soldiers who were looking for a black rider, then headed straight into this valley."

We will soon visit Lhalung, several hours distant on horseback from his uncle Khyentse's residence. Rinpoche's family and I were guests at the two-storey house with wooden windows and floors built half a century earlier for the abbot who would move from there to stay in retreat in locations such as Giawo and others that were even closer to places where Palgyi Dorje

had lived. In the following days the master visited one of these caves or hermitages together with Cheh during his stay in Galen. The Khyentse residential house was simple accommodation and like the rest of the village it had no electricity, so we depended on sadly bad quality Chinese-made candles that burned sideways and soon left us in the dark.

The word Galen means "to take off the saddle", but it also refers to the syllable of the family name of another famous sage named Ga Anyen Tamba, direct disciple of Sakya Pandita and spiritual teacher of a Mongol emperor, who stopped there at the beginning of the 14th century. It was here that Ga "took off the saddle" to remain for a long time before returning to court. But it is to Padmasambhava's disciple that we owe the birth of the gar, or spiritual place, known by his name, entrusted for many years before the revolution to the guide of Khyentse who had predicted the events to come due to the climate of division that was being created among the very administrators of his *labrang* [monastic household *ed.*] and within many families.

In the wood-panelled room with the terracotta stove in Chokyi Wangchuk's house, in addition to Cheh there was also his fellow countryman Keng Leck from Singapore (there are videos of him on youtube). Rinpoche often sat on the bed talking to us while continuing to prepare medicines and *chudlen* pills, or working

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on the *khatag* scarves and protective cords that he would distribute to the hundreds of people expected every day at the house, always crowded to hear him speak or receive blessings. The *khatag* seemed to come to life under his fingers after intertwining and authenticating them with a mantra before distributing them to the waiting line. Many people also asked for one for their children (in nomadic areas they had an average of 3 to 5), for yaks or horses, or even to “protect” the new machines that had been invented to curdle butter more easily.

Except for a week of flu that weakened the master by forcing him to stay in bed most of the time, the days in Galenteen followed one another peacefully with visits from ordinary people and authorities, teachings from the teacher to nomads, and walks along the river. I often went close to the temple, a place of peace and silence, where the inhabitants had gathered together the stones carved with the faces of the deities and the syllables of the mantras that had been stolen during the cultural revolution. The village came to life on the eve of a great Avalokitesvara Long Life initiation ceremony and the grasslands around the Khyentse house were filled with tents. There was a crowd such as I had never seen before with street vendors, hermit yogis, monks and nuns who had come out of their retreats, and even a couple of trucks, one with a crank ignition and the other loaded with beers that had been literally looted.

Together with the protections Rinpoche prepared and authenticated hundreds of *chülen* medicines to distribute during the initiation. The next morning in the area around the tent-gönpa that would host the celebrants of the rite, hundreds of other people arrived and I was able to calculate more than 1,500 considering that by the evening the *chülen* pills had run out. They even came from distant villages that were three days on horseback, drawn by the news spread in a short time from valley to valley of the ceremony in the sacred place of the revered Khyentse to be celebrated by his favorite nephew. Soon the snow lion dances, traditional religious chants and singing began and – most popular of all – folk songs based on the life of the Tibetan “King Arthur”, Prince Gesar, who was considered an emanation of Padmasambhava. I recorded some of them but I fear they have been lost. Rinpoche knew several by heart like all Tibetan children, but growing up he



Two monks dressed as Bon priests during the Dances at Galenteen.

reread as a scholar most of the 50 volumes of the stories about him. His knowledge of traditional songs and dances will lead, I believe, to his contagious passion for the Khaita songs.

Thinking of the large amount of literary and historical material that he had collected over the years, that evening Rinpoche told me about a technology that will become more sophisticated, practical and widespread twenty years later. He would have liked to catalog and reproduce on microfilm – he said – the many ancient books he had received as gifts and those of the Shang Shung library at Merigar. He sensed that it would soon be an easier operation, as will happen, not with films, but thanks to the scanners of the digital age that was just starting. In the morning, during a dance with Yamantaka masks to propitiate the Tsen, a class of beings who were the celestial lords of Galen, several jeeps arrived with the political authorities from the capital of Derge, and it was not appropriate to continue with that part of the religious ceremony.

Their arrival was very important for the village and they were invited to a big breakfast under one of the most beautiful tents in the camp. The bosses said that they had already discussed his proposals for schools, hospitals, and social services for nomads in the district council, which included Colondon (or Korondo, in the sacred valley of Lhalungar where we will be going soon), and found them “fantastic”, as Rinpoche translated to me, satisfied, confirming the expectations of the convivial atmosphere of that meeting in which the monks and the head of the monastery participated.

After a new series of dances based on the myth of the rivalry between a good king and a bad one conducted by monks with impressive paper-mache masks, the actual ceremony began and Rinpoche changed his clothes to wear the ritual robes of his uncle, the Abbot. After the first part of the consecration rituals in the tent-gönpa, surrounded by a growing number of people, the local lama who assisted the master went around the crowd touching everyone on the head with the image of Avalokiteshvara while the monks distributed the *chülen* pills to the adults.



The altar of the Avalokitesvara ceremony in the Galenteen gónpa tent.

There was the same crowding the following day even if this time the ritual was preceded by a horse race, a really popular passion. Rinpoche had been put on one of the champion horses who would later win the first race and the excitement of the people around who wanted to touch him made the horse go wild, fortunately without consequences. The race course passed under our window and there was also a race on foot and one for bicycles, old heavy Chinese models. Eventually the finals were held with the winning horses. In the end Rinpoche counted seven victories for the local horsemen (famous throughout the region, he said) and two for the visitors. "There is an ancient tradition here and the jockeys are very strong," he said proudly.

In the following days the master decided to transmit the "*lung*" of the tun book, the spiritual practices of the community, to the monks and lay people who had requested it, and during the entire recitation an old lama who was a contemporary of Khyentse held my hands tightly, smiling with his cataract filled eyes. In the previous weeks, taking advantage of Cheh's stay, Rinpoche had him teach those present the melody of the Song of the Vajra, and the eight move-

ments of yantra yoga to the monks, albeit awkward in their long religious robes. When the ceremonies and the festivities for the initiation of Avalokiteshvara finished Rinpoche transmitted the practice of Phowa to about fifty elders. At the end a very old woman in tears will tell him that before dying she would have liked to see in Galenteen his son Yeshe, incarnation of Khyense Wanghuk of whom she had been a disciple since childhood. ©

To be continued in the next issue.

Artists in the Dzogchen Community

Ricky Sued

I met the Master in 1989. At that time I was returning from a trip to France after being in a Karma Kagyu monastery where I met different Masters of that lineage and also the Drupa Kagyu lineage.

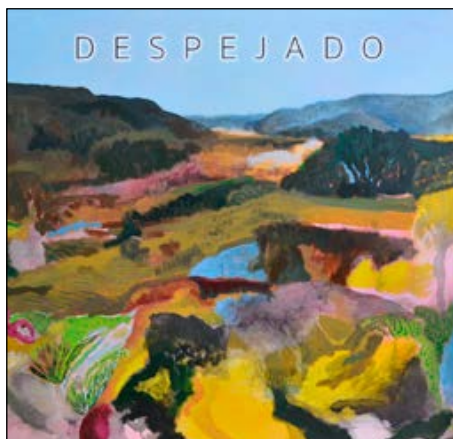
When Marisa and I returned from that trip, our mutual friend Jennifer Fox told us that she had met a Master in New York who had dazzled her so much that she wanted to help us so to go Tsegylgar and meet him also. Honestly, I didn't feel like meeting any new Master at that time, but given Jennifer's excited enthusiasm and gift, I accepted.

Since I didn't speak English and we knew that the Master was going to Caracas after Conway, we asked Jennifer if she minded that we use the money to go to Venezuela instead, to which she replied that the only thing that would make her happy is that we could meet Chögyal Namkhai Norbu no matter where. So that year we headed to Caracas.

In Venezuela, we and others went to receive the Master at the airport. Honestly, I had no expectations. When someone dressed in red and wearing a strange hat got off the plane, I began to cry uncontrollably for no reason. I had never had a similar emotion before! The day after, because of dreams that I had that same night plus my state of emotion, I realized with absolute certainty that I had arrived home. I had found without looking for, the person who would mark my life and the path to love.

Six months after that, the Master visited Argentina and we organized our first retreat in a center of Focolare nuns in Córdoba. The following year, with the help of the international Community, we were able to buy the place where the Master established Tashigar South.

Tashigar Sur is my home, the Master is my home, the Teachings are my home... I mean, everything I do revolves around that, even if it's something other than writing a poem or composing a song or whatever, the heart of all this activity is the Master and the Teachings. And of course, also the Sangha without whom none of this would exist.



I moved to Tashigar South twenty-two years ago, I built my family here together with Noe, we have two beautiful daughters very related to the Dharma: Zoe and Uma who always lived here, they grew up between Ganapujas, practices, Vajra Songs and games taught by the Master (by the way, they are both very good Bagchen players!)

So my life is this, my friends are here, when I go out of my house I can see the Stupa that we have built... I can only thank and thank the Master for this tremendous gift and all those who maintain it at this time.

As far as my work as an artist, for example, when the Master gave us some teachings on the retreat in the dark, at that moment I asked myself, what about doing theater in the dark? What about taking out one of the most important elements in theater, which is light? I told the Master and began to experiment with the project with



my group, so in the 90's the first play in the dark came out, called Caramelo de Limón. It had a great success and played in many cities. After that, many theater groups began to work in this field, so this is an example on how the encounter with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu affected my creative life.

Also in the plays I wrote, the poems and the songs I'm working on now, in all of them you will find a little bit of the seed

of the Master and his teachings. This is not something that I do on purpose, but arises naturally, I think that the experience is similar for all disciples and people who met the Master, everything is imbued with his presence.

Then I started to discover playing music. The plays I did were always closely related to music, in fact we did an Rock Opera with friends and great musicians in 1983. But I was always on the other side, directing, staging, or writing. When I turned fifty, my friend Marisa gave me an acoustic guitar and from that moment on I began to study guitar, then sax, then piano and finally the bandoneon led. a type of concertino. Of course, I play all the instruments badly, but all this led me to a place where I felt very comfortable, and that is the composition.



I write the lyrics, I work on the melodies and I am lucky to be surrounded by great musicians who complete and harmonize the songs, like Diego Bravo with whom I did most of the songs, Gabriel Braceras and Diego Lucientes. I am deeply grateful to all of them.

So far I have written about twenty-five songs, twenty are already on my You Tube channel (Ricardo Sued) because, in addition, along with all the songs, I produce a video of each song, which also makes it very interesting. I work for that with a small group of people who are very talented and creative, since we do everything with a very small production, but we are always trying to do something interesting.

My plans are to go on practicing, trying to understand more and more in depth all this wonder that the Master has left us, and trying to apply it in my life whatever is at that moment. ©

There's a little cloud in the sky
On it we have built a great building
Also made of cloud substance

There's a little cloud in the sky
On it we have built our love
Also made of cloud substance

There's a little cloud in the sky
Above it is located our world
Also made of cloud substance

There's a little cloud in the sky
on it are all our joy and happiness
Also made of cloud substance

There's a little cloud in the sky
on it are all our sadness and pain
Also made of cloud substance

There's a little cloud in the sky
on it are my goals in this life
Also made of cloud substance

There's a little cloud in the sky
on it are my achievements in this life
Also made of cloud substance

There's a little cloud in the sky
on it are my frustrations in this life
Also made of cloud substance

I must finish this poem
Because it has started to rain...
Soon the sky will be clear
and the blue will shine

Stuff and Stuffing

Margaret Jasinski

At the door, is a pile of stuff. I am looking at it with the eye of measurement. Why? The pile looks paltry.

True, it is colorful, a mound of sweaters, and not just any ones, these are all cashmere, some made in Scotland, the very best quality. At the same time, they are not the best because they are second hand, culled from charity shops and thrifting. I wanted to send something special, and these cashmere sweaters are good pieces of clothing that I was going to use for new purposes, hats or re-styled garments. I see potential in each piece. I also see the moths had their day, there are a few holes. A hint of judgement comes from wondering – is this enough, does it suit the occasion? The sweaters came from the earth like my very bones in a chain of events not one could recount. A goat ate grass, then came fleece, spun into yarn and in a factory, a knitted sweater was produced on needles, it went to a store where it was temporarily stored, then someone bought it, took it home and later donated it, then I came along and made a purchase, now mine, I send these sweaters, soft and warm, to Ukraine. Being pre-owned they reveal my personal security system. Let someone else take the risk of buying, I'll pick it up in the next round when it is second chance.

A tinge of doubt crosses the mind as I cram the pile of stuff into a bag for shipping. These are winter clothes, by the time they get there it may be spring. How will they travel? I rehearse what is known. I am sending them to a nearby Ukrainian church. The items will be sorted and sent, by container. How will all of this happen?

In my minds' eye I see a busy container port, a colored metal box containing the sweaters hoisted by crane into neat stacks onto enormous ships. I see myself standing at the harbor mouth, waving to the container until the vessel dips into the horizon line. "Good luck and all the best." I hope the contents make their way to someone's hands. I hope someone sees what I intended – the beautiful cashmere sweater, not

the moth hole. It is sent from me to you. We do not know each other. The exchange of goods is highly personal. The sweaters hold a bit of my DNA.

In the pile I tucked in a few surprises. Three silk scarves. Silk scarves? They are not needed. But a silk scarf takes very little room. It is something beautiful. I was thinking of the grandmothers, the babushka's. And there is room for beauty in the container of my mind. I recall reading "The Thoughtful Dresser" written by Linda Grant, former editor of British Vogue. The book contained an account of the liberation of Auschwitz; when at war's end supplies were sent to those who survived, an extraordinary and little event took place: someone sent lipstick. Yes, lipstick. This thoughtful gift brought the women with shaven heads and delicate circumstances back to the time "before," when they lived lives of normalcy, including life's irritants and joys, and in many cases, a tube of lipstick. This is my fantasy – the silk scarves, indeed. I envision someone being happy for a minute, holding the scarf with pleasure, and after the moment passes, when lingering doubts set in, uncertainty is supported by touch and feel, contact with beauty.

These days as I think of those fleeing from their homes, I am struck by the sheer volume of things in my life. Each time I handle a kitchen tool, when I take a pen in hand, look in the closet for something to wear to work, I wonder how it would be to stuff my life into a suitcase, board a west-bound train and head into the unknown. Looking around, I am aware that I bought much of this stuff, this assemblage, from somewhere. It astonishes me. I have lived with stuff all my life, lots of it. It comes and goes. I like finding "nice things" and giving things away. This is not generosity, it is my personal system of exchange, one thing for another, the world of forms. In the last weeks, since the war began, in the back of my mind I play a game of calculus. It is a mental game of possibility and bargaining. As I look at the largess around, I strike the bargain. Would I give away everything in the house, the sewing machine, the books, the paintings, the rocking chair, all the linens and beautiful cloth, would I give them all away to stop the war? Yes, take it all. How about the car? Throw it in? Yes. The

bicycles – I have two. Yes, take them, too. How about the house? We find our limits. How far do we go? What is confidence, but lack of doubt. No indecision. Take it. I will be fine without the house. I can live at work for a while, they'll understand. It is a game in the mind. This for that. What does it mean to offer? Can offering be done in a spirit of boundlessness? What is infinity? I am not sure because I am bound. And I know it. I live in a world of amounts.

A mount, a mount like Mount Olympus reaching the heavens beyond earthly realms, a place of expansive imagination, the home of gods. What does a trillion dollars amount to? I imagine a big stack reaching the sky as I wonder, can it actually exist, a trillion dollars? It must, someone agreed to it in the company of others. And to back the idea, a handshake, some products, goods in kind or imaginary goods in cyberspace. Mount Trillion. And here I thought a million was a lot of coin, and in the "coimage of my brain" it is a nice round figure. When I play the lottery a few times a year with my friend Al, we pay fifty cents each and buy a humble one dollar ticket. We agree, we don't need megabucks, a million will be fine, big money indeed, just count the zeroes. Enough. That would be enough. Rest in peace, mind, there is nothing to worry about now, and speaking of amount, there are a million thoughts to accompany the prize, one for each dollar.

What is enough? Amounts live in our heads, a mental fabric of warp and woof, the two threads that hold opposite directions. How easily we can be "with ourselves at war" to find what is "just right," the precise position of not too much or too little. What a dream. Calculus – the war figures are adding up. How many thousands of lives, injuries. Property values – billions. One oligarch, here or there, if the figures we hear are correct, could play for all of it. And at the very moment when we find balance in accounting, we become aware of pricelessness, and with that knowledge, amounts are fixed and limited, they cannot enter the conversation; it does not touch the heart.

The essence of all this? We work with conditions, conditioning and circumstance. Pivot. We aren't learning a theory, we are discovering for ourselves. Life is not the-

oretical, is it? We work with the unusual stuff of life, ideas related to “me,” the dream of comfortable retirement and putting things away for the winter, and without judgement, we go beyond. We go “beyond” and make contact with our own experience. The other day my auntie, aged ninety- five- years, said, “Today I had to go farther than the [rosary] beads.” Indeed, I understand, more than words can say. Indeed – there is a reflexive word. When we go beyond the habitual mind we find ourselves in a reflexive moment of knowing, for no reason, without cause; we know, not with the usual mind, in the usual way. We discover a space in our experience that does not depend on “what I think.” This space is the experience of existence, it is not a fancy place, it is simply a break from analysis, judgement and other habits of mind that repeatedly separate us from ourselves.

In moments of non-separation, we know what we know with natural reflexivity, a quality that spontaneously accompanies moments of clarity. (If in doubt, recall any epiphany.) An epiphany cannot be described in words or thoughts, it is not a reference to “me” and it has no “cause.” Spontaneously arising, we know what we know, without fragments of doubt. Life speaks in movement, without words or ideas as by-products.

“Life is movement and movement is life” It cannot be anything else. Movement is life’s nature. It is our nature as well- when we recognize it as such, we arrive precisely where we are, wherever it may be.

Post Scriptum: Stuff, it is an interesting word, originating from the French estoffe meaning provision. Estoffer means to cram or to pad (such as bombast in a garment). From Latin, stuppere means to plug up. Stupp is a plug or cork for a bottle. In Greek stuppe means to condense and to clutter. The farthest reaching iteration of the word comes from Sanskrit, stupa, which has two meanings: shrine, and the area at the top of the head. The dictionary does not indicate that in the Hindu tradition, the top of the head is also the 7th chakra, sahasrara, the crown chakra, the one thousand point lotus with petals arrayed in every direction at the top of every head. When every direction has a path there is no fixed domain, nothing is sacred and everything is a shrine. ©

Lungsang: New Booklet with 8 Movements of Yantra Yoga

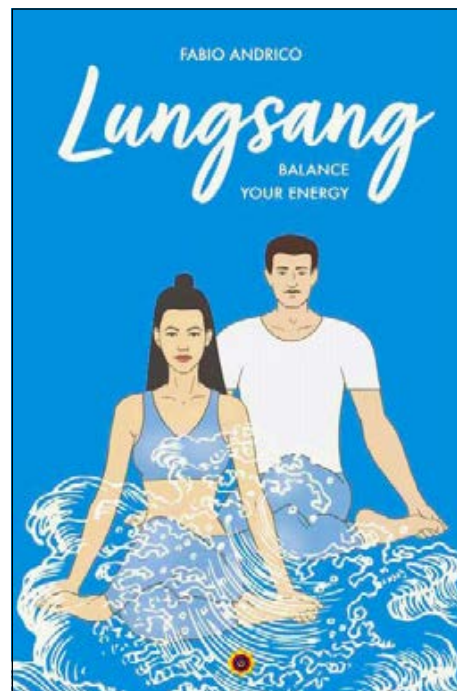
Tamara Kozhukharova

A long time ago, in 2018, while I was attending a retreat with Fabio Andrico at Kunsangar South in the Crimea, I had the idea for this booklet.

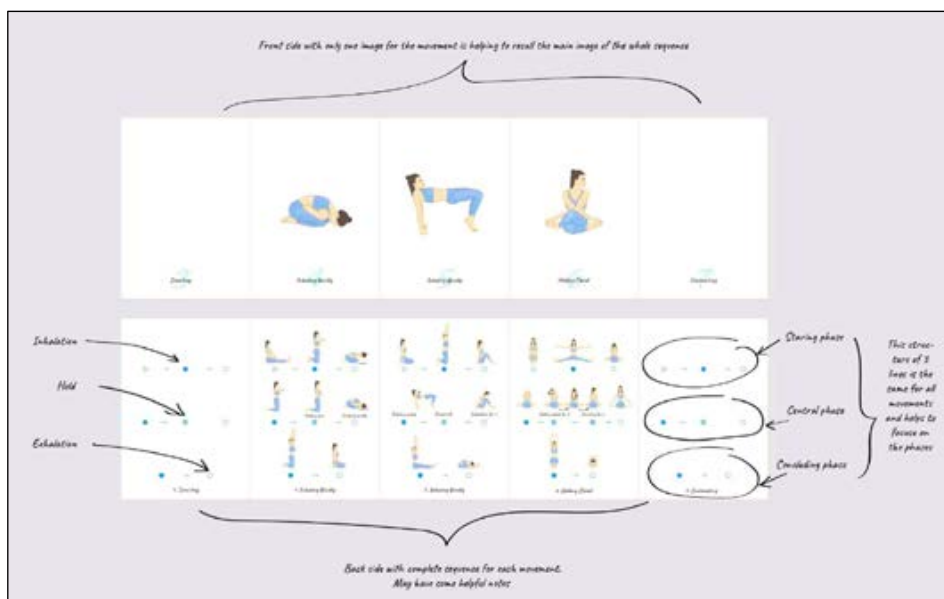
I remembered what it was like to feel full, light, and completely free in mind and body at the same time, the experience that arises just after doing the eight movements of Yantra Yoga correctly. At the same time, I remembered that I had managed to get through the huge workload of organizing a large retreat with Rinpoche in 2010 in Moscow thanks to the morning practice of Yantra Yoga throughout the retreat.

In 2018, under the guidance of Fabio, I was able to recall the main aspects and sequence of the eight movements. But what if a few more years pass by with a break in my practice and I want to remember the exercises again and practice on my own?

I know from experience that inspiration is sudden and not particularly sustainable. I don’t know about you, but for me it would easily have broken down after fifteen minutes of painstaking analysis of the sequence in the book and doubts about the correctness of my performance. Therefore, I decided to express exactly the things that I would like to hold in my hands in such



a situation – a booklet with all the eight movements. » continued on the following page



New marking invented by Igor.

How I Met Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

and Beyond

Steven Landsberg

IG President and Santi Maha Sangha instructor

I think my exposure to Buddhism happened when I was about sixteen and still in High School. I had a friend who knew some other people and one of those people happened to be an owner of a bookstore. We were able to go there, and most of his books were on Buddhism. Then later on when I went to the University, a series of events made it possible for me to get involved in a study program, the History of Religion, and that made it possible for me to go to India; in the 3rd year of the University.

So I found myself at the age of nineteen in Varanasi, India. I actually went there partly to study Sanskrit, partly to study something about Indian religions and partly to study Indian music. Actually what ended up happening is that I studied Sanskrit for a couple of years, but my music interest became much stronger and that interest led me to search around for a music teacher; and at the same time I was exposed to a lot of people who were coming from Europe and the United States, but it wasn't until much later that I met Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche in 1982.

That meeting was the result of knowing some Italians in India, and my friendship with them continued even after I returned to the United States. I knew Mario Maglietti and Paolo and Poupee Brunatto, and they told us about Rinpoche. Then in



1982 when Rinpoche led a retreat at OZ in California, he was extremely informal; we used to eat with him and discuss with him, and he was very easily available, practicing with us all the time and it was very different learning with him at that time than it was with other teachers. And I think that was a phase of Rinpoche's life that was also quite unique.

As the years went by I continued to see Rinpoche frequently in Tsegylgar (East) and also a lot in Margarita where Rinpoche spent a lot of time informally with his students. Of course learning in formal situations with Rinpoche was great, but learning in this informal way was also something very special.

When Rinpoche started offering the Santi Maha Sangha courses, then I became very focused on what he was doing. Santi Maha Sangha became the main emphasis of my practice. Then in 2010 I began very intensively to prepare myself to become a SMS

instructor. Until that time I did not have the confidence to enter that and I was just not ready to do that. Even when I did pass the SMS Instructor's exam in 2010, I still had many, many doubts. Even after doing this for 10 years, I still have many doubts.

So I think being an instructor of SMS is a kind of process. Sometimes I am very enthusiastic about doing it, and sometimes I feel I need to pay more attention to my own practice and I try to balance the two of those things.

Now, since Rinpoche's passing, there has been a kind of confusing period. Nobody knew exactly where to place their foot and there were so many questions, a lot more questions than there were answers. I think as time has gone on, the Community is stepping up to this challenge. I feel very optimistic about the future actually. I see things settling down in a very positive way. Of course there are issues and there are always going to be issues. That is normal.

But for me there is no question that the Dzogchen Community and the legacy of Rinpoche is going to continue. Even this morning I had a kind of flash, not about Rinpoche but about other masters who have passed on, maybe it's been thirty years, fifty years, or maybe a hundred years, but still their teachings come down in the form of books, or as represented by their students, or even their grand students, so to speak, but they have continued. And these are examples of how these traditions get passed on. I feel very confident about the future of the Dzogchen Community.

» continued from previous page

Right there in Kunsangar South, I told Fabio about my idea, and he suggested that I put together this booklet. His main wish was to create a new series of drawings specifically for this booklet.

Anna Chilina, a wonderful Moscow illustrator, started on the illustrations, creating our own boy and girl. We had fun in the process as best we could: the girl at the beginning of her yogini career was red-haired, while the boy looked like a hipster.

Fabio would look through all the drawings, tirelessly correcting arms and legs, twists and turns, inclinations of the head

and the line of the shoulders. I think after that you can be sure of the correctness and perfection of the poses in the booklet.

I asked two designers to put all our ideas together to create a single printable booklet, but apparently the illustrations had to be put on hold. Anna sometimes interrupted work for worldly work, as at the beginning it was only karma yoga on her part.

At some point, I paused the creation of the booklet inside myself, because it seemed that I had done everything I could, but although circumstances were not favorable the volume of unfinished work did not fade away.

Then we chose a different strategy to put it into practice. I decided to raise money and send it to keep up the necessary speed of creating drawings. Practitioners from several countries sent their offerings, for which I thank them very much! The funds that were collected made it possible to complete the entire work in just six months.

Then, in 2021, at my request, Igor Pini-gin put together the entire booklet in just two months, turning all our ideas into a finished product. I have never seen a creative karma yogi work so fast! Igor and Fabio constantly corresponded and jointly developed a new system of indicating dif-



Steven teaching at Kundrolling, New York City in 2014.

Let's see how this evolves, with Yeshi's eventual involvement, already he did this kind of transmission in Merigar [West] so those people who were able to attend have access to a lot of the teachings and explanations that Rinpoche gave, all his talks, retreats and books etc., so when you think about it other masters, they wrote so much, they taught so much, and their material is available. I think Rinpoche's material will gradually become available to so many beings.

Certainly the archive of Rinpoche's teachings is very important and it needs to be maintained, my hope is that it becomes available, not something that becomes used to maintain peoples' authority or something. If you look at history, there have been times among various religious traditions where the control of a library or archive become a point of contention, and that can lead to problems.

As for my SMS teaching, I do a weekly session on the Precious Vase, and many new people come there, and we are also going to start something now in China, and I hope that will be on a weekly basis and it will also be dedicated mostly to the study and practice of the Precious Vase. I think that can be useful.

There are around 45 SMS instructors, and they have all been authorized by Rinpoche, they have a big responsibility to fill and there are many things to do. There are people who are developing open programs and that is very useful, and then there are people working alone and trying their best. I think there is room for all of this. We shouldn't try and limit it in any way.

So there are people who like to collaborate and do things together, and then there are those who find it more efficient to work alone. All of this is good; we shouldn't try to create barriers and make it difficult for people to do things.

Right now with all the Zoom possibilities, there are so many things going on even at the same time, I don't see any problem there, I think there is enough if an audience and people can participate where they feel it is necessary, we don't need to control things there. Also we have this Sangha App and Norbunet, so we have all these ways of announcing all these possibilities to the wider audience.

I think the main thrust of our involvement will depend on our individual enthusiasm based upon our practice. I feel that if people are seeing and experiencing the benefit of that, then their involvement with the Community is going to naturally unfold, and they will be inspired to participate and do as much as they can.

As Rinpoche used to say, we live in time and we are getting older day by day, the inevitability of that process is infallible. So we depend on younger people



to step forward and move into positions of responsibility, I think that is a natural process and it is going to happen. We don't need to force but it will just naturally take place. To conclude, I am rather optimistic about the future of the Community. ©

ferent types of breathing, which had not been used in any of the books before. Igor sketched some ideas.

Then I hardly need to tell you that it became clear that the booklet should be available to the whole world, and therefore it needed to be translated into other languages. This is how Alina Kamina, a translator into Russian, appeared in our project. It became clear that we also needed to compile a booklet in Russian, prepare an electronic version and, in fact, make a couple of dozen more edits. All this was done by Olga Bondareva, who prepared the English and Russian versions.

And this is only the beginning of the story, because, as far as I know, the booklet is currently being translated into Spanish and Chinese.

So, the idea that arose in 2018 came to fruition in 2022.

I sincerely thank Fabio Andrico, Anna Chilina, Igor Pinigin, Alina Kramina, Olga Bondareva and the editors of the Shang Shung Institute in Italy and Russia. Without them, this idea would never have been realized and would not have served for the benefit of all sentient beings.

I want to thank my dear Master Chögyal Namkhai Norbu for giving precious

teachings on such a simple and necessary method.

Anyone who is interested in working with the mind through the body, who understands how important it is to hear your body and monitor your health, who comprehends the fundamental nature of the breathing process and wants to improve the quality of his or her life during the day, I recommend doing the eight movements every day! ©

You can purchase this booklet in English and Russian.

<https://shop.shangshungfoundation.com>

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