

CONTENTS

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu - Discovering Our Real Nature Through Experience	4
Interview with Namkhai Yeshe - Experiencing Our Natural State Through Sound	7
The Passing of Lopön Tenzin Namdak Rinpoche	12
ASIA - A Little Tibet in Nepal	13
Shang Shung Publications	14
SSIUK & Ka-ter - Honoring the Legacy of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu	16
SSI School of Tibetan Medicine - Preserving Ancient Healing Knowledge	18
Tibetan Medicine Counselors Graduate	22
International Gakyil - Join the Team!	23
Sangha App - Can Technology Help Us to Be More Diligent?	24
Norbunet is Back!	24
Yantra Yoga Teachers' Training Level 2	26
Eight Movements Teacher Training	27
Retreat with Namkhai Yeshe in Paris	28
Dzamling Gar New Gakyil & Upcoming Program	29
Merigar West - Restoring the Paintings in the Gönpa	31
Summer 2025 Program	32
Khaita Teachers Graduation	35
Merigar East June News	35
Kunsangar North - Living Connection with the Teaching	37
Kunsangar South - Preparing for Summer	37
Get to Know About Sangyeling	39
Tsegyalgar East News	41
Tsegyalgar West News	42
Tashigar South News	43
Book Review by Andy Lukianowicz - A Future We Can Love	43
The Golden Key of the Lungta - interview with Migmar Tsering	46
The Illusory Game of Art and Life by "Jaka" Giacalone	47
Refining Pure Gold in the Years of Lead by John Shane	51

Cover: Traditional Tibetan Medicine Physiology Tree: The tree of physiology is a Tibetan thanka depicting human physiology and certain pathological transformations.

Back cover: A collage of photos from the recent retreat with Namkhai Yeshe "Teaching on the Essence of Guru Yoga and Meditation in the Style of Dzogchen Longde" held in Paris, May 9-11, 2025

Errata: In the last issue of The Mirror, no. 167, the photo caption on page 43 should have been, "The Vajra Dance teachers who worked with Prima Mai and Adriana during the Vajra Dance Teacher Training, 1st level".



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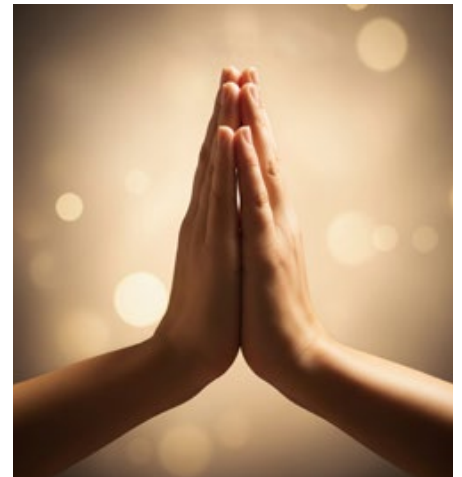
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DZOGCHEN TEACHINGS WITH NAMKHAH YESHI

It is with great joy that we inform you that **Namkhai Yeshe** will hold a retreat of **Dzogchen Teachings in Merigar** from the afternoon of **July 2nd to the morning of July 8th**.

On behalf of everyone, we thank Namkhai Yeshe for his generosity and compassion.

For more information, please visit the website: <https://www.merigar.it/en/courses-and-events/dzogchen-teachings-2025/>

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DISCOVERING OUR REAL NATURE THROUGH EXPERIENCE



Chögyal Namkhai Norbu teaching in Hong Kong in 2012. Courtesy of Jing from China

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu
From the Song of the Vajra Retreat, Hong Kong 2012, May 17, day 2.

Regarding direct introduction Guru Garab Dorje explained that by receiving oral transmission we can discover our real nature using different kinds of experience. As I explained yesterday, even though we can have infinite experiences, there are three main experiences because we have three gates, three existences: body and speech and mind. For us everything is related to them, including experiences. For instance, the experience of sensation is related to our physical body.

In Vajrayana teaching this is given a lot of importance and in Vajrayana higher tantras manifestations such as Chakrasambhava, Guhyasamaja, Hevajra and Kalachakra are all manifestations in joyful forms in *yab* and *yum* union. What do *yab* and *yum* represent? They represent the famous word *mahasukha*, *maha* meaning total, *sukha* meaning bliss, and when we know and are in a state of contemplation then it becomes bliss.

In our dualistic vision it is a sensation of pleasure. For example, when males and females have sexual contact they feel a sensation of pleasure. That is true not only for human beings but also for cats and dogs and other animals. It means that this experience is very important and notable. *Mahasukha* describes enlightened beings totally in that kind of bliss, which is considered to be one of the most important experiences in Vajrayana.

How can we understand that it is considered to be more important? We have three root emotions - ignorance, attachment and anger - and in order to transform them according to the method of Vajrayana transformation there are three kinds of manifestations: peaceful manifestations for transforming ignorance into clarity, joyful manifestations for transforming attachment and wrathful manifestations for transforming anger. These forms are very important for transforming emotions and each manifestation makes use of different kinds of experiences. A wrathful manifestation such as Vajrakilaya and many like Hayagriva appear in yab and yum form, which is related to their joyful aspect, which is bliss. There are also many peaceful sambhogakaya manifestations such as the five Dhyani Buddhas that manifest as yab and yum so we can understand how important the mahasukha experience is.

It is also important in Dzogchen teaching. However, in an ordinary way, when we are receiving an introduction to discover our real nature, it is not very easy. When Vajrayana practitioners first start to do the visualization for a practice such as Vajrasattva, they transform into Vajrasattva, which is a peaceful manifestation. After transforming they have an experience of clarity of that transformation of Vajrasattva, no other particular experience. If they do the visualization in a different way, as Vajrasattva yab and yum, they transform into Vajrasattva non-dual yab yum, and at that moment will have not only an experience of clarity, but also the presence of sensation: two experiences, of sensation and clarity.

When many Vajra practitioners, particularly monks and nuns, do practices like Kalachakra, Hevajra, or Chakrasambhava, they do them mentally through transformation and, of course, then they can realize that high level. But if we have no basic capacity, when we have such a strong sensation we fall immediately into dualistic vision. During our lives we may experience some special feelings or we see something special and immediately we feel very happy and we like it. We like it because we are falling into dualistic vision; it is a strong feeling, I want it and I want to develop it. When we fall into dualistic vision we cannot develop it but at times we may block our potentiality for developing. For that reason the method of sensation is not so easy to use in practice. Sensation is something very concrete that we can feel, but even though it is concrete, that is the very problem that causes us to fall into dualistic vision easily. In this case we need to learn and train and know how to govern that sensation so that we can go ahead concretely. For that reason in Dzogchen teaching when we give the introduction we do not use the experience of sensation very much.

At times some people who are really interested in Dzogchen teaching never succeed in discovering their real nature, even though they may have received many methods. This is

because they have a lower capacity. In this case there is a particular way to experience sensation and a particular method, but it is not like direct introduction.

For the direct introduction (*ngo sprod gdams*) what we do most of the time is the experience of clarity and the experience of emptiness. We can do both of these. For instance, when we do visualization with lights and other things, we can have that clarity. In general I often use this introduction which is called *yeshe sangthal*. With the experience of emptiness you feel it less than [the experience of] clarity and sensation but even though you feel it less, you can discover and understand it.

In the Dzogchen teaching we have three series, Dzogchen Semde, Longde and Upadesha, which are always connected with the Three Statements of Garab Dorje, and there are many different explanations about the way of introducing and working with the capacity of the individual. Sometimes we go further using not only the Dzogchen way but even combining it with the Anuyoga system. In the introduction we may visualize our teacher in a pure dimension, like Guru Padmasambhava. However, that is for us not having impure vision even though we are applying that method in a dualistic way. This is not really the Dzogchen way but we can apply the Anuyoga system like that.

How should we do Guruyoga according to the Dzogchen teaching? The white A in a thigle is a symbol of our primordial state.

How should we do Guruyoga according to the Dzogchen teaching? The white A in a *thigle* is a symbol of our primordial state. And how do we make use of the *yeshe sangthal* method? We shouldn't limit ourselves thinking that it must be done in a particular way. We never can limit methods. Methods should work according to circumstances, so whichever way we can discover, we work with that. In

the path of Dzogchen, we sound A and visualize a white A in a thigle at the center of our body. Then we relax in the state of Guruyoga. After a little we work with the direct introduction, using our mind because we need experiences.

Then again we think about the white A in a thigle and we sound A spreading infinite lights from the white A in the thigle in which there are all five colors, the essence of the five elements. When we imagine spreading these lights, all thoughts of our dualistic vision, such as the universe, everything is related with the five elements. So we are spreading light in that dimension. This is the visualization with the first A after the Guruyoga.

Now we sound another A and in that moment we imagine that everything in our existence, our dualistic vision, dissolves into its nature. Everything that is produced from the five elements dissolves into its real nature and becomes five colors which then come back and dissolve in our white A in the thigle. Then we relax again. Each time we do this, we do the visualization first and then we relax in the state of contemplation,

which means that each time we are empowering the practice.

Then we sound A again and in that moment we imagine spreading those five colors in our vajra body. Our physical body is also produced by the five elements and now they all dissolve in the nature of the five elements and then into the white A in the thigle.

What remains now? We are in immense emptiness; there is nothing in that dimension. We have our physical body with the white A in a *thigle* and we notice that. This is called the experience of emptiness. When we relax in that state it is no longer an experience but we are in our real nature.

After a little while we sound A again and imagine spreading that light so that our physical body dissolves in the white A in the thigle. Our physical body no longer exists but our being is that white A in the thigle. Where is this white A? In the dimension of infinite emptiness. It is our dimension, it is our being, we are not seeing it somewhere in a thigle. We are in that experience of emptiness and now we relax a little while there.

Again we sound A and in that moment the white A in the thigle gradually becomes a very tiny white A in a thigle.

This is our being now, in the dimension of immense emptiness. Now we observe the experience of emptiness and then we relax in that state. Now we are arriving at the end. In this moment we sound A and this tiny white A in a thigle dissolves into emptiness. We no longer have anything concrete in our existence. But we do not become emptiness because emptiness is an experience. We notice there is our presence, who is being in that now? We are not becoming emptiness. We discover that this is called instant presence.

When we dissolve that tiny white A in the thigle, immediately we notice that and discover that instant presence. It represents our state and is called the state of *rigpa* in Tibetan. *Rigpa* doesn't mean the primordial state. The primordial state is a general name which we also use for the nature of mind or, in Sanskrit, *dharmata*. It is our real nature but this is not *rigpa*. When we discover that with experience and we are in that presence, this is called the state of *rigpa*. When we discover that, it is called direct introduction.

If you are not sure that you really discovered it, you shouldn't worry. You simply recall how we did this practice and you repeat it many times. Sometimes you might be worried about how many A's we repeated. You shouldn't be concerned about that and sometimes you can do fewer. At times, for example, we say spreading lights and dissolving everything with these lights after which they return and integrate with the A. At times the lights enter and all purify everything and our existence manifests as the nature of the five elements.

It is not necessary to limit yourselves. You should do what

you feel and the best way for your practice. It is important that you remember that when we are doing this practice together, "doing it together" means we are in the same moment, the same state, which is why you can also have more possibility to discover your real nature.

Now I'll briefly repeat this visualization. First we do Guruyoga practice with visualization of the white A and we relax a little. Then we sound A again and we imagine infinite lights spreading from the white A in the thigle. When we sound the third A all existence dissolves in the nature of the five elements and becomes five kinds of lights which dissolve in our white

A in the thigle. What remains outside? Emptiness, but we observe and we are in that state. Then we sound A again and spread light inside our physical body which dissolves in the white A in the thigle. We can also dissolve our physical body at that moment if we do the practice in a shorter way. If we do a longer practice then we also do another A for dissolving the physical body. Then we visualize the white A in the thigle and our existence becomes smaller and smaller until it is tiny. Again we observe and relax and then at the end it also dissolves in emptiness.

When we dissolve that tiny white A in the thigle, immediately we notice that and discover that instant presence.

When we sound A and dissolve [into emptiness], at that moment we are in instant presence but we do not become like a stone. We notice that dissolution and we are in that presence. This is called instant presence and is what we should discover. At any moment when we are doing Guruyoga, doing visualization of the white A in a thigle, when we relax in that instant presence, if we have that experience it is called "son wisdom.". When we are dying in the bardo of *dharmata* the "son wisdom" and "mother wisdom" meet. The "son wisdom" is what we have experienced in our lifetime and now in the bardo of *dharmata* our sound and light and rays manifest nakedly and we can recognize them. When we have that recognition, we are enlightened instantly.

Edited by L. Granger

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EXPERIENCING OUR NATURAL STATE THROUGH SOUND

An interview with Namkhai Yeshi about his newly published composition ATIMONLAM

June 2025

The Mirror: Dear Yeshi, you have recently created a sound composition called ATIMONLAM, which is described as a guided meditation to discover our inner nature. Can you kindly tell us how this idea appeared and about the history of the creation of this work?

Namkhai Yeshi: The history is very long. It's not a history like you may think, it's not a common artistic work in which you have some kind of inspiration with which you start working and setting up your artistic work. It's very long because I've been thinking about the possibility of using sound.

In the teaching of Dzogchen we have two main methods. The first one is form, the second is sound, which relates to the simple fact that we are mostly working in a union of emptiness and clarity. Normally emptiness is represented by form as the essence of the mind is emptiness. And clarity is generally represented as energy and energy for human beings is mostly sound. As a matter of fact, we usually speak about our voice as an expression of energy. So the idea was simply to fill a gap that we have in which we have very good material to work in the field of form and we don't have very much to work in the field of sound.

We have many examples of sounds. The simplest example from Chögyal Namkhai Norbu's teaching is purification. We use sounds related to the elements, we have mantras, and we also imagine specific colors. We combine all these aspects of form and sound in a unique way. And this is not very



common. It was presented by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu as a specific method. Now everyone is doing purification in the same way, but actually this is a specific method. It's not really the most common way to do it. So it was his choice to use sound in that way, just like the main practice we do is the Song of the Vajra.

The Song of the Vajra is a structure based on sound and it is also not the most common activity or practice or kind of meditation you would do. It's presented as part of the series of Semdzin. We can also discuss this aspect, but it's not really the important thing. The important thing is that in the Song of the Vajra we have all the structures and information that are related to the full series of the Dzogchen teachings, at least those that have been transmitted and given by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu dating back to the full lineage. It's actually all contained in the same song, at the same moment you are singing it. And this is the main idea - that we are entering directly into the nondual state through the sound. Even if it's a single sound like "A" or the full Song of the Vajra, no matter how you do it, the key point

is that you are entering through sound. You are not entering through form, you are not using a conceptual idea.

Let's say, for example, you gradually enter a calm state, like in all explanations of *nepa, gyuwa* and so on. You move from that conceptual understanding of your own mind and enter by the knowledge of your mind which is more conceptual. Then you discover movement and go straight into the nondual state. Instead here, the nondual state is directly introduced by ourselves through the sound, not by someone else externally. And the sound happens in time. Being a non-synchronous event, sound helps us to enter directly into the present state.

I've been working and thinking a lot on how to fill this gap, how to create something that may allow anyone, with or without any experience of the Dzogchen teaching, to have that kind of experience. At least to perceive something that at the very first moment could be sort of a general experience of the present time. Just like when we say that the ordinary mind is the gate to the nature of mind. Then from this ordinary understanding



The ATIMONLAM cover

of presence you can enter into the real understanding of awareness and knowledge of present time and actually discover that this presence and this present time are your own natural state. This is how you may enter directly through the sound into the understanding, into your own natural state beyond any kind of such mental activity like judgement.

My idea was to use a common form, a common way to present this, which is modern music. After the Second World War till recent times there has been a growing knowledge and development of the repertoire of modern music, which has something to do with present time, mind and so on. It's not like the classical music from the late 19th century, like post-romantic Russian music, just to quote the most classical music we listen to. Every movie you watch, there is epic music - this is Russian music, there is no discussion about this. This comes from Rimsky Korsakov's structure of orchestration, and from that time till today, we still listen to the same music.

After the beginning of the 20th century, we had a development of completely different kinds of music, non-tonal and so on, and also of electronic music, which somehow has some common elements with meditation, mental practices, and knowledge of oneself, because in the 21st century things have changed a lot. By using this more common language, anyone can access that state.

The idea was to give that kind of experience to everyone. And for those

who have very good knowledge of that state it's a way to improve in a very well-defined path. It is not just, 'Oh, now I'm going to stay present and not get distracted.' Instead, it's a guided way to do it.

M: ATIMONLAM is in three parts which are described as outer, inner, secret. What does each part convey to the listener?

NY: There are three moments, or three movements like in music, but mostly it's three stages. There is an external stage in which there is still the world of outer sounds, sounds coming from the real world you may still somehow refer to; the musical gesture can still refer to something that exists. Then there is a central part, which is completely the inner world in which you start to hear sounds that come from a physical body: you focus on breathing, on the heartbeat, on sounds that are not normally heard with the ear. And then there is a secret part, or let's call it a part which is more absolute or conceptual, which is the sound itself.

What really happens in the mind? You go from an outer sound to an inner sound, to a sound that exists by itself, that doesn't need to be an expression of energy. That was the main inspiration - the idea of how do I turn this understanding, this knowledge I have, that kind of experience, into something that you can hear, that you can experience. I thought, let's use a sound that is not practically possible to fix on a support.

I chose a sound that is not in any way possible to represent digitally, which is the sound of a flame, because a flame by itself is a concept.

How do we suggest the idea of fire burning? Obviously, fire is a special element. In the teaching fire has a very important meaning. Fire burns everything, but nothing burns fire itself. This is the reason why it's an important example. We have several types of mental exercises, like in the series of Rushen, which are essential for the practice of Dzogchen Longde, where we experience fire. We experience working with clarity in the field of imagining fire and working with that unstable element. So I thought, let's try to use that sound that you practically imagine, by giving an external gesture, the gesture of lighting a match.

But this is going to happen many times, so it also becomes the musical pulse. It's like the beat of a song. That is the pace of the piece that allows you to come back each time to that kind of presence, because the sound is very strong. It's obviously stronger than in any possible reality, because it's been recorded very near the place where the matches are lit, and it lasts exactly the time of the flame. It's not been modified or transformed in order to have it for a longer time. It's exactly that time, because this is the final goal.

My idea was to put that element that repeats and people can get into that present state exactly in the natural time it's really needed, which is about maximum two seconds. Two seconds are enough to enter directly into a nondual state. It's like when you're singing "A" and "A" lasts a few seconds. In about one or two seconds you enter that state, you are relaxed and present, and you have awareness of all you have learned about this teaching.

And the idea was, let's repeat this many times and have a structure that is basically three times the Song of the Vajra. The Song of the Vajra lasts a little more than seven minutes. I multiplied by three, created the three movements, and added this repetition related with the flame to all these parts. Everything comes out from the flame. That was the idea.



Namkhai Yeshe at his studio

The inspiration was how the flame burns. There is an initial part in the sound that is like turbulence, like a wind. It's a non-real sound, a noise that comes from silence. And then slowly, slowly it moves the air and creates some sound that is present only in the environment. It's not a real sound that has some particular components, but a very strong turbulence of the air. By having that mental movement, you imagine, recall that experience of heat, of light and so on. And everything in that musical piece also refers to all these aspects.

As you have the flame, you also have the heartbeat which is something warm. Also when you're breathing, it's an idea that you're exchanging air, you are being refreshed, but at the same time you are transforming, producing internal energy. You need that oxygen in order to burn anything in your body, to transform any food, any elements from a cellular point of view. Also internal breathing is not a breathing we normally think about. When we say 'breathing', we have the external breathing, inhaling and exhaling but we also have cellular breathing, which is more similar to a plant, to a vegetable. It's not really something that is related to a movement of inhaling and exhaling. It's more a chemical reaction like photosynthesis. This is mostly how cells breathe internally, and this is also the reason why from that part, that

movement, we move to the third part, which is the secret part more related to knowledge.

It's like simply saying that you know that it works this way. This is why many elements from the outer world disappear in that section, and for the first time harmony appears. In the previous part, there is almost no harmony at all; there are very few notes, common pitches of music. Only in the final part, we start to have harmonic structures which are very dense and have a lot of variation. Everything is obviously built on my tonality, which is *c-sharp* because I sing, breathe and think in *c-sharp*. These harmonic structures are a large development of *c-sharp*.

Normally we have *b-flat* - Chögyal Namkhai Norbu's main tonality is *b* or *b-flat*, it depends - *c-sharp* and *d* for more spiritual music. All Masses are usually written in *d* because *d* was considered, at least in the classical period, to be the correct tonality for a Mass, for religious music and so on. *C-sharp* is not really used in the western world, but in the eastern world, mostly related with Indian music which has a tonality centered around *c-sharp*. For this reason, I thought this should be fine.

Then this idea had to be translated into something that you can actually

hear, you can work with. I've been testing these sounds in order to see if they promote some kind of interesting stage or mental state. To do that, I obviously had to stop working for some days and listen to what I had done, without any intention, and then understand how it really felt, if it worked or not. Obviously it had to affect my perception. If it affected and worked, then I went in that direction, otherwise, I reworked some parts but the main idea was quite correct from the beginning.

From a production point of view, I had to collect all the sounds. Most of the sounds are coherent and recorded in Chögyal Namkhai Norbu's house. Practically everything that you hear in that composition comes from there. All sounds, also external sounds, come from Merigar. There's nothing that has been added on purpose to enhance or have some aesthetic final effect. The full work has nothing to do with aesthetics, it has a functional goal. I was working with the idea of creating a functional work, a musical work, so that it promotes that kind of state without thinking or feeling the need to have an aesthetic purpose.

Whether you like or don't like the sounds, it's not the main point. The main point is if you step into some kind of interesting mental state, which means the work has reached its goal. If instead you are somehow captured by the aesthetic work, then you practically failed because it's very easy for any musical piece to be aesthetic - you follow harmony, rhythm, you add certain specific elements, and then it's aesthetically beautiful. But this doesn't relate to having reached any kind of goal in terms of meditation.

M: We know that you used objects belonging to your father, Chögyal Namkhai Norbu. Which objects did you choose and what inspired you to choose them?

NY: The objects obviously cannot be any objects. In order to fix this sound in a support, such as a digital recording, you need an object to produce some sound. You need to work with those objects. Normally when we refer to objects, at least from a musical or traditional point

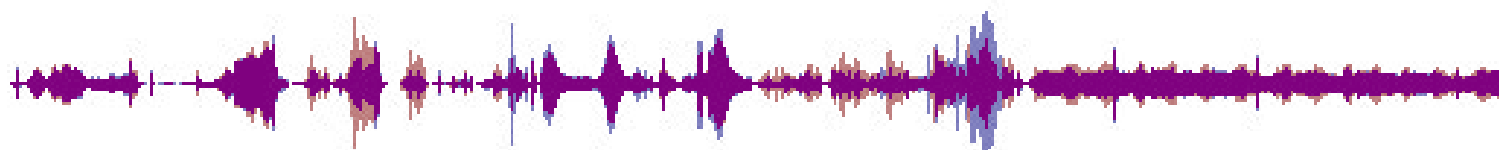
of view, we speak about "found objects". In French we say *objet trouvé*. Found objects are typical objects that produce sound that you find interesting and you are mostly captured by the sound itself. It's a spectro-morphological characteristic rather than the object itself. You're not interested in the fact that the object has a specific function in the real world, but in the fact that that object produces an interesting sound that refers to the final result or the aim of your artistic work.

This was a tradition starting from the 1960s called *musique concrète*

tries, carpets, and so on. These materials all together create a specific kind of sound environment and I recorded many objects there on purpose taking them from his studio and bringing them up in this small *gönpa* because they sounded better there and also it appeared to be more coherent.

I used some musical objects like flutes and some other strange sounding objects that had been gifted, like so called Tibetan bowls. I don't like that sound but I created some interesting emissions by scratching them or doing some strange things.

dense. There is a lot of energy going on, but there is no real tension. It's energy that is not moving and the only movement is created by harmony. You have outer movement at the beginning because things are moving: there are birds, there are people walking, there are things happening externally. Then there is a central part in which only the physical body is moving: I'm standing still with the contact microphones on my chest and everything is moving because my body is moving. I'm breathing, my heart is beating, I'm in a very relaxed state but the body is very active. Then, suddenly,



ATIMONLAM waveform. Courtesy of Namkhai Yeshe.

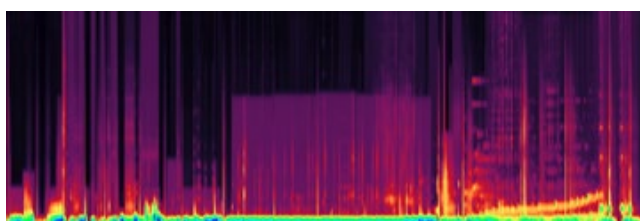
or concrete music and it refers to the studies and research of the 60s in music in France, mostly in Paris, by a group whose leader was Pierre Schaeffer. That kind of music, that is still very popular today, is based on the idea that you analytically listen to those sounds in terms of what characteristics they have for the fact that they are sound and nothing more than that.

You usually classify them using tables in which you name this sound, you say this sound has this characteristic and it's useful to do this and that and put it in your library. Then you go through all the objects that are available, you listen to those objects, and most of all you listen to those objects in the proper room. Maybe an object works well in one room but doesn't work in another.

Some of the objects were recorded in the small *gönpa* that is on the upper floor where my father would usually fill and authenticate statues. There is his hammer and all the tools to fill the statues. There are many different parts of the room which are made of wood, mostly the ceiling. It's a wooden painted ceiling with mantras made by Migmar and there is also some glass, some tapes-

The most important part in this composition is the shift from each movement going from one stage, mental state, into another which usually happens suddenly. The most important one is before the third part because it represents *tregchod*, the idea of cutting through with a single very high pitched sound. It's Chögyal Namkhai Norbu's bell for initiation that I recorded in different ways. I combined that sound in reverse so that instead of sounding like

you have this sound of *tregchod* which cuts and you go into a stage in which there is a movement that creates this expanded, very dense structure in which there is movement of appearing and disappearing harmonic things. There is a very large harmonic progression, *c-sharp*, like a full orchestra, from very low to very high pitch, and in the movement there's just this large expansion and that's all.



ATIMONLAM spectrogram. Courtesy of Namkhai Yeshe

"dong", it suddenly goes very high and cuts that sound. I also added something very strange, which is in his room today. There are plastic dust sheets that sound very strongly, similar to water, to the noise of the waves on a large surface of water, like at the seaside. I mixed this sound and that created this very strong impact in which you come back to the present state.

The tension is an expanded tension because the third section is extremely

But before that there is this very strong sound. And what is interesting, if you analyze the sound of that bell, is that it practically contains many of the sounds that you will hear in an expanded version later because I have related it from a frequency point of view so that it sounds like an expansion of the same thing. That bell is a huge bell for initiation that is still there although that room now is not used. There are these plastic covers, there are different things and some of them are exactly as they were left.

So when I'm suggesting the idea that now we are in the present time, the objects are not in the small *gönpa*, but where they are. The difference in place, in sound space, is when you hear it large and then you hear it like a sound that comes from

a place that seems to be ordinary. In the real sense it's the present time. It's how the room is empty now compared to the sound of the objects with their meaning, with their discovered or found function.

This is a contrast that I wanted to present so that when you are listening, you hear that the sound space is changing like layers. You change focus, like when you are looking at something with your eyes, you move your eyes focusing on different parts of a picture, and your time changes while you are looking at this particular part of the picture. In the same way you are changing time given by this

Conservatory of Music in Florence and compose music on the computer. Are there any reasons that you chose this particular field of study?

NY: As I said, I thought sound is a gap to fill because some years have already passed and honestly I did not see much evolution, at least in the aspect of the Dzogchen Community, teaching and so on. Maybe I don't know enough about what's going on, but the point is that I did not see anything that was really a revelation of something that is working. As I am growing older, I thought that it's

the idea that every ten years maximum you have to do a *ngondro*. I have done it already three times in my life and every time it is longer. I thought now I'll do it for five years. It took me three years because when I spoke to the coordinator he told me that it's very difficult to do if you don't have any experience in general, in terms of training the mind, training the ear.

I thought from the very beginning I was ready to spend at least three or four years because I have never done all my *ngondro* in less than three or four years. My father told me that you have to do that, you have to choose what you are going



illusion of the sound space because we are in the present time now compared to the object as it was always used in that smaller, more intimate environment, the small *gönpa*.

I created these two different environments in the composition very clearly so that you can have that kind of experience. And you may experience something like sounds that come from your childhood compared to the sounds of when you are an adult or older. I tried to be very coherent in this so that when you hear all these sounds, they are also recognized for their own environment and you can actually relate to that because, when they are listening, people create their own idea, their own virtual world with these sounds. What was important for me was that this world is consistent so that you can find that it is a familiar world that becomes more and more familiar the more you listen to that work.

And then at the end you can understand how a certain experience is also related to proximity to the teacher. By understanding that, probably you also understand how you relate to the teaching. By using objects, that's the difference. Those objects have this kind of power to bring with them this kind of experience.

M: At the moment you are completing your training in electronic music at the

time to do something and I would like to do it with music although I can't say that I had a very clear idea.

Initially I thought only to do something I like as I never had the time before. Many people think that I spend my life doing my own things, but this is not true. I've always supported my father all my life. So I thought, now maybe I can have some free time as there are people who are taking care of the Community, who are teaching and so on, and maybe for the first time in my life I can dedicate some time for myself and do something interesting. My initial idea was to study music in the most common understanding of this term. The kind of music you do live, something that happens, not something that you fix or create on purpose in the studio.

Then I decided to attend electronic music school and I discovered by chance that there was one of the best historical schools in Europe in Florence. I found that there is an interesting tradition right here in Florence and I met the person who was coordinating the composition class and started to study with this idea. Then I realized that there is a lot in common, a lot that I can actually apply to make a twist in the way we conceive of the teaching itself.

Since childhood I have been raised with

to study, not like in traditional Buddhism in which someone tells you what to do. When you are a Dzogchen practitioner, you have to choose what you want to do and what you do has to have a very strong link and connection with the teaching and the knowledge you have. So you take a course of study or a commitment to do something for some years that will seriously improve your knowledge, meaning the knowledge of Dzogchen. You take that kind of commitment and you have to complete it and have some kind of result.

When I started, I didn't really have this idea, but a few months later, the first time I heard some very strange music made of sounds, of noises - really disturbing sounds as if they were made in the early 50s with equipment for testing waves for physics labs - I understood that there is something interesting to discover that can be a way to rethink totally and have some interesting insights. So I proceeded in this study and now I have published my first work.

Thank you very much for your time and this interview.

You can purchase the composition ATIMONLAM at Shang Shung Publications shop: <https://www.shangshungpublications.com/en/explore/atiyoga-dzogchen-and-buddhism/product/atimonlam-english>

THE PASSING OF LOPÖN TENZIN NAMDAK RINPOCHE

His Connection with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu and Merigar

With the greatest sadness we announce that the great Master Lopön Tenzin Namdak entered parinirvana on Thursday, June 12, 2025 at 7:45am at his retreat residence in Jema Ritro, on the hill side near Nagarkot, in Nepal. He was 100 years old.

Lopön Rinpoche had a special connection with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu and with many in our Dzogchen Community sangha, and in fact he is portrayed on the northwest panel of the Temple of the Great Contemplation at Merigar among the principal masters of Bön.

It was in 1978 that Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche established a close relationship with the Lopön when he travelled with Andrea Dell'Angelo, Mario Maglietti and a group of his students to Dolanji in Himachal Pradesh, India, to shoot the film, "Arura", on Tibetan medicine.

In August 1989 Lopon Tenzin Namdak was first invited to Merigar to give Dzogchen teachings on which occasion he gave the initiation of Meri and the complete *lung* of the Oral Transmission of Shangshung (*zhang chung snyan rgyud*) for the first time in the West.

He returned to Merigar for a second time In May 1991 to give teachings in the newly built Gönpa from May 3-5. At the time Chögyal Namkhai Norbu was in personal retreat in his cabin in the woods and asked Lopön Tenzin Namdak to give the *lung* transmission of the whole Shangshung *nyengyüd*, which he had not received, for a second time. On the last day of the retreat Norbu Rinpoche came from his cabin to receive it, sitting in the front row in the Gönpa.



Lopön Tenzin Namdak consecrating the Great Stupa at Merigar in 1997.

The last time Lopön Tenzin Namdak visited Merigar was at Easter in 1997 and from March 28 to April 3 he taught, morning and afternoon, on Dzogchen according to the Yetri Tasel (*Ye khri mtha 'sel*), a teaching contained in the Bönpo Kangyur, basing his explanations on a commentary written by Trenpa Namkha. While giving teachings, Lopön Rinpoche was seated in the Gönpa below the depiction of the great Bönpo Dzogchen master Tapihritsa. During his stay, he also consecrated the Great Stupa of Enlightenment with the rabne (*rab gnas*) ceremony.

Lopön Rinpoche also visited and gave precious teachings in many different Gars and Lings of the International Dzogchen Community around the globe,

from the east to the west coast of the USA as well as countless other places. Lopön Tenzin Namdak dedicated his life to preserving the Tibetan cultural heritage and transmitting the precious teachings of the Yungdrung Bön tradition to ensure that its ancient wisdom and lineage would continue to flourish for future generations.

With deep gratitude, we honor a Master who has touched the lives of many across the globe for so many years and been a beacon of light in bringing timeless wisdom to all those students who had the great fortune to receive his teachings.

The Mirror

A LITTLE TIBET IN NEPAL

Dolpo is one of the largest and most remote districts in Nepal, with a territory that reaches altitudes of over 7,600 meters right on the border with Tibet.

Here the population, mainly Tibetan, continues to live according to the rhythms of tradition: they are semi-nomadic farmers, who grow barley and raise yaks, sheep, goats and horses, moving according to the seasons in search of pastures. The harshness of the territory, very wild and difficult to reach, has favored the preservation of the Tibetan language and culture, so much so that Dolpo can be considered a real little Tibet, in which one of the oldest and most vast heritages of knowledge and spirituality has remained uncontaminated. ASIA has been present in this district since 2012, when Geshe Tenzin Nyima of the Drodulling Yungdrung Monastery, after founding a boarding school - Ganchen Meri School - for the children from the villages of Kaigaun, Thapa Gaon and Hurikot, among the poorest in this region, sought help to renovate the old building through Löpon Tenzin Namdak, master and abbot of the Triten Norbutse Bönpo Monastery in Kathmandu, which ASIA has supported since 1996. In 2012, after having verified the needs of the school and the feasibility of the requests, we started a project there and built a building with nine classrooms, also providing the furnishings.

The school is a point of reference in a very remote area, reachable only on foot or on horseback from the small airport of Juphal, and welcomes both children and monks from the poorest families in the area, often orphans and living far from access to formal education. Geshe Tenzin Nyima wanted to ensure that Tibetan-speaking children had access to education, offering them the opportunity to learn their language, history and culture. A constituent element is the teaching of the Bön religion, which is widely practiced in Dolpo, even



though the school is open to children of all religions.

However, it is very difficult for local families to meet the expenses necessary to keep their children in school, which certainly cannot count on their support to maintain the structure and purchase the necessary teaching materials. This is why in 2017 we started the Long Distance Sponsorship project, to continuously provide for the needs of the school and the children enrolled.

Being well known and appreciated by the Tibetan community, every year the school receives an increasing number of requests for enrollment, even from families who live in the most distant villages. Every year, about 70 children are enrolled, educated and cared for by about 6 people. Coming from nomadic or semi-nomadic families, **the boarding school is the only opportunity these children have to attend school regularly and benefit from a very high quality education.** In addition to Tibetan culture, history and language, the children also learn English, Nepali, and all the

other subjects included in the official national curriculum. During the school year, teachers organize various activities such as practical workshops on local crafts and traditional knowledge, traditional dance and song performances, excursions, etc.

Sponsoring a child at the Ganchen Meri School has enormous value because it does not only mean supporting education and providing new opportunities, but also **safeguarding the precious cultural identity of Tibet** that is disappearing more and more each day. Become a **custodian of Tibet's treasure** and offer quality education and dignified living conditions to the children of this truly special school.

GO TO OUR WEBSITE AND ACTIVATE A LONG DISTANCE SPONSORSHIP
https://dona.asia-ngo.org/sad_bambino_en/

OR WRITE TO adozioni@asia-ngo.org

NEW AND RECENT PRODUCTS FROM SHANG SHUNG PUBLICATIONS

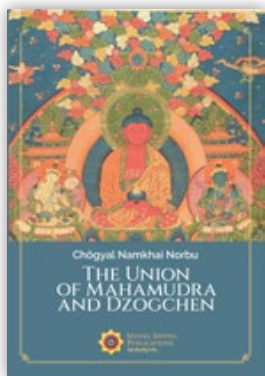
Dear Readers, the most important news of recent months is definitely the acoustic composition ATIMONLAM by Namkhai Yeshe.

You can find it on our webshop in various languages: <https://www.shangshungpublications.com/en/products/product/atimonlam-english>

An interview with the author about this composition has been published in this issue of The Mirror. As far as books are concerned, the following publications will be available in early July:

The Union of Mahamudra and Dzogchen

This book contains teachings given by the master Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, commenting on a text written by the master Karma Chagmed Raga Asya (Araga) entitled *Avalokiteshvara's Direct Instructions on the Concise Essence of the Practice of the Union of Mahamudra and Dzogchen*. Araga was a master in both the Karma Kagyü and Palyul Nyingma lineages. Chögyal Namkhai Norbu gave these teachings at Merigar West, Italy, from June 24 through July 1, 2011. During this retreat he read the Tibetan root text aloud and directly translated it into English, verse by verse, sometimes line by line, and then elucidated the meaning of the text.

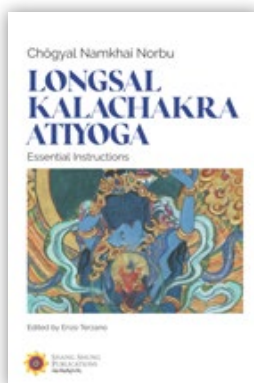


Longsal Kalachakra Atiyoga

The practice of Kalachakra (meaning the wheel of time, from kala, meaning time, and chakra, meaning wheel) was transmitted by Dzogchen Master Chögyal Namkhai Norbu during two retreats:

the first held at Tashigar North on Margarita Island, Venezuela, in 2004, and the second held at Dzamling Gar, in Tenerife, Spain, in 2013–2014.

During both retreats the Master transmitted two systems of the practice of Guru Kalachakra. The first method taught at the retreats is connected to the terma, or rediscovered teaching, of Dzogchen Master Changchub Dorje and is structured as an Anuyoga practice. The second practice comes from the cycle of the Longsal teaching, terma of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, and bears the title *The Way to Practice the Profound Path of Guru Kalachakra*, here in called Longsal Kalachakra Atiyoga.



The Vajra Dance of Space

The manifestation of wisdom is just like space. It pervades all without any consideration of subject and object, and thus through the presence of wisdom one can integrate everything.

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

Book One:
The Vajra Dance of Space of the Unborn

Book Two:
The Vajra Dance of Space of the Song of the Vajra on the Khalong Mandala



SHANG SHUNG
PUBLICATIONS
ཤཱང་ཤུང་ཡི་མཚན་འཛིན་ལུ་ཡོད།

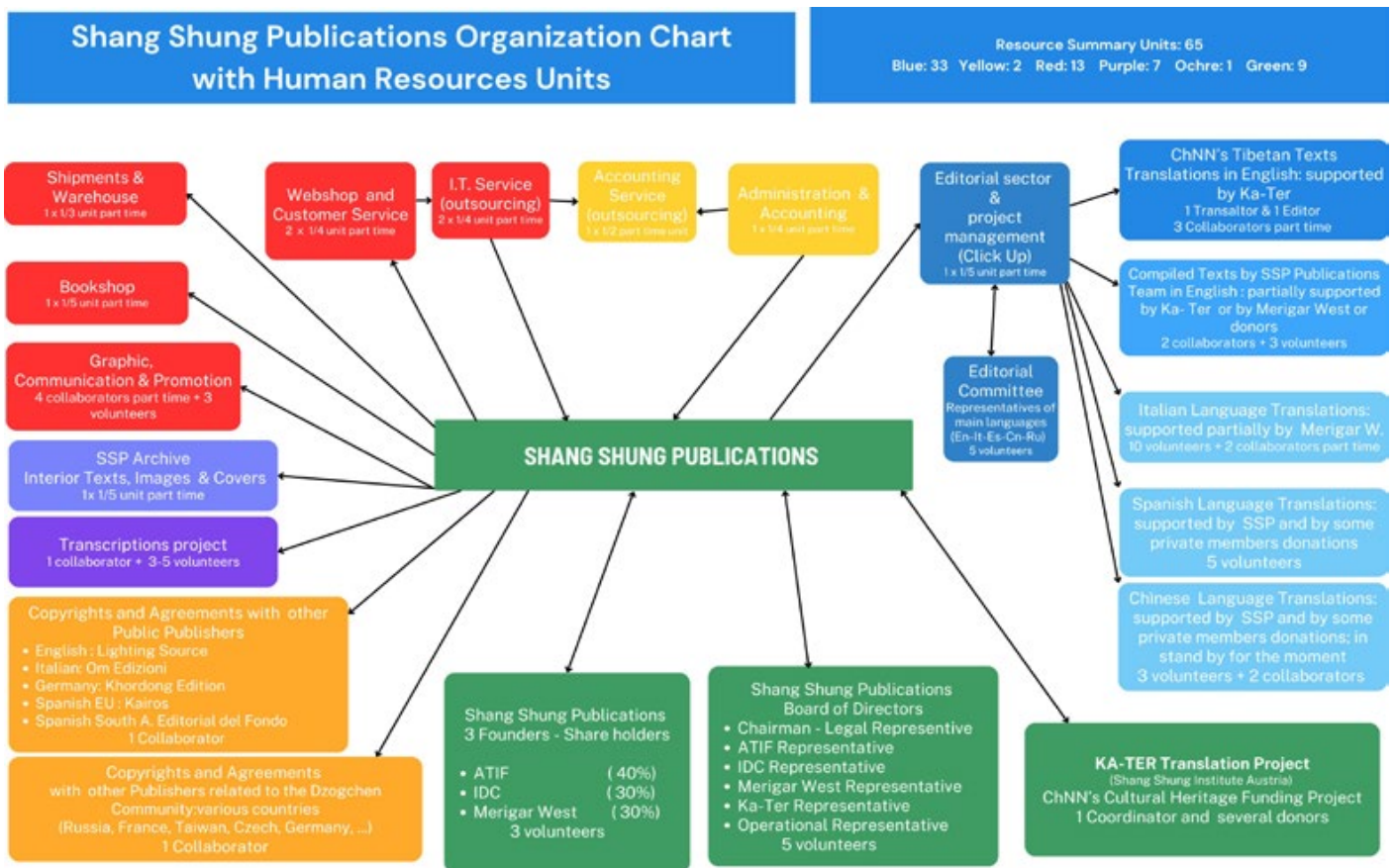
La chiarezza luminosa dell'universo

La chiarezza luminosa dell'universo: una chiara esposizione del Tregchöd primordialmente puro è uno dei primi libri sullo Dzogchen tra quelli scritti da Chögyal Namkhai Norbu. Concepito inizialmente come un compendio di istruzioni derivate dai tantra dello Dzogchen Upadeśa e dalle opere di Longchenpa e Jigmed Lingpa basate sulla conoscenza personale e sull'esperienza, nel 2005 l'Autore lo arricchì con i versi de L'Upadeśa del Tregchöd primordialmente puro, parte del ciclo di insegnamenti da lui riscoperti, conosciuti come Longsal. Questo testo prezioso è una meravigliosa guida all'essenza del nostro essere attraverso la conoscenza di uno degli insegnamenti più antichi basati su una saggezza primordiale e al di là del tempo.



Recently published books

- **Padmasambhava's Advice on Total Perfection - A Hidden Treasure Discovered by Dorje Lingpa- An Oral Commentary:** https://www.shangshungpublications.com/en/explore/new/product/product_944
- **Dzogchen Upadeśa Teachings of Rigdzin Changchub Dorje - An Oral Commentary** https://www.shangshungpublications.com/en/products/product/product_949
- **Illuminating the Gateway to the Teaching:**



<https://www.shangshungpublications.com/it/prodotti/product/e-book-illuminating-the-gateway-to-the-teaching>

- The Preliminaries of the Path of Ati - Longsal Commentaries Volume Six:

https://www.shangshungpublications.com/en/products/product/product_928

- Insegnamenti Dzogchen Upadesa del Rigdzin Changchub Dorje

<https://www.shangshungpublications.com/it/component/hikashop/product/e-book-insegnamenti-dzogchen-upadesa-di-rigdzin-changchub-dorje-epub>

LATEST NEWS

News from Shang Shung Publications

The Collaborative Synergy Project for SSP: to strengthen collaboration

and synergy within the Shang Shung Publications Team. What has changed and what is changing in Shang Shung Publications Impresa Sociale Srl? In the last three years, our activities have diversified further: in addition to the English and Italian language, we now publish books in Spanish. We are also working to publish digital texts in the Chinese language. In order to increase the dissemination of the public texts of the Master, distribution agreements have been activated in Italy, with Om Edizioni, and in South America, with Editorial del Fondo.

Ecommerce: a new webshop

The new webshop, created by Florido Comunicazione and CoopWeb, is not only characterized by a new graphic design, but it is also more functional for managing multimedia products and electronic invoicing. The digital products ordered by readers have gone from 30% to 45% with the new webshop.

Access to purchased digital products has been simplified and in your profile (download area) you can find all the au-

dios or ebooks recently purchased or in the past. The new webshop was made possible thanks to the financial support of the International Dzogchen Community, Ka-Ter and Merigar West, as well as a private donor from Hamburg who has always supported us. But what and how many human resources work with Shang Shung Publications? Some time ago we mapped our activities: you can see the chart below.

Probably no one imagines that we are a group of almost 60 people who collaborate continuously to translate, transcribe, correct, make and deliver the books, videos and audios of Shang Shung. This number of sixty people does not include the most important stakeholders: the hundreds of people among readers and donors who support Shang Shung Publications directly or through Ka-Ter.

Mapping our activities: Our collaborators are 80% volunteers in Karma Yoga and the remaining semi-volunteers or part-time. We are very happy about this and would like to make sure that there is awareness of so much collaboration and, above all, we

would like to improve the synergies and stabilize this spirit of collaboration. How do we want to improve and stabilize collaboration between people? To improve the collaboration between people we thought to organize a program of Coaching and team building on 8 and 9 July, at the end of the retreat with Namkhai Yeshe. The project is called the Collaborative Synergy Project for SSP.

This initiative will consist of three main meetings spaced approximately two months apart, with collaborative group work taking place in between the workshops. These meetings and group sessions will focus on key topics and projects that are vital to the future of Shang Shung Publications. The purpose

of the Collaborative Synergy Project is to: strengthen the bonds among those engaged in the work of Shang Shung Publications; align our understanding of each person's role and contribution; cultivate a culture of mutual support, appreciation, and respectful communication; move our collective work in the direction of greater cooperation and more effective use of our shared resources.

Another important aim of this project is to improve certain working processes within Shang Shung Publications. But to do so meaningfully, we believe it is essential to first strengthen the people behind them - by fostering trust and collaboration, especially within smaller working groups that will help evolve and

enhance these processes over time.

This project will be a wonderful opportunity to connect with people from all over the world who dedicate their time and energy to the daily work of Shang Shung Publications.

It will be a special moment to get to know one another better, to deepen our mutual understanding, and we believe this will be very important for the future challenges that lie ahead for Shang Shung Publications. The results of this project will be published within six months.

Shang Shung Publications Team

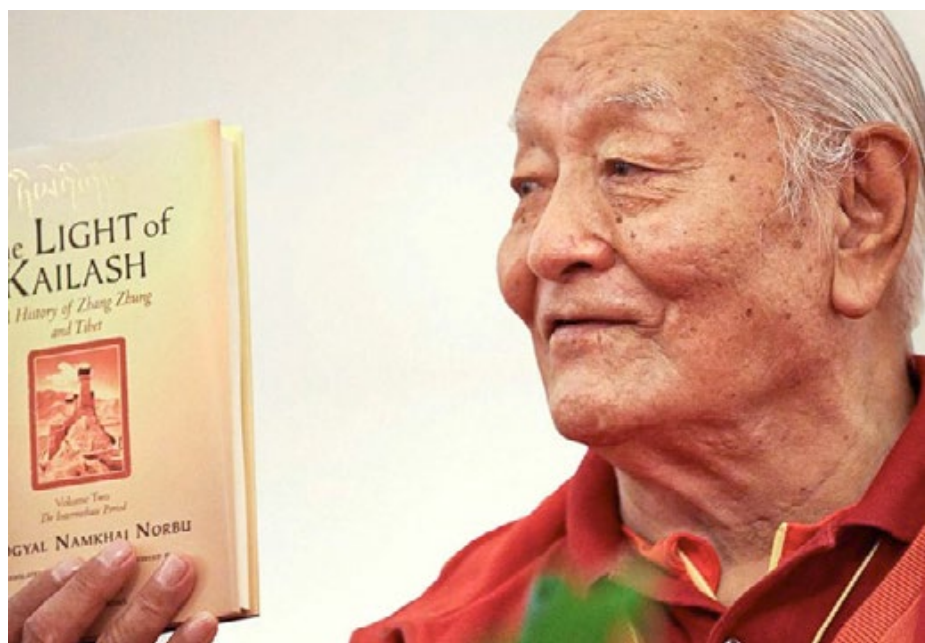
HONORING THE LEGACY OF CHÖGYAL NAMKHAI NORBU



A Collaborative Initiative by the Shang Shung Institute UK and the Ka-Ter Translation Project

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu was not only one of the most revered Dzogchen masters of our time, but also a renowned scholar whose work spanned many dimensions of Tibetan culture. Through decades of teaching, writing, and speaking at international conferences and universities, he passionately emphasized the richness and importance of Tibetan heritage - especially as it faces increasing threats to its survival.

Now, nearly seven years after his passing, [the Shang Shung Institute UK](#) and [Shang Shung Institute Austria](#), with the [Ka-Ter Translation Project](#) at its core, are launching a new collaborative initiative to further his legacy. United in purpose and vision, this partnership is dedicated to spreading awareness of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu's extraordinary life work and to preserving it for future generations.



Following the success of a joint fundraising campaign to bring a **stupa by Rigzin Changchub Dorje** to the sacred site of **Maratika in Nepal** (planned for March 2026), **Jamyang Oliphant** (Director, Shang Shung UK) and **Oliver Leick** (Director, Shang Shung Austria) have

designed a vibrant year-long series of cultural and educational events beginning in July 2025.

A Year of Cultural Engagement and Exploration

At the heart of this initiative is a rich



Chögyal Namkhai Norbu and Roberto Cacciapaglia at the presentation of 'Light of Kailash vol.3' in London, 2015

program of **book presentations** dedicated to the works of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, published by [Shang Shung Publications](#). These events will be held in **Italy, the UK, Nepal, and Spain**, and made globally accessible via live **Zoom broadcasts**. Recordings will also be available on the [Shang Shung Institute UK's YouTube channel](#).

Each presentation will be designed to be **interactive and accessible**, featuring expert dialogues, Q&A sessions, and group readings, depending on the nature of the text. Events will take place in **bookshops, public venues, universities, and International Dzogchen Community centers**.

In addition to the featured titles, a variety of other books by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu will be available for purchase, with proceeds going to support the **Ka-Ter Translation Project**—a crucial effort dedicated to translating and publishing the Master's vast body of work.

Inaugural Event – July 7, 2025

Castle of Arcidosso, Tuscany

The first event in this series will be held on **July 7, 2025**, at the historic **Castle of Arcidosso** in Tuscany. The evening program includes:

A photographic presentation by Gino Vitiello, sharing rare and intimate images from his 1988 pilgrimage to Mount Kailash with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu.

An **interview with Professor Fabian Sanders**, who will offer insight into *Total Perfection*, a key Dzogchen text recently published through the Ka-Ter Translation Project.

The event will conclude with **Khaita**

Joyful Dances, refreshments, and the opportunity to visit the nearby **MACO Museum of Oriental Art and Culture**.

Upcoming Events and Thematic Highlights

This year-long program explores many key themes from Chögyal Namkhai Norbu's teachings and writings. Highlights include:

Tibetan Culture and History

A special talk by **Professor Charles Ramble** on *The Light of Kailash, Volume 1*.
Date: Late September 2025
Location: Rangjung Yeshe Institute, Kathmandu (one of the world's leading universities for Buddhist studies)

Books for All Ages

Presentations of *The Adventure of Nyima Dawa and the Little Yak* and *The Story Book*, including activities for children with **Kumar Kumari Yoga**, songs, and possibly theater performances. Dates and locations to be confirmed.

Songs and Dance

Workshops and talks on *Khaita Joyful Dances* and *Collected Comments on the Songs in Message from Tibet*. Details to be announced.

The Afterlife and Transformation

A thematic seminar on *Birth, Life and Death* and *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*, featuring a **musical composition by Roberto Cacciapaglia** and an **art exhibition**.

Beyond the book presentations, the program will include **art exhibitions, music performances, Khaita dance**

workshops, and **video installations**. Each event will conclude with a convivial gathering, offering refreshments and a space for reflection and community connection.

Culminating Event – August 2026

IATS Conference, Kathmandu

The initiative will culminate at the prestigious **International Association for Tibetan Studies (IATS) Conference in Kathmandu, August 2026**. A **round-table discussion** will be held to explore Chögyal Namkhai Norbu's scholarly contributions to the field of Tibetan studies. With many of the world's leading academics in attendance, this gathering will serve as a powerful forum for honoring his legacy.

Join Us

This collaborative project offers a rare opportunity to bring the wisdom, vision, and scholarship of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu to a wider audience—bridging the worlds of spirituality, culture, and academia in a shared celebration of his life's work. We warmly invite you to become part of this journey. You can support us in many ways:

- **Join us at an event**
- **Share your ideas for future activities**
- **Make a donation to sustain this important work**

Donation Information

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Thank you for your support and participation in this meaningful and far-reaching initiative.

Jamyang Oliphant & Oliver Leick
Directors of the Shang Shung Institute UK and Austria

SSI SCHOOL OF TIBETAN MEDICINE: PRESERVING ANCIENT HEALING KNOWLEDGE FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE MODERN WORLD

Studying Tibetan Medicine allows you to understand yourself and all the surrounding processes much better, provides the necessary basis for a balanced and long life, gives you the keys to take care of yourself, your family and everyone who needs it and, as a result, fills you with inner joy, strength, and a sense of fulfillment.

The history of Traditional Tibetan Medicine dates back to the ancient pre-Tibetan kingdom of Shang Shung. The development of this system is associated with various cultural periods of Tibet, the accumulation of extensive practical experience, and the integration of the methods of other ancient medical systems. Despite its long history, this healing science has not lost its relevance in the modern world. On the contrary, it demonstrates the ability to treat many modern illnesses, making it interesting and beneficial to learn.

Some of the most important qualities of traditional Tibetan medicine are its holistic nature, personalized recommendations, and focus on prevention. Along with centuries of experience in its application and the use of many unique



Chögyal Namkhai Norbu with Dr. Trogawa Rinpoche (left) and Dr. Drolma Lobsan (right) at the First International Congress on Tibetan Medicine in Italy in 1983.



Dr. Phuntsog Wangmo

multi-component formulas made from raw materials of plant, mineral, and animal origin, Tibetan medicine and its unique methods attract the attention of doctors, researchers, and patients in many parts of the world. Existing literature indicates an impressive therapeutic potential of Tibetan medicine methods, especially for chronic diseases.

At the Shang Shung Institute School of Tibetan Medicine, our main goal is to transmit authentic knowledge in an understandable language. We are well aware of the importance of the original root text Gyud-Zhi and its main commentaries, and therefore, all teachings are based on these primary sources. At the same time, thanks to Professor Phuntsog Wangmo's extensive experience in training students outside of Tibet, the teaching is car-

ried out with appropriate commentaries and examples to help better understand the essence and its application in daily life.

Professor Namkhai Norbu, The Founder of the School

The founder of the SSI School of Tibetan Medicine, Professor Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, was the first to introduce Tibetan Medicine to the modern European medical community. Professor Namkhai Norbu organized the first international conference on Tibetan medicine in 1983, and regularly invited famous experts and teachers of Tibetan Medicine to Italy to conduct courses and seminars.

Professor Namkhai Norbu paid special attention to the preservation and dissemination of knowledge of Traditional Tibetan Medicine in the West. He repeatedly emphasized that this unique knowledge, preserved for centuries in the remote mountains of Tibet, is valuable for all humanity and should serve and benefit all people.

Professor Phuntsog Wangmo and the International School

Intending to preserve and develop knowledge of traditional Tibetan Medicine, Professor Namkhai Norbu invited his niece, Professor Phuntsog Wangmo, a well-known doctor and teacher of Tibetan medicine, to be the head of the School.

Professor Phuntsog had received a complete traditional education in Tibetan Medicine in the capital of Tibet (Lhasa). She studied and practiced under the guidance of two famous scientists and doctors, Khenchen Troru Tsenam and Khenchen Gyaltzen. She is a Tibetan Medicine doctor with more than 35 years of practical experience.

The first branch of the School was opened in the USA, the second is located in Russia, and the third, the youngest School, is in Spain, in Tenerife.

Thus, thanks to the special vision and aspiration of the great Teacher Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche, the colossal work, knowledge, and incredible dedication of Professor Phuntsog Wangmo and the sincere efforts of the International Dzogchen Community members and International School Team, we have these three beautiful branches of our precious International School of Tibetan Medicine.

SSI School of Tibetan Medicine, USA

SSI School of Tibetan Medicine, USA is located in Conway, Massachusetts, at Tsegyalgar East, the seat of the International Dzogchen Community in the US. The School has been operating for over 20 years.

It is the home of the first English-language, four-year training in Tibetan medicine in the West that offers the same curriculum as Traditional Tibetan Medicine schools in Tibet, thanks to the commitment of our Director, Doctor Phuntsog Wangmo.

Since the first group of graduates in 2008, the School has trained several dozen students from all over the world to become Menpas - Tibetan Medicine Doctors. As part of the training, the students visited Tibet and went through an internship at Qinghai Medical University.

Recently, we have divided the four year program into two parts, so after 1.5 years of studies, students can become Tibetan Medicine Diet & Lifestyle Counselors and start applying their healing knowledge. Those who wish to receive the complete Tibetan Medicine training can continue with the second part of the program.

In May, 2025, our first cohort of eleven talented and dedicated students from different parts of the world graduated from the TM Diet and Lifestyle Counsel-



or Program Online. The next cohort will begin in January, 2026. If you would like to join and help people heal through diet and lifestyle, please contact our School.

Along with our longer programs, we offer various shorter courses and workshops online. In our Tibetan Medicine Library (below), you can find free webinars as well as replays of our past workshops on Self-Massage, Men's Health, Women's Health, Gemstones for Healing, and much more.

Contacts:

Katya Kuzmitskaya – Administrative and Communications Manager, US School

Email: katya@shangshung.org

Join our community of learners:

<https://community.tibetanmedicine-school.org/>

Tibetan Medicine Library: <https://community.tibetanmedicineschool.org/spaces/19355331/page>

To subscribe to our newsletter, email katya@shangshung.org

School of Tibetan Medicine in Russia

The Russian branch of the School is located at Kunsangar North, in the Moscow region. This branch of the School was founded in 2012, and in 2013, a group of 60 students began full-time education in the main four year program.

Today, the following training programs are relevant in the Russian branch of the School:

- The main four year training program;

At present, 35 doctors who have completed full training in the four year program have graduated, and now a new group of 45 students is in training. The planned completion of the program is 2028/2029.

The main training program at the SSI School of Tibetan Medicine is a complete equivalent to the Tibetan Medicine training program at Qinghai University (Xining, China), the main partner of the School.

Upon completion of the basic four year education, graduates will go through an internship at Qinghai University.

The internship includes a three month period of practice with doctors in various departments of the "Arura" Tibetan Medicine Clinic, a study of special commentaries to the main text Gyud-Zhi, a trip to the mountains to study and collect medicinal herbs and materials, and



an exam. Upon successful passing of the exam, an official document is issued confirming the compliance with the bachelor's degree in Tibetan Medicine.

- The program on external Ku-Nye therapies;

This is a part-time program consisting of three modules. The total duration of the program is seven to nine months. The program represents a comprehensive study of all external therapies presented in the basic four year program.

- Diet in Tibetan Medicine;

This is a fully online program consisting of three modules. The total duration of the program is seven to nine months.

Also, we regularly organize shorter courses and seminars. Shorter programs and courses are based on the material of the main program in one way or another.

In addition to Phuntsog Wangmo, the teachers of the School are also its graduates, who have completed full training in Tibetan Medicine in Russia and an

internship at Qinghai University, as well as a special program for teachers, and assisted Professor Phuntsog in courses for the required number of hours.

All our teachers also have classical Western medical education.

Assistant Teachers of Professor Phuntsog in Russia: Alexander Popov, Artem Verny, Vladimir Bakshi, Irina Pankevich and Medegma Budaeva.

Collaborations

Over the years of its existence, the School in Russia has held many wonderful events and acted as a co-organizer of large-scale events with its friends and colleagues from scientific

and medical institutions, such as the First Moscow State Medical University named after Sechenov, the Center for Medical Anthropology of the Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology (IEA) of the Russian Academy of Sciences and others.

Special thanks to Kunsangar North and members of the Dzogchen Community for their kind support of the School and continuous lovely cooperation. Without this, we definitely wouldn't have been able to do anything.

We plan to continue all our programs and conduct new regular recruitments, and we will also conduct many new interesting programs together with our precious international team.

Therefore, we invite all interested parties to join us on social networks, follow all the news, and contact us directly with questions.

Contacts:

Vladimir Belyaev – Director of the Russian branch of the School

Website: tibetanmedicineschool.ru

Email: stm@shangshung.ru

Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/@shangshung108>

Vk: https://vk.com/tibetan_med

Telegram: t.me/tibetan_medicine

Shang Shung School of Tibetan Medicine Europe

The year 2025 has been a period of substantial progress for the **Shang Shung School of Tibetan Medicine Europe**, marked by the successful implementation of training programs, meaningful institutional collaborations, and a renewed commitment to expanding the reach and recognition of traditional Tibetan healing sciences. Through its diverse initiatives, the school continues to uphold its mission to preserve, transmit, and apply the profound knowledge of Tibetan medicine in contemporary contexts.

Completion of KuNye Massage Training and Therapist Certification

Among the highlights of this year was the successful completion of a full training cycle in KuNye massage, a real healing art within the Tibetan medical tradition. Twenty-four students completed the rigorous program and have been officially certified as KuNye therapists. This accomplishment not only underscores the school's dedication to high-quality training but also contributes to the growing number of qualified practitioners available to serve the public with authentic and holistic therapeutic care.

Expansion of the Diet and Lifestyle Program

Following the ongoing interest in our diet program, the school has launched a new edition of the training, reflecting the importance of nutrition in Tibetan medical theory. The course offers students a deeper understanding of how diet and lifestyle adjustments can support long-term health and harmony in alignment with individual constitutions and environmental factors.

New Elder Care Initiative in Collaboration with Partner Schools

Building upon the themes introduced in the *Embracing Death* course, the school has initiated a new and broader program focused on elder care, developed in collaboration with the other two Tibetan medicine schools (USA and Russia). This program reflects a growing need for traditional and integrative approaches to aging and end-of-life care, aiming to equip students and caregivers with practical tools and compassionate perspectives rooted in ethics.

Ongoing Clinical Services and Medical Consultations

The clinical aspect of the school's mission has also seen meaningful development in 2025. Our **resident doctors, Irina Pankevich and Medegma Budaeva**, have tirelessly worked to provide **consultations and external therapies**, offering a reliable and increasingly well-regarded service to the local and international community. Their dedication ensures continuous access to traditional Tibetan medical care, and feedback from patients has been notably positive.

Additionally, from **February to April**, many individuals had the valuable opportunity to receive **personalized health advice and therapeutic treatments** from **Dr. Phuntsog Wangmo**, who conducted consultations during her **three-month residency at Dzamling Gar**. Her presence enriched the school's outreach and brought significant benefits to those seeking traditional care in a supportive environment.

Strengthening Ties with Dzamling Gar

The connection between the Tenerife branch of the Shang Shung School and Dzamling Gar has deepened in 2025 through ongoing collaboration. Dr. Phuntsog Wangmo is now actively involved in the annual Mandarava retreat, offering her expertise in Tibetan medicine within this spiritual framework. Additionally, a new edition of the Garlic



and Ghee Chudlen retreat was successfully held in the Gönpa of Dzamling Gar, continuing the tradition of revitalizing and healing recipes grounded in ancient formulas.

A New Digital Presence: Website and Online Services

This year also saw the launch of a completely new website: tibetanmedicineschooleu.org. Designed to be clear, user-friendly, and informative, the website now serves as a central hub for all school-related resources. It offers a wide range of **evergreen online courses** accessible at any time, and introduces the **possibility to book online consultations** with the school's dedicated team of doctors. This digital platform reflects the school's commitment to making Tibetan medicine more accessible globally.

Looking Ahead: Advancing Standards and New Educational Offerings

As the school looks toward the future, several initiatives are already underway to further enhance its academic and professional standards. Notably, efforts are being made to secure **formal recognition of the school as an educational center for KuNye massage**. In line with this goal, beginning in 2025, the KuNye training program will adopt a **new structure**, increasing both the **number of in-person training hours and personal**

practice sessions. The updated curriculum will meet the requirements for a total of **340 hours**, enabling students to achieve a higher level of certification and professional readiness.

The school also continues its close collaboration with the **Yantra Yoga Department**, and in October 2025, it will launch an **online course on Tsadul**, co-taught by **Dr. Phuntsog Wangmo** and **Fabio Andrico**. This course is designed to complete the **preliminaries of Yantra Yoga**, offering practitioners a comprehensive foundation that integrates movement, breathing, and therapeutic knowledge.

Contacts:

Ilaria Faccioli - Director of the European branch of the School

<https://tibetanmedicineschooleu.org/>

Email: tibetanmedicine@atiyogafoundation.org

WhatsApp: +34 657262182

Conclusion

At the Shang Shung Institute School of Tibetan Medicine, we are committed to serving as a vital bridge between traditional knowledge and modern application, ensuring that the profound healing principles of Tibetan medicine remain accessible, respected, and alive.

The Tibetan medical system is truly a unique gem of healing arts. Thanks to the uninterrupted lineage, it has not only reached us without losing its purity and authenticity, but has also been supplemented with numerous extensive commentaries on the main texts and practical manuals, in which one can find descriptions, symptoms, and methods of prevention and treatment for the overwhelming majority of modern diseases.

We invite you to learn more about our International School, and we will do our best to help support you in studying Tibetan medicine!

FIRST COHORT OF TIBETAN MEDICINE DIET & LIFESTYLE COUNSELORS GRADUATE

After 1.5 years of studies, 11 dedicated and talented students graduated from our TM Diet & Lifestyle Counselor Program, the first part of the complete Tibetan Medicine training.

March 30, 2025 - Dzamling Gar

They were guided by our dear director, Dr. Phuntsog Wangmo la, and supported by amazing teachers and Menpas, Irina Pankevich and Medegma Budaeva.

Over 1.5 years, students learned:

- Tibetan Medicine Root Tantra
- Formation of the Body
- Etiology
- Preventative Medicine
- Basics of Pharmacology
- External Observations and Diagnostics
- Qualities of Foods, Spices, and Drinks
- Tibetan Language, and more

Coming from different places in North and South America, as well as European countries, they formed a special bond through weekly online classes, study group sessions, and exchanging personal experiences in the group chat. It's been precious to witness such deep sense of respect, love, and collaboration.

In May 2025, most of the students were able to travel and meet in person at the Tibetan Medicine Schoolhouse in Massachusetts for their third and final intensive. Students from Europe joined online, with their presence felt deeply in the group. After 10 special days with Dr. Phuntsog and the final exam, on May 19, 2025, students had a graduation ceremony in majestic Khandroling.

Celebrating this auspicious occasion, we would like to express our gratitude to:

-Professor Namkhai Norbu, the founder of the Shang Shung Institute and precious Teacher to many of us, for the ever-present guidance and inspiration.

-Dr. Phuntsog, for her dedicated work

to transmit Tibetan Medicine knowledge in its purity, her compassionate heart, and calm, warm, and healing presence.

-Menpas Irina and Medegma, for supporting the students weekly, checking their homework, providing clarifications, and working tirelessly as always.

-All the dear students who chose to receive precious Tibetan Medicine knowledge at our School and showed profound dedication, respect, and care for the lineage and one another.

May their paths be full of blessings and may they embody and bring the precious healing qualities of Tibetan Medicine into the world for the benefit of all beings!

Our next cohort will begin in January, 2026. If you would like to learn more email katya@shangshung.org



Graduates

- Stamatia Rori
- Lee Rome
- Fredrick Arnold
- Joseph Solorio
- Steven Bosiljevac
- Chi Wa Lee
- Andrea Brazausky
- Mickey Campbell
- Doug Hall
- Stephan Mair
- Irina Martynova

Graduates with Dr Phuntsog (center) on Khandroling in Buckland, Massachusetts May 2025. There were 11 graduates in total, so some unable to attend are missing in the photo.

GIVE A HAND TO THE INTERNATIONAL GAKYIL

JOIN THE TEAM! BLUE AND YELLOW ASSISTANT APPLICATIONS ARE URGENTLY NEEDED AND WELCOME!

Dear International Dzogchen Community Members, The International Gakyil (IG) is a volunteer group of International Dzogchen Community (IDC) members whose mission is to facilitate and promote collaboration between all IDC Gars and Lings, support their local activities, and provide oversight and global services to all IDC members. They are also responsible for the administration and information functions of the IDC association. The global services and the administrative and information function include:

- Membership policy & Dzogchen.net (Membership Management System)
- Webcast platform
- The Mirror
- International Teachers (payroll and administration)
- Copyright and Trademark
- Collaborate with the Gars/Lings on different matters
- Manage legal and financial issues for the IDC
- Statute up to date and compliant with the Italian law for non-profit organizations.
- Managing Gars and Lings affiliation process to the IDC and keeping all the relevant
- Manage legal and financial issues for the IDC
- Lead the IDC/ASIA house project in Dzamling Gar
- Collaborate with the International Atiyoga Foundation, ASIA; Shang Shung Publications Impresa Sociale S.r.l.

The IG is looking for interested and dedicated members to join its team as Blue and Yellow assistants with the seri-

ous intention of becoming IG members for the next three-year term starting upon the approval of the financial statements at the Annual General Assembly (AGA) on July 6, 2025 at 3.00 pm CET in Merigar West, Arcidosso, Italy.

To apply, please send a letter of interest and a curriculum vitae to blue@dzogchen.net, red@dzogchen.net, and yellow@dzogchen.net by **June 15, 2025**. Descriptions of the IG Team in office are available at <http://dzogchencommunity.org/about-the-international-gakyil/>

General requirements:

1. IDC membership for the last three consecutive years plus the current year. Members of longer standing are a plus
2. Previous experience working on a Gar or Ling Gakyil, or another IDC management position is a plus
3. Knowledge about IDC community processes
4. Availability to attend weekly meetings, and other occasional meetings during the year
5. Ability to work in a team and online

Blue Gakyil

Main requirements:

1. Understanding the essence of Dzogchen and the ability to use this knowledge to communicate with IDC Instructors, Gakyils, Lings, and Members
2. Having passed the Santi Maha Sangha Base Level exam is a plus
3. Proficient in spoken and written English
4. Strong communication skills
5. Basic computer skills

Main responsibilities:

- a. Liaison to facilitate and promote collaboration among all IDC Gars and Lings, and support their local activities
- b. Communicate with IDC members

and Gakyils regarding their questions and concerns

- c. General and teaching-related communications
- d. Collaborate with Santi Maha Sangha, Vajra Dance, Yantra Yoga, and Khaita instructors on matters related to the Teachings
- e. Communicate and collaborate with entities founded by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, and other organizations who share similar interests and activities
- f. Create and update the content of IDC web resources (Webcast, dzogchen.net, dzogchencommunity.org).

Yellow Gakyil

Main requirements:

1. Experience in finance, administration, and law (having all three is a plus)
2. In addition to good written and spoken English skills, knowledge of Italian is an advantage

Main responsibilities:

- a. Management of membership and collaborating on the maintenance of Membership Management System
- b. Management of Dzamling Gar IDC House
- c. Work with lawyers to solve legal issues
- d. Communication with accountants and auditor
- e. Budgeting and cost management
- f. Supervision of secretary
- g. Other

Thank you for your interest, and for considering giving a hand to the International Dzogchen Community!

The International Gakyil



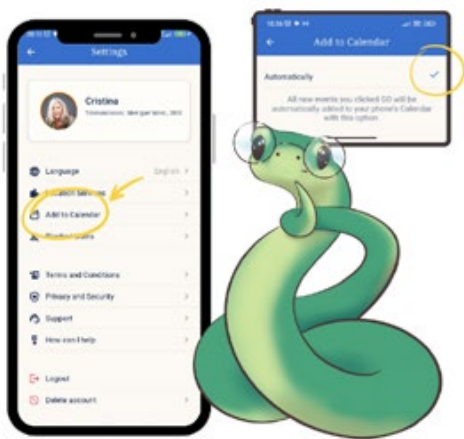
CAN TECHNOLOGY HELP US TO BE MORE DILIGENT?

How do we make time for practice in today’s busy and distracted world? If we want to stay familiar with the state of contemplation, we need to be diligent.

“Time-blocking” is a time-management technique: you allocate dedicated time slots for a task, minimizing distractions and improving focus.

Virtuous companions also support our diligence. They organize online and onsite practice sessions, listing them among the hundreds of events you can find on Sangha App.

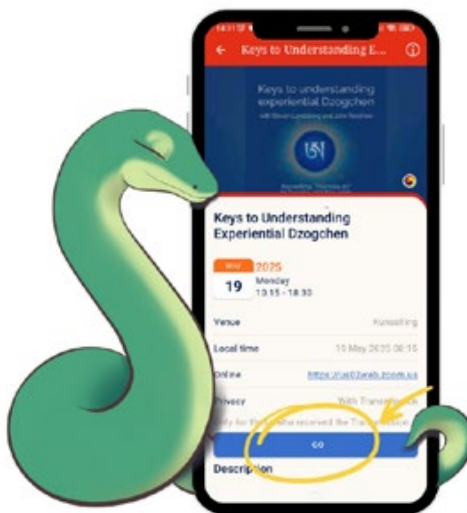
Sangha App helps you block a time slot in your daily calendar with the “Add to calendar” function.



If you enable this “Add to Calendar” setting and press “Go” on an event, Sangha App will automatically add that event to your Google or iPhone calendar.

To reach the Settings tab, click your own picture in the upper part of your Home section. With approximately 500 practice sessions every month, Sangha App is the place to go when you need to practice together with virtuous companions

[Here is how to browse Events](#) to find



what you are interested in. Make sure you press “Go” on the event’s detail page!

Do let us know how Sangha App supported your practice!

New Channels Shang Shung Publications

We are happy to inform you that a new channel has been created in Sangha App dedicated to Shang Shung Publications. Join the channel by searching for it in the Channel tab, so that you can stay updated on the new books by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu and compositions by Namkhai Yeshe.

Daily Rushen

We also invite you to the new Daily Rushen channel — a quiet space to journal your daily Rushen practice. If you’re practicing, or wish to start Rushen or another practice, sharing your journey can help both yourself and others.

How does it work? Set a goal for yourself and share it with others within the Daily Rushen channel. Then, every time you do the practice, you write “Done” and the date. These little reinforcements help you keep up with the practice goal you have set for yourself.

We’re here to support your journey — feel free to write to us with questions, feedback, or just to share how it’s going.

Love,
Sangha App

NORBUNET IS BACK!

Dear International Dzogchen Community Members, we are pleased to share with you some great news - Norbunet is back!

All original Norbunet subscribers will be receiving welcome emails. It may take a few days before this process is completed, so please be patient and check all your inbox folders regularly, including spam, for the welcome message. Once you receive your welcome email you will be subscribed to Norbunet, and there will be nothing further that you need to do. Instructions for changing your settings, opting out, or posting to

Norbunet are in the welcome email.

In case you are an original Norbunet subscriber and you did not receive an invite, or if you wish to become a new Norbunet subscriber, please enter your email address and name at this webpage: <https://mailman.norbunet.org/postorius/lists/norbunet.norbunet.org/>

The re-activation of Norbunet project would not have been possible without



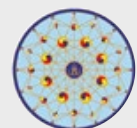
Community fun at the Merigar annual summer picnic with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu in 2014.

the dedication and commitment of our deeply appreciated volunteers:

- Loek Jehee**, the founder and tireless moderator of the original Norbunet
- Maarten Schoon**, software developer and Loek's assistant
- Thinley Koblensky**, software developer and hosting manager
- Gabriele Marazzi**, software developer
- Diego Namkhai**, consultant
- Liudmyla Vasylenko**, new Norbunet moderator
- Katya Schmookler**, new Norbunet moderator



**INTERNATIONAL
DZOGCHEN COMMUNITY
GAKYIL**



We thank them for their service!
Please follow the guidelines of this communication platform with care, to ensure seamless service for the benefit of all users. In case of subscription problems and/or other technological issues please contact red@dzogchen.net

The International Gakyil

Dear User, Welcome to the Norbunet mailing list! Norbunet 2.0 is an international email list for all those who are interested in the activities and programs of the International Dzogchen Community (IDC) founded by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu.

It is an up-to-date source of information about courses, retreats, and other events organized by the IDC centers

called Gars and Lings around the world, allowing people to stay connected in a friendly and respectful way.

To post to this list, send your message to: norbunet@norbunet.org

You can unsubscribe or change your options (e.g. switch to or from digest mode, change your password, etc.) at any time by visiting your subscription page at: <https://mailman.norbunet.org/postorius/lists/norbunet.norbunet.org>

Terms and Conditions for Norbunet

Subscribers: <https://norbunet.org/conditions>

Thank you for your interest!
The Norbunet 2.0 team
Homage to the Masters!

YANTRA YOGA TEACHER'S TRAINING LEVEL 2

The first second-level Teacher's Training at Dzamling Gar after years in which everything seemed to be suspended

April 14–23, 2025, Dzamling Gar

As soon as my plane landed, I received the request to write something about this experience. I'm now on a train, writing while traveling from Rome airport to the city where I was born and live - Naples. The city where Yantra Yoga first began to spread in the West, thanks to the tireless energy of our precious Master Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, the exotic professor who taught at the Oriental Institute and who gradually revealed himself as a precious Dzogchen Master to a small group of students who gathered around him in the 1970's.

Since those distant days, Yantra Yoga - one of the first practices taught by Rinpoche - continues to be one of the main



gateways to the Teaching and remains an invaluable tool capable of bringing benefit and relief to many in this corrupted age, where stress, discomfort, and confusion are increasingly widespread, and Yoga is often reduced to yet another business.

Everything in me is still alive and vibrant after ten intense days of practice with senior teachers Laura Evangelisti and Fabio Andrico, and thirty-seven first, second, and third-level teachers, all together.

I hadn't been to Dzamling Gar in many years. Upon arriving, I felt welcomed into an atmosphere of enchantment, surrounded by beautiful plants and incredible flowers, and the constant song of birds, sometimes mixing with the playful shouts of children. The warm, intense sunlight lasting until late evening was a memory I carried with me all these years, along with the path Rinpoche used to take to reach the white tent and the pauses where he would stop to talk with my son Marcello, who had just turned four at the time. I'll never know what they talked about - I didn't go near because I didn't want to break that enchantment, which had a taste of sacred intimacy and which, somewhere within my son, still lives on.

The Gönpa hadn't been built yet. Seeing it completed was moving, and practicing there was a great empowerment.

As always, collective practice is like an algorithm, an exponential multiplier

of energy - sometimes difficult to handle. But we are fortunate to work with energy and emotions, to recognize their essence, aware that everything is relative.

The Teacher's Training was a unique opportunity to clarify doubts and take a closer look - through open discussion - at what might seem like minor details, but are actually fundamental aspects, which can only be clarified thanks to the direct experience of those who have deeply practiced. The three third-level teachers - Oni MacKinstry, Jan (Honza) Dolensky, and Maxim Leshchenko - were in constant exchange with Fabio and Laura, offering a valuable contribution and managing to give voice to all the questions and clarify every doubt that arose.

I'm truly grateful to all of them, and also to the second-level teachers Nataly Nitsche and Carolina Mingolla, with whom I shared valuable moments of guidance and exchange, to Fulvio Grosso and Leticia Receptor, who finally received their second-level diplomas after years of waiting since their supervision, and to Sean Read, whom I had the pleasure of meeting in person for the first time with his overwhelming energy. Lastly, the active participation, interest, enthusiasm, and collaboration among and with the first-level teachers were a fundamental driving force that gave a great boost to the training.

The well-structured program left the final hour for first-level teachers to review and share their practice together, while



The three 3rd level teachers: Oni Mckinstry, Jan (Honza) Dolensky and Maxim Leschenko (left to right) together with international teacher Laura Evangelisti (2nd from right)



Leticia Receptor and Fulvio Grosso (left) receive 2nd level teacher diplomas



second and third level teachers, joined by Naomi Zeitz and Alessandra Policreti, met daily to discuss the precious future of the Yantra Yoga Teaching, especially in relation to Teacher Trainings and supervisions. Heartfelt gratitude and recognition go spontaneously to Fabio and Laura for their tireless and extraordinary commitment over the past thirty years, during which they have carried forward

- according to Rinpoche's guidance and with immense devotion - an incredible work of training around the world, insuring the unaltered transmission of this extraordinary practice.

The Teacher's Training created a strong sense of collaboration among us teachers and a desire to continue practicing while maintaining this deep con-

nection between us, committing ourselves to both personal and collective evolution as teachers. Special thanks also go to the Dzamling Gar Gakyil for organizing this event together with the Yantra Yoga department.

This was the second Teacher's Training of this new cycle of powerful Teachings initiated by our Precious Master Namkhai Yeshe. With immense gratitude, I share these vivid memories, aware of how incredibly fortunate I am to be a student, and with the hope that many other fortunate students and practitioners may derive immense benefit from the practice of Yantra Yoga! Emaho!

With Love and Deep Joy,
Fabiana Esca

THE IN-DEPTH EIGHT MOVEMENTS COURSE, TEACHER TRAINING AND SUPERVISION AT DZAMLING GAR

From 28 May to 6 June 2025 Dzamling Gar organized an In-depth Eight Movements Course combined with Teacher Training and followed by Supervision with our International Teacher Fabio Andrico.

Fifteen of us were very fortunate to attend the course in person in Dzamling Gar and over 60 people connected and practiced online.

As Fabio explained each of the movements with great precision, he emphasized the importance of breath in driving and shaping the movement. Many of us could experience how focussing primarily on the breath made the movement itself effortless yet precise, gentle yet yielding the result. As we practiced



Group of participants with the new Teachers Elena Sautkina (2nd from left seated front row) and Tatiana Magdieva (3rd from right seated front row)

this, our minds also gradually became relaxed and clear, while the fluid breathing, the key aspect of Yantra Yoga, maintained itself. At the end of the in-depth course, everybody was very joyful, relaxed and grateful.

The next day, Supervision began. Three candidates and a couple of people who joined as participants shared this experience. We all bathed in Fabio's knowledge, skill, compassion, kindness and humour. The candidates have received innumerable corrections and were practicing during these four days continuously. At the end, two of us, Tati-

ana Magdieva and Elena Sautkina, were authorized as the Eight Movements instructors. Using Rinpoche's words, being part of the lineage now gives us the responsibility to teach "in a perfect way" and we promise to do all we can for that.

We would like to express our deepest gratitude to Rinpoche, Fabio and Laura, as well as all the instructors for transmitting Yantra Yoga worldwide. May many more people connect with the method of Yantra Yoga and practice it in future!

Elena Sautkina and Tatiana Magdieva

DZOGCHEN TEACHINGS WITH NAMKHAH YESHI IN PARIS 9-11 MAY 2025

From May 9 to 11, a long-awaited retreat took place in Paris, organized by the French Dzogchen Community after several months of dedicated preparation.

Over the course of four months, the team worked tirelessly, and the result exceeded all expectations: the event unfolded seamlessly in a special location where Chögyal Namkhai Norbu had given teachings ten years ago.

The atmosphere of the retreat is hard to put into words – it was a time of deep practice, heartfelt connection, vivid presence, and a profound expression of love. This time, many new faces joined us, a beautiful sign of how alive and relevant the path continues to be.

Namkhai Yeshe and his wife Daria also held several informal meetings with students in Parisian museums. Together, we visited exhibitions and shared mo-



ments of contemplation and connection outside the formal retreat schedule.

We express our heartfelt gratitude to Namkhai Yeshe for this long-awaited teaching, and to all the participants who travelled from different countries to attend. Special thanks go to the more than

40 karma yogis whose support made the retreat possible.

We look forward to seeing you again – in the circle of the Teaching and with kind intentions.

Vince Li



DZAMLING GAR - TENERIFE

NEW GAKYIL AND GEKÖ OF DZAMLING GAR APRIL 2025



Dzamling Gar is happy to welcome their new Gekö, Jan 'Yanchi' Kompis from Slovakia.



Thinley Koblensky (Yellow, President), Gabriele Marazzi (Red, Vice President) and Matteo Dell'Angelo (Blue, Secretary) Left to right

KUNYE MASSAGE & EXTERNAL THERAPIES 3-LEVEL EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

**March 30, 2025
Dzamling Gar**

We have just completed another cycle of our Kunye Massage & External Therapies 3-Level Educational Program.

This in-person training at the beautiful Dzamling Gar allowed students to gain hands-on experience in Tibetan therapeutic practices while also learning in a very close and personalized way with our beloved team: our director, Dr. Phuntsog Wangmo, and teachers Irina Pankevich and Medegma Budaeva.

During Level 2, students refined their Kunye massage techniques, gained a deeper understanding of advanced

applications, worked with specific points, explored various methods of massage, and focused on joint mobilization. In Level 3, the main focus was on Tibetan external therapies, gently introducing students to techniques like hot stones, cupping, medicinal oils, hot and cold compresses, and mild moxibustion.

Once Level 3 ended, the diploma ceremony began. As a truly special moment, our dearest Rosa Namkhai was not only



Kunye Massage & External Therapies 3-Level Educational Program Graduation with Dr Phuntsog Wangmo, March 30, 2025, Dzamling Gar

present but also prepared a special gift for the students. Rosa's presence honored the students' hard work and also served as a reminder of the deep value of the ancestral Tibetan wisdom passed down over centuries. We are truly thankful that Rosa shared this moment with us.

We would like to express our gratitude to all the students for their trust and dedication. Both levels were fully booked in a short time, with students joining from different parts of the world. We are deeply grateful to have welcomed such a dedicated group. We would like to extend special thanks to the entire team at Dzamling Gar, a place that made the experience even more magical and relaxing, and to our dear Dr. Phuntsog

Wangmo, whose immeasurable dedication, knowledge, and guidance offered invaluable support to the students, enriching their learning experience in a truly profound way.

We would like to invite all those interested in learning this technique to join us for our next Educational Program starting on October 4, 2025. For more information, you can write to us at tibetanmedicine@atiyogafoundation.org or click on the following link: <https://tibetanmedicineschooleu.org/massage/>

To conclude, we would like to reflect on the importance and commitment that this practice requires, both in terms of learning and in service towards others.

We hope to see you again in future courses!

Tibetan Medicine Team

Leticia Receptor
Educational & Media Coordinator
Shang Shung School of Tibetan Medicine~Europe
+54 9 1169495770

UPCOMING PROGRAMS AT DZAMLING GAR

<https://dzamlinggar.org/events/>

Summer 2025

Developing confidence in applying Namkhai Yeshe and Chögyal Namkhai Norbu's teachings July 18 - 22

with Arnaud Coquillard,
Santi Maha Sangha Teacher
Onsite with part of the sessions online

Requirements: This course is meant for those who have received teachings from Chögyal Namkhai Norbu or Namkhai Yeshe. ALL the sessions of the retreat will alternate replays of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu's teachings on the Invocation of Samantabhadra, explanation and practices from the Base level of Santi Maha Sangha, collaborative and reflective activities.

Deepening course of Vajra Dance of the Song of the Vajra July 25 - 29

with Ludmila Kislichenko

Requirements: This course is meant for those who have received teachings from Chögyal Namkhai Norbu or Namkhai Yeshe.

Approaching Spiritual Teachings with Intelligence July 26 - 27

with Arnaud Coquillard

On-site Only
This retreat is for everyone that are exploring various spiritual paths, looking for a specific path, and for those that wish to understand more deeply the path they are already on. It is specifically designed to help us develop skills and discernment in order to approach our own spiritual path.

Song of the Vajra: Semdzin and the Vajra Dance August 1 - 5

with Arnaud Coquillard & Ludmila Kislichenko

Requirements: This course is meant for those who have received teachings from

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu or Namkhai Yeshe. The retreat will consist of viewing the Teachings given by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu in Hong Kong in 2012 combined with commentaries and practice guided by SMS teacher Arnaud Coquillard and Vajra Dance teacher Luda Kislichenko.

Teaching Course on Öser Chenma August 8 - 10

with Julia Lawless
Online/Onsite

Requirements: This course is meant for those who have received teachings from Chögyal Namkhai Norbu or Namkhai Yeshe.

UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY

Tara Explanation and Practice August 13 -15

with Costantino Albini

Transmission required from Chögyal Namkhai Norbu or Namkhai Yeshe

More information for all programs please contact: secretary@dzamlinggar.org or blue. gakyil@dzamlinggar.org



MERIGAR WEST - ITALY

RESTORING THE PAINTINGS OF THE MASTERS IN THE MERIGAR GÖNPA

The Temple of the Great Contemplation, located at Merigar, in the foothills of Mount Amiata in Tuscany, Italy, was conceived and designed by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu and inaugurated by H.H. the Fourteenth Dalai Lama in May 1990.

The paintings, inscriptions, and decorative motifs adorning the temple were described and rendered in sketches by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu in his manuscript *Merigar's Temple of the Great Liberation Through Seeing* which was used as a guide by the artists and artisans who came from Tibet and other lands to paint and embellish the temple.

The execution of the paintings, inscriptions, and decorations was mainly carried out in 1994. The painters for the interior panels included lama and artist Drugu Choegyal Rinpoche as well as Tsering Wangchuk and Sönam Palmo from Tashi Jong monastery in India. Many other skilled artists assisted.



Inside the temple above each of its eight glass windows are rectangular wooden panels portraying masters from various religious traditions of Tibet who were also Dzogchen practitioners.

On the western side at the center of the west panel there is the figure of Samantabhadra, symbol of the profound emptiness of the *dharmakāya* with on his right side Vajrasattva, symbol of the infinite richness of the *sambhogakāya*. Appearing to their right and left in alternate order is an extraordinary representation of the Twelve Primordial Masters of the *nirmānakāya* dimension, the twelfth of whom is Buddha Shakyamuni on the extreme right. Finally, on the extreme left is Shenrab Miwo, founder of the ancient Bön religion.

On the southwest panel is Master Garab Dorje surrounded by the masters, male and female, of the Dzogchen Semde lineage; on the south panel are

depicted masters of the Ancient school, the Nyingmapa, with Guru Padmasambhava flanked by Mandarava and Yeshe Tsogyal at the center; on the north panel is Machig Labdrön surrounded by treasure discoverers or *tertöns* connected to the Chöd teaching; on the northwest panel are masters belonging to the Bön Dzogchen lineage as well as Dzogchen masters of the Buddhist tradition, such as Rigdzin Changchub Dorje, Ayu Khadro, and Nyagla Pema Dündul; on the southeast panel we find masters of the Kagyüpa school with Marpa and his famous disciple Milarepa in the central position; on the north-east panel appear the Sakyapa masters with Sachen Kunga Nyingpo at their center; and finally, on the eighth and last panel on the eastern side of the temple we see masters of the Kadampa-Gelugpa school with its supreme head, H.H. the Fourteenth Dalai Lama, Tenzin Gyatso.



Now that thirty years have passed since their creation the wonderful paintings of the various lineages of masters on these panels have become damaged and need immediate and expert renovation.

For this work to be carried out with the utmost care Merigar and the Dynamic space of the Elements have requested

specialists in restoration to come to the Gar to undertake this delicate work. In order to cover their time and expenses please consider participating in this important undertaking with a donation to help to preserve the work of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu for the future.

In addition, last summer the Dynamic Space team worked on renewing the

decorations of the outer ring ceiling inside the Temple. Last year they managed to finish five sides of the octagonal ceiling. Next summer they will be completing the remaining three and are also requesting donations to help them complete this work.

Donations can be sent to:
 Bank account:
 Merigar Dzogchen Community - Loc. Merigar 58031 Arcidosso Grosseto Italy
 Banca: INTESA SAN PAOLO SpA
 Filiale di Arcidosso - GR
 C/C 3503
 IT35E0306972163100000003503
 Codice BIC o SWIFT: BCITITMM
 For more information please go to the [donations page](#).

For further information, please contact dynamicelements@yahoo.com

Many thanks to all!

THE SPRING/SUMMER 2025 PROGRAM AT MERIGAR

With the arrival of the warm season, Merigar is preparing to experience some intense months.

Like every year, the sun and longer days offer the perfect opportunity to intensify activities at the Gar, creating a calendar that includes teaching, culture and moments of authentic community sharing.

The beating heart of this season will undoubtedly be the Dzogchen Teachings retreat that Namkhai Yeshe will lead from July 2 to 8. An event of particular importance not only for Merigar, but for the entire Community, which has al-



ready seen the workers at the Gar busy for weeks in the careful preparation of the buildings and spaces. Under the coordination of Gabriele Siedlecki, confirmed as Project Manager, and with the support of Davide Boni who is training to take on this crucial role next year, every detail is being taken care of to best welcome participants.

Among the new features of this year will be the opening of a new panoramic path connecting the Longsal Square to one of the Sangkhang, continuing to the Stupa of Complete Victory to join the Path of Awareness. In addition, visitors and practitioners will be able to benefit from completely renewed, more functional and complete signage, which will make it easier to orient themselves through the paths and structures of the center.

The structure of the July retreat, established through the experience of the last two years, will maintain its fundamental characteristics, enriched with improvements suggested by practice. A particularly joyful event will be the coincidence with Namkhai Yeshe's birthday on July 3. The program of the day has not yet been established, but it will still be a source of joy and happiness for us to share this day with him.

Summer activities at Merigar opened in June with an event of particular institutional importance: on June 7, the center hosted the Annual Assembly of the Italian Buddhist Union. Starting on the afternoon of the 6th, Merigar welcomed the Board of Directors and representatives of the more than seventy Italian Buddhist Centers associated with the UBI, many of whom had the opportunity to visit the Gönpa, the Stupa, the library and the MACO Museum in Arcidosso for the first time. The day of the 7th was dedicated to the work of the assembly, representing an important opportunity to show Merigar's hospitality and strengthen the bonds of collaboration within the Italian Buddhist panorama.

The Open Day on June 21st deserves special attention, a day that coincides with the international celebration of



Yoga. It will be an opportunity to present Merigar, its community and the various activities that take place there to the wider public, opening the doors to anyone interested in learning more about our activities.

The summer program is structured with a rich variety of events. Two Teacher Trainings are planned, one of the second level Vajra Dance and one of the Eight Movements of Yantra Yoga, the latter divided into two parts between August and September, and for those who already know Yantra Yoga at the end of June we will have an intensive weekend on the Fourth and Fifth Series.

For those looking for a relaxed but meaningful experience, the appointment with Yoga Holidays is back, a format that in past years has received considerable appreciation from both regular practitioners and new visitors. There will also be the possibility of participating in a weekend dedicated to the Khaita Joyful Dances, open to all participants regardless of their level of experience.

Events intended for practitioners will include a seminar on Rhythmic Breathing and kumbhaka, the Contemplation retreat in early August, the viewing of a retreat by Master Chögyal Namkhai Norbu in the middle of the month, two weekends dedicated to the Vajra Dance and a seminar on Zernga.

Cultural activities will continue with the "Library Talks" series that will touch on different themes, from the voices of birds to the recent archaeological discoveries of San Casciano dei Bagni, from musical communication to mathematics, to the profound meanings of Sanskrit and Tibetan terminology. Furthermore, on August 1st we will be happy to host once again a concert organized by the Clazz festival in the Gönpa.

The season will end in September with a weekend dedicated to collective practices on the occasion of the seventh anniversary of the passing of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, scheduled for the weekend of September 26-28.

Although the calendar is full of events, there is always the possibility of changes and adjustments. For updated and detailed information on each individual event, we suggest you consult the official website of the center or directly contact the office, the point of reference for confirmation and clarifications on a program that promises to be full of opportunities for growth, meeting and sharing.

June

June 14-15, Theoretical seminar on the basics of traditional medicine, with Aldo Oneto

June 21, Merigar OPEN DAY and International Yoga Day



June 28 Library Talks - The voices of birds

June 28-29 Intensive Weekend on the Fourth and Fifth Series of Yantra Yoga

July

July 2 - 8, Dzogchen Teachings with Namkhai Yeshe

July 11-13, Vajra Dance Practice Retreat
July 12-13, Explanation and practice of Ganapuja (online only)

July 18-27, Vajra Dance Teacher Training of the 2nd Level, with Adriana and Prima
July 19-20, Practical application seminar of Tibetan ku nye massage on the chair, with Aldo Oneto

July 26, Library Talks. New discoveries at the sanctuary of San Casciano dei Bagni
July 28-31, theoretical-practical seminar on Rhythmic Breathing and kumbhaka, for all practitioners

August

August 1, Clazz Concert in the Gönpa
August 1-5, Contemplation Practice

Retreat

August 4, Ganapuja (Guru Padmasambhava Day) and Padmasambhava Anniversary

August 7-12, Teacher Training of the 8 Movements of Yantra Yoga - Part I, with Fabio Andrico

August 9-10, Khaitea Joyful Dance course, open to all

August 14-18, Viewing of a retreat by Master Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, in person and via webcast

August 16, Library Talks. How we communicate music. A journey into the Western tradition on how music is passed down: oral tradition, writing and recordings.

August 19-23, Yoga Holidays

August 21, Library Talks. Beyond Words: Deep Meanings of Sanskrit and Tibetan Yogic Terminology

August 19-31, Tibetan Translator Training

August 23-24, Zernga Explanation and Practice

August 29-31, Vajra Dance Practice Retreat

August 31, Children's Day

September

September 5-7, Deepening and Practice of the Dance of the Three Vajra

September 12-14, Breathe Seminar, with Fabio Andrico

September 15-21, Teacher Training of the 8 Movements of Yantra Yoga - Part II, with Fabio Andrico

September 26, Library Talks. The Twenty-One Faces of Compassion: A Journey into the Iconography of the 21 Taras
September 26-28, Practices and Events for the Seventh Anniversary of the Passing of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

October

October 4 Library Talks - Dialogue with Nature: Visiting Japan between ikebana, bonsai and gardens.

KHAITA TEACHERS GRADUATION

Since the supervision and qualification of the first Khaita teachers with Rinpoche in 2016, there have been two more occasions to award diplomas: the second just took place in Merigar West on 18 May 2025.

This was the final seminar of the second Khaita Educational Program, after two years consisting of eight one week long group intensive trainings with our wonderful and steadfast instructors Adriana Dal Borgo and Petra Zezulcova.

We convened at the Capannone (Mandala Hall) in Merigar West during the week 12th - 18th May. We came from Italy – Elvira Riposati, France – Carole Georges and Valerie Sohet, England – Cindy Faulkner, Russia – Anastasia Sedler and Romania – Krisztina Balla. I'm from Scotland, and was here to learn more Khaita and support the group.

Merigar West and the whole of Tuscany in May is clothed in stunning shades of green and refreshingly cool compared to the July and August heat we experi-



enced here during the last two years of Khaita training. As well as being able to teach 50 dances, the Khaita training programme emphasizes both the dances and their associated melodies and songs: their meaning both to the aspects of Tibetan culture and to the practice of Buddha Dharma and Dzogchen in particular. The main point is to know how to present Khaita as a coherent whole - a vehicle to preserve Tibetan culture, language and to help us develop conscious presence in movement.

Every day for seven days we deepened our knowledge of:

- the evolution and view of Khaita
- the language of dance and of Khaita in particular
- the competence to teach 50 of the

- most popular dances
- the rehearsal of a dance - Lasoggi Drod-kol - to perform together

I was most impressed by the level of dedication and focus all six candidates applied and the progress they made over this last week. The last three days were devoted to the examination of the above knowledge and it was a pleasure to see these dancers display the fruit of their hard work to finally receive their diplomas.

With these teachers of Khaita going back to their countries around the world may many new people have the opportunity to learn and enjoy these dances and discover the profound knowledge of Tibetan culture and the Dharma!

Peter White

MERIGAR EAST - ROMANIA

MERIGAR EAST JUNE NEWS

We're happy to share with you the highlights of what's been happening at Merigar East, what's going on now, and what's coming next.

Recent Highlights

From 1-8 May, we concluded an intense retreat with Igor Berkhin, who guided us through deep practices that left a



strong impression on all of us. Special thanks to Igor for his profound guidance and teachings. This retreat gathered 23

participants from 9 different countries – including two young ladies who traveled all the way from Mexico! It's proof that

even distant places can feel close when the heart is open to practice and learning.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to the Israel Dzogchen Community, especially the Blue Gakyil, for their precious help and collaboration. It was a true demonstration of the kind of mutual support and interconnectedness that Rinpoche always encouraged us to cultivate.

Collaboration, mutual support, dedication, and joy — especially when it benefits others — are the essence of our community. No matter where you're from, what language you speak, or which Gar or Ling you belong to, these values bring us together as one sangha.

Meditation Training & Secondary Practices of the Dzogchen Community

We also want to extend our warmest thanks to all the instructors, participants, and the **Sangha App Team** who contributed to the **Meditation Training and Secondary Practices** program, which concluded on May 26th with our last session of Green Tara and Vajra Dance with the Hungarian Dzogchen Community.

A very special thank you to each of the instructors whose knowledge, time, and patience made this program so special:

- Enzo Terzano – Italy
- Lynn Newbone – USA
- Dina Priymak – Italy
- Oliver Leick – Austria
- Lukas Chmelick – Slovakia
- Steven Landsberg – USA

Thanks also to the Sangha App for providing a space where participants could share their experiences, questions, and materials that supported their practice in a meaningful way.

What's Happening Now

In the same spirit of collaboration, Merigar East continues to offer oppor-



tunities for practice. With the kind help of **Kunsangar North**, we are excited to announce an online retreat on **Guru Wisdom Gomadevi and Chöd Practice** with **Enzo Terzano**. The retreat will be in English with translations into Russian, Spanish, and Hungarian. Don't miss this exceptional opportunity to deepen your practice, supported by recordings you can revisit later. Please apply now and let's practice together from 6–12 June. Register and see the full program here: <https://dzogchen.ro/events/guru-wisdom-dakini-gomadevi-and-chod-practice/>

Later in July, we'll meet onsite and online with **Zoli Cser**, who will guide us in the **Practice of Purification of the Six Lokas combined with Vajra Dance**, from 9–13 July. You can read the program and register here: <https://dzogchen.ro/events/purification-of-six-lokas-practice-combined-with-vajradance/>

Looking Ahead: Transforming Merigar East

This year is transformative for Merigar East!
Why?

Because we are continuing the painting of the Gönpa ceiling, giving it a whole new look with the Song of the Vajra on it. We're also starting the reconstruction of our three external Vajra Dance mandalas so that soon we can dance and activate them — in a space where, as Rinpoche said, “there is more sky than Earth.”

But we need **your support** to make this vision a reality in time **for Merigar East's 20th Anniversary celebration in 2026**. Even a small contribution helps.

Your contribution will help us:

- Host Migmar Tsering and his Dynam-

ic Space of Elements team to transform the Gönpa ceiling

- Cover materials, paints, and other essential expenses for the mandalas and Gönpa renovation

- Provide food and travel costs for volunteers who will help with the work

Read more about the project that will start on 15 July until August 15 and how you can

donate. Any donation — no matter how small — is deeply appreciated: <https://dzogchen.ro/gonpa-renovation-2022/>

Other Ways to Support

You can also help by joining us during this project — cooking, cleaning, gardening, or assisting with painting and reconstruction of the mandalas. Every hand makes a difference! Please contact us at: office.me@dzogchen.ro to let us know when you'd like to come and help.

Upcoming Courses

We're thrilled to announce that Migmar Tsering will hold an in-person course on Namkha here at Merigar East! Come on 4-6 August and learn how to harmonize your elements and bring peace and happiness around you. If you're interested, please contact us at: blue.me@dzogchen.ro to secure your place and accommodation. Please note: this course will not be online.

A Summer of Practice and Bloom

Merigar East is in full bloom, greener than ever — and the sunniest days of the year are just around the corner! ☀️ Check out our upcoming events here: <https://forms.gle/JxwDZFyoQxa2h5Xh8> and reserve your place early.

Stay connected, keep practicing, and thank you for being part of our community!

With love,
The Merigar East Team

KUNSANGAR NORTH - RUSSIA**LIVING CONNECTION WITH THE TEACHING**

Dear friends, warm greetings from Kunsangar North!

**Kunsangar North, Russia.
April-May 2025**

The entire spring in the Gar was marked by preparation for the Teaching of Namkhai Yeshe. It was not just organizing a broadcast, but a real internal tuning. We lived it with all our space: through retreats, practice, silence and the Vajra Dance.

First there were retreats with Alexander Gomonov. The retreat on Lhagthong, classes on the Dance of the Song of the Vajra — all this gathered attention, purified and helped to truly settle everyone. The dance took place daily, and the mandala became a place where the body learned to be present.

The culmination was a week of retreat



on the topic "Circle of the Day and Night" in which 50 practitioners participated. From early morning until late at night, we learned to be in the flow of awareness: Guruyoga, contemplation, falling asleep in presence. The teachings of Rinpoche and Yeshe came to life in the breath, the look, the dream, and all this became a living connection with the Teaching, which Namkhai Yeshe soon transmitted.

And a few days after the Teaching, during the morning practice of the Dance, a halo appeared above the Gar. The light circle in the sky became not only a beautiful natural phenomenon,

but also a sign, a quiet reminder: the Teaching was here, it happened and it continues - if we do not lose the taste, do not forget the presence.

The grass under the stupa is smooth, the paths are neatly trimmed. The space is alive; it has become even clearer and brighter.

Thank you to everyone who was with us this spring: online, in person, in the body or just in the same tune.

With love, Kunsangar North

KUNSANGAR SOUTH - CRIMEA**PREPARING FOR SUMMER AT KUNSANGAR SOUTH, CRIMEA**

Hello and many greetings from the blooming Kunsangar South!

This early summer we are full on with preparations for our most active season.

Our in-person retreats program May to September is complete with all the elements: Santi Maha Sangha, Yantra



Yoga, Vajra Dance, Tibetan Astrology and Khaita courses. It is so amazing that the teachings and methods transmitted by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu and Namkhai Yeshe are practiced uninterruptedly throughout time and space!

The retreat program can be found on our website <http://kunsangarsouth.ru> and in our Telegram channel: <https://t.me/+5eAiGZM4mA04ZWE6>

<https://t.me/+5eAiGZM4mA04ZWE6>

Currently several projects run in parallel at Kunsangar South:

- Major repairs are being done to our beautiful Longsal Stupa;
- A network of roads and paths is being constructed;
- The project of the roof for the new toilet and shower building is advancing;

- We are replacing the old mats for Yantra Yoga with new, comfortable and durable ones;
- We are also in the process of ordering a new Earth Mandala to replace the old one.

If you wish to support any of these important activities, please get in touch with our Yellow Gakyil: kunsangar.yellow@gmail.com

We also have smaller everyday tasks



such as repairs, taking care of trees and plants at the Gar, spring-cleaning the Gönpa and the summer kitchen. Here you can see some of our Gakyils at work!

We are currently looking for a new Gekö, as Oxana Prokofyeva who served in this role for the last two years, would like to retire. If you are interested in becoming the Gekö of Kunsangar South, please get in touch with us: kunsangar.geko@gmail.com.

Also, Gakyil positions will become available at the end of this Summer in all of the three sectors, so you can inquire about these amazing opportunities, and we will send you the relevant information: kunsangar.blue@gmail.com

And, of course, we are waiting for you all! Come and visit us whenever your time allows. The Gar is primarily a space of practice, and our doors are always open!

With Love from Kunsangar South,
May all beings benefit



SANGYELING- RUSSIA

GET TO KNOW ABOUT SANGYELING

St. Petersburg, Russia

If you don't know about a city like St. Petersburg, we'll tell you a little bit.

It's big (it's home to seven million people), it has many rivers and canals, which are framed by granite embankments and crossed by open-work bridges. The water is usually the color of liquid lead, because it's windy here. The sky is covered with clouds, so we're always happy when we see the open blue sky. St. Petersburg was founded in a cruel time so it's often said that it "stands on bones" as there are many cemeteries here; for example, at the beginning of the 20th century, during the Great Patriotic



Rinpoche arriving at the St. Petersburg retreat in 2010

War, almost an entire generation of St. Petersburg's citizens died of hunger. But there are also many magnificent palaces, museums, and institutes that house masterpieces of art, ancient artifacts, and manuscripts.

Our city is beautiful and complex — in a word, a very good place to practice. At the moment Chögyal Namkhai Norbu got off the train at the station in the center of St. Petersburg in 1992, the man-



Gönpa of Sangyeling

dala of the Teaching began to unfold in our city. Those who were lucky enough to enter it became the sangha, to which Rinpoche gave the name Sangyeling. In the best of times, Namkhai Yeshe and almost all the international teachers have come to us. We have produced our own instructors and have held hundreds of

but have not become members of the Community in St. Petersburg number many hundreds, if not thousands.

It is believed that the residents of St. Petersburg are a little slow - perhaps this is true. We often save our energy, as we live in a rather harsh climate, transitional between maritime and continental, and,



Gakyil of Sangyeling

retreats. We have a large gönpa with a mandala of the Vajra Dance in the very center of the city, right next to that very train station.

We once had 220 official members, then Rinpoche passed away and there were 160 of us. Now, thanks to the power of the transmission and the fact that Namkhai Yeshe began to give teachings, there are already 180 of us. And the people who have received the transmission

having the history of our city and country behind us, we are used to reading between the lines and not rushing as the future is opaque. Therefore, we try to live in the present.

In the gönpa, we gather for collective practices, Vajra Dances, Yantra Yoga, Khaita, Santi Maha Sangha retreats and watching webcasts of Namkhai Yeshe's teachings and recordings of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu. We have a self-organized group studying the melodies of practices, as well as an online group for studying Dzogchen texts. We broadcast regular Yantra Yoga classes in Zoom, practices and SMS retreats, ganapujas



Rinpoche's arrival at the train station in St. Petersburg in 1992

and Samantabhadra monlams on special days. We do not hold open classes and retreats very often, only two or three times a year, but now we hope to revive our project "Evolution - St. Pete", a framework in which interesting and varied lectures, seminars and concerts were held.

In St. Petersburg there are now two Santi Maha Sangha teachers, three Yantra Yoga teachers plus a teacher of the 8 movements, a Kumar Kumari teacher and a Respira instructor, four Vajra Dance teachers (two of them come from time to time) and two teachers of Khaita Joyful Dances. We love all these wonderful people very much who help us to develop awareness and presence in practice and life and do everything possible so that the Teaching infuses the body, speech and mind of those who want to unite with it. We also love, appreciate and invite Community teachers from other cities and countries.

For many years now, the St. Petersburg gakyil and assistants (not all of them are from St. Petersburg) have almost always managed to implement the principle of the "mandala of joy" - people come and go, but friendship and warmth,

responsibility and cooperation, mutual assistance and humor remain. Community members also try to help the gakyil, and their suggestions are often very useful and pleasant - for example, in 2025 we created "only good news on Fridays" and a wonderful calendar with photos of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu and St. Petersburg instructors.

Many of us have known each other for a long time, some have just joined; some people often come to the gönpa or to Zoom, others appear from time to time - we try to treat each other as members of our big family, not only St. Petersburg, but also Russian and international. Since the time of Covid, we have been keeping and constantly updating lists of people who need help with practices ([long life and Garuda practices](#), [Shitro practice](#)), helping needy members of the Community and supporting charity projects and projects of the Community gars and lings - both the gakyil and Community members are involved in organizing. Also, since Covid and the Zoom boom, the Sangyeling gakyil have been making weekly schedules of online events of the entire international

Dzogchen Community in Russian and publishing them in several information channels for all Russian-speaking members of the Community - this also helps us remember each other and feel like one family, transcending the limitations of space, if not time.

Thanks to Rinpoche, we sat next to you at many retreats, and now we see each other more often online, in Zoom or in the Community chats. We met and became friends - perhaps our face or name will just seem familiar to you if we meet again. And we, of course, will meet, because our vajra connection began and will not end - and now, thanks to Namkhai Yeshe, it is renewed and becomes even more alive and strong!

Come and visit us in Sangyeling, connect online or just write! We are always happy to answer - albeit sometimes in a northern leisurely manner.

Contacts:

Email address:

spb.dzogchen@gmail.com

Telegram: [@Sangyeling](https://www.instagram.com/Sangyeling)

TSEGYALGAR EAST - USA

TSEGYALGAR EAST GAKYIL RETIREMENT

Al Daggett retires from active TSE Yellow/Treasurer service after 6 years

Al Daggett retires from active TSE Yellow/Treasurer service after 6 years on TSE Gakyil this time, 4 terms on Yellow in 25 years, and originator of TSE organization with Bob Kragan in 1983 requested by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu. Originally with Paul Anderson (Gurudjieff teacher) from age 19, he met Chögyal

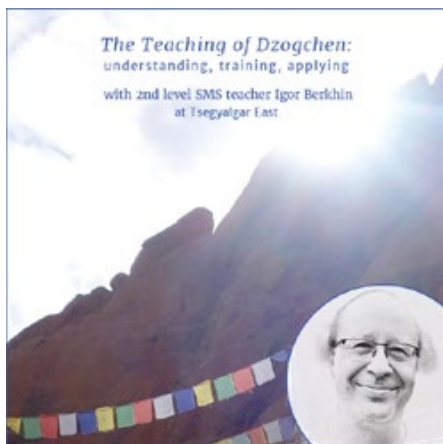


Namkhai Norbu. In 1983 and has been an active member since. He will become an active "Friend of Yellow" and work for

sustainability of Gar and Lings in the U.S. and world wide.

The Teaching of Dzogchen: understanding, training, applying with 2nd level SMS teacher Igor Berkhin

August 8-17, 2025, Tseg্যালgar East In-person only at the Vajra Hall, Khandroling, Buckland, MA
For more information contact:
secretary@tseg্যালgar.org



8th annual Dance Dance Dance retreat at Khandroling, August 30th to September 14th, 2025. Save the Dates!

We are happy to announce the 8th annual Dance Dance Dance retreat at Khandroling, Land of the Dakinis, Tseg্যালgar East in Massachusetts with local dance instructors Kyu Kyuno, Carisa O’Kelly, Bodhi Krause, Justin Hudgins,

and Saralé Lizdas. In-person only. We hope to see you there!
For more information contact:
secretary@tseg্যালgar.org



TSEGYALGAR WEST - BAJA CALIFORNIA

LONGDE PRACTICE RETREAT WITH FABIO ANDRICO

November 2nd to 15th, at Tsegyalgar West. Immersive Practice at Tsegyalgar West

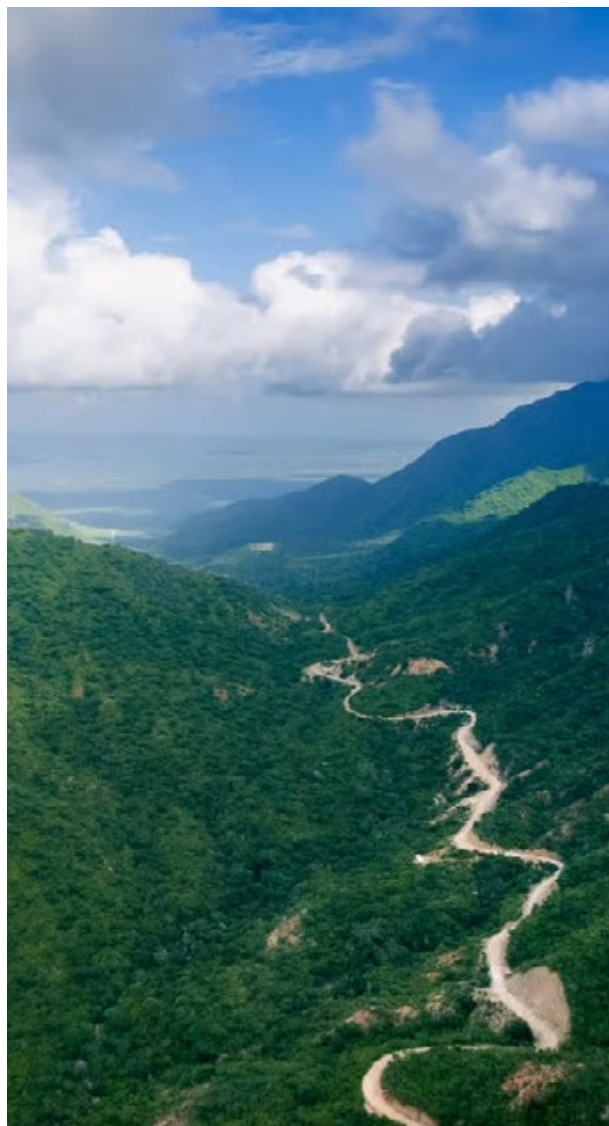
This retreat is dedicated to the Longde cycle of Dzogchen practice, focusing on direct experience through a traditional retreat structure. The emphasis will be placed on applying the methods that participants have already received through prior transmission. We will follow a structured schedule that supports the integration of Longde practice throughout the day and night.

Inspired by the Dzogchen teachings given by Namkhai Yeshe in Paris, May 2025, with the intention of supporting practitioners in deepening their understanding through direct application in a retreat setting.

"My idea is to do mostly a practice retreat. Not spending too much time explaining because once you know how to apply the principle, the time, the positions, the rest is experience."

— Fabio Andrico

If you you have questions don't hesitate to contact us via email: tsegyalgarwestsecretary@gmail.com



NEW GAKYIL OF PELZOMLING, MEXICO

Dear Community!
Pelzomling is very excited to present to you the new Gakyil team

BLUE GAKYIL:

Dannae Ruiz
Tania Fragoso

RED GAKYIL:

Lilia Álvarez
Verónica González Salgado

YELLOW GAKYIL:

Alicia Corona
Juan Pablo Plata

Special thanks to the former Gakyil team who are stepping down and giving us impetus to continue working for the community and the dharma!

Gakyil of Pelzomling



Alicia Corona



Juan Pablo Plata



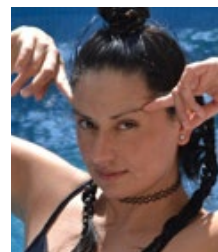
Dannae Ruiz



Lilia Álvarez



Tania Fragoso



Verónica González Salgado

TASHIGAR SOUTH - ARGENTINA

NEW GAKYIL OF TASHIGAR SOUTH

We are happy to announce that in Tashigar South, a new Gakyil was elected for this term on Sunday, June 1st.

IN THE BLUE: Graciela Moltisanti and Carmen Torres

IN THE RED: Carolina Mingolla and Vitalijus Motikas

IN THE YELLOW: Celeste Scavino and Susana Pogorelsky

Additionally, there is a dedicated group of enthusiastic assistants and collaborators who have committed to supporting the new Gakyil in their work.



Above: Graciela González Moltisanti (blue) Carolina Mingolla (red). In the center: Carmen Torres (blue) Susana Pogorelsky (yellow). Below: Celeste Scavino (yellow) and Vitalijus Motikas (red).

All members of the previous Gakyil will also be available to assist them during the transition and serve as advisors if needed during this year. We wish a smooth and successful work to the new team!!!

May all be auspicious!
The Community of Tashigar South

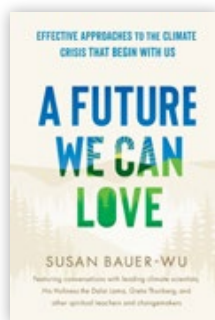
BOOK REVIEW

by **Andy Lukianowicz**

A Future We Can Love

How We Can Reverse the Climate Crisis with the Power of Our Hearts and Minds

by Susan Bauer-Wu
Shambala 2023



'The environment does not need fixing. It is our behavior in relation to it that needs fixing.'

Dalai Lama

'We are failing, but we have not yet failed.'

Greta Thunberg

This timely book, inspired by the conversation between the Dalai Lama and Greta Thunberg in January 2021, is a wonderful compendium of information from climate scientists, activists and spiritual leaders from all corners of the world to urge readers to embark on a four-part journey, starting from making available knowledge of climate science, to engendering the energy and capacity for change in the direction mankind has been following in the Anthropocene, to recognizing the urgency and will needed for change to avert the extinction of mankind, and the concrete actions we can take.

Susan Bauer-Wu [ably assisted by co-author and editor Stephanie Higgs], who apart from being president of the Mind and Life Institute [an organization co founded with the Dalai Lama in 1987] is an organizational leader, climate scientist and mindfulness teacher, presents this book as a skilful interweaving of conversations with climate scientists, climate activists, and community and some [but not enough?] religious leaders which never descend into resignation,

despair or anger at the vicious, cynical, mendacious, hypocritical and corrupt world 'leaders' who act gleefully against our future, but instead always seek and find ways to proactively work to defend 'our home', as Greta calls it, 'our only home', the Dalai Lama chimes in. One extract by the Dalai Lama is pithily titled, 'when pessimism is not an option'. Systematically and methodically the lies peddled by the fossil-fuel lobbies and their government and media disinformation lackeys are unmasked and deconstructed regarding the extent, depth and catastrophic impact of the business-as-usual model of the Industrial Growth [sic] Society; we are warned that even idyllic nature films and documentaries are lies co-opted into the great pretence, 'making us think that nature is fine'.

Joanna Macy calls the life-sustaining society alternative to our collective extinction the Great Turning; others call for an Ecological Revolution; Susan instead opines a less provocative, 'smaller-scaled' title, that suggests something within the reach of everybody, and rec-

ommends naming it the birth of a new Age of Enough, where everybody can contribute first of all by curtailing and rejecting the seduction of the constant drive for more to satisfy the manufactured ego's false wants, not needs; but as David Loy succinctly puts it, 'Why is more better when it is never enough?' We need instead to find fulfillment in what we have - as taught in the Buddha's teaching as promulgated by the Dalai Lama. His is perhaps the most powerful voice in the conversation, both with regard to the authority of his statements of the Buddhist teachings and also his grasp of the facts and gravity of the climate situation [regrettably a grasp not shared with a large number of Tibetan dharma teachers, as I found out when doing research for my friend John Stanley's book on the Buddhist Response to the Climate Emergency; the Zen teachers John contacted, including Joanna Macy, an important voice in this book too, were more up to speed on the climate situation] and his almost telepathic congruence with the message of Greta, two generations his junior.

More specifically, to achieve this we then need to come out of our social and spiritual shell and reach out to inform others of the need to generate the will and knowledge necessary to renounce the false promises of consumerism and commodification spewed by neoliberal 'capitalism on steroids'. Please note that these words are not mine but are the precise words of Zen Buddhist Roshi and anthropologist Joan Halifax, author of the seminal *Shamanic Voices* 1979; she describes the effects then goes on to identify the causes of our dilemma; she also breaks down into four stages our moral suffering when confronting the climate crisis: distress, injury, outrage and apathy. It is the outrage we feel that can generate the energy that must be harnessed into moral action.

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu tirelessly taught that practice and action starts with each one of us, 'the first number is number one'.

Her interventions are amongst the most no-nonsense and direct in the book, always cutting to the chase.

The book takes the reader step by step through an adroitly devised program that deploys the Buddhist teaching on interdependence to better understand the nature of the climate crisis and the need to take immediate action for its solution; then explains why the scientifically proven feedback loops unleashed by our disastrous and heedless actions leave us no time to wait to take action on an individual and collective level. Individual? Chögyal Namkhai Norbu tirelessly taught that practice and action starts with each one of us, 'the first number is number one'. Rebecca Solnit helpfully states, reflecting on lines written by Virginia Woolf at the time of the first world war, 'the unofficial history of the world shows that dedicated individuals and popular movements can shape history'; or Matthieu Ricard: 'Let's not underestimate the banality of goodness'. Despair is not an option! Collective? First, strength accumulates by acting, working, and practicing together; second, it is worth reiterating that, contrary to the lies propagated by its lackey spokesmen the fossil-fuel industry is the biggest driver of emissions, it is not individual behavior - remember their gaslighting message 'things would be ok if people used less water when brushing their teeth'; nor, though I hate to contradict them, is it the fault of cows farting!

Nor is social compliance any longer an option, and the fact that Greta Thunberg is now regularly arrested - at least twice, in the Hague and, I am ashamed to say, in London - shows there are no depths to which our western 'leaders' will not stoop to appease the fossil fuel industry and silence its opponents. Moreover a couple of years after the publication of this book the USA, bastion of polluters, promoters of the perversion and perishing of our planet, held an election and

Andy Lukianowicz



I was born in London, and after receiving teachings and transmissions on nondro and transmissions and initiations on inner practices from the Nyingmapa master Dudjom Rinpoche, moved to Italy to study and practice Dzogchen further with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche, living first in Naples then later in Rome. Fluent in Italian and English, I translated written books but for me more importantly and more fruitfully for my practice aural/oral teachings, principally for Norbu Rinpoche for thirty years, and also for Lopon Tenzin Namdak Rinpoche, Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche, Khandro Rinpoche, Sakya Trizin, Tai Situpa, Tsoknyi Rinpoche and others, and not least had the privilege to translate for Dalai Lama XIV on his inauguration of the Merigar Gönpa.

chose as their next president... Donald Trump, loud bombastic climate crisis denier, who canvassed proclaiming a platform promise to 'Drill, baby, drill!'

To reiterate, the book is structured in four parts: knowledge, capacity, will and action, gently but firmly guiding us from considering the disastrous consequences of persisting in the business as usual model of the Industrial Growth Society [translation, wallowing in greed, hatred and ignorance] to preparing the groundwork for the Age of Enough, the only path to survival of human society and civilization [not forgetting the important survival of our closest relatives, the animal realm], helping and encouraging nature to return to what it does best and naturally: greening.

Part One of the book, in two chap-



Andy and Lopön Tenzin Namdak.

ters, Science and Spirit, concentrates specifically on recognizing the harm we are doing to ourselves and the planet, acknowledging our responsibility, exacerbated by our unhealthy social mind exacerbated by a socio-economic system dedicated primarily [or exclusively?] to the exploitation of nature and of our fellow humans in less 'advanced' [sic] societies. We are encouraged to look within and discover what, beneath the flim-flam of consumerism, we are doing it for...? The contributors encourage and lead us to take cognizance of the gravity of our self-inflicted situation and as this sinks in, to deal with the arising anger, fear and anxiety and transform these into the energy necessary to struggle for change; some suggest how to develop rituals and practices [some in line with the *zer-gna* practices taught in the past by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu] to reconnect with our inner nature and with our 'outer nature' our home, not a rock hurtling through space as reductively proposed by some 'scientists' but the earth as a living being, Gaia [although James Lovelock, author of *The Revenge of Gaia* 2006 is one loud voice somehow overlooked in this book: his warning, that the earth is acting to rid herself of an unwelcome guest, homo shopiens, to return the planet to the fauna and flora who do her less harm and love her more, is a warning we should heed] and with

the gods and goddesses and spirits of nature [that people also know how to contact and invoke as we do through the practices of Tibetan Buddhism and Bon]; and generally rise up to defend our, and more importantly our children's, and animals' [the ones we haven't yet exterminated into extinction] future survival on this planet that our 'leaders' are hell-bent [here the word choice is certainly my own] on destroying. Take to heart

We have to change our whole education model; the Dalai Lama emphasizes the importance of education

what the young are saying to the older generation, we who have wreaked this havoc: 'You will die of old age, we will die of climate changed' [updated to; 'if we don't all die first in the nuclear war you so desperately want to unleash first']; and how to proactively help, by speaking and acting on behalf of the human and natural communities and environments most immediately in danger of extinction by the actions of 'civilization'. We have to change our whole education model; the Dalai Lama emphasizes the importance of education, imperative so as not to simply replicate a next generation of homo shopiens, to

teach them to become more mindful and conscious and strive to overturn our patriarchal, misogynist, racist [it is Michael Moore's 'stupid white men' who are mainly responsible for this mess] model of society whose wealth is largely based on plunder, pollution, waste and slavery. This fact, in Al Gore's felicitous phrase, is an 'uncomfortable truth', and Joan Halifax's strong statements confirm that woke is true, real and a fact. We must become stronger morally and through our acuity and discernment take responsibility for our activities to help ourselves and others come to understand, courageously face and together overcome the spiritual crisis challenging modern humanity in order to recover knowledge of the sacredness of humanity and of nature, as detailed in Seyyed Hossein Nasr's exemplary book *Man and Nature* 1968.

Susan has woven a remarkable tapestry of quotes from her contributors, one can imagine them sitting around a table each putting in a suggestion or observation adding to and furthering the conversation as needed. Those of Macy, Halifax, Ricard and Loy I have already mentioned, among others there are also Jennifer Odell, and Nobel peace prize winner Wangari Maathai, founder of the Green Belt Movement in Kenya. She recounts a touching story of how 'a tree of God', a fig tree by a stream near her home annually replenished life; when she returned home after years at college, the tree was no longer there, replaced by a church. 'Now I discovered the place of God was in a church.' And sure enough, the stream had also disappeared. Nature mind displaced by concept mind. Literally, this story reminded me of something Chögyal Namkhai Norbu once said, that centers are set up to serve the spread of the teachings, subsequently the teachings serve the spread of centers. Each reader will find their own favorite themes.

The book closes with a plethora of practical, helpful and accessible to-do lists drawn up by several seasoned active contributors. Just as tantric Buddhism offers a multitude of ways and practices as ways to enlightenment,

maybe as many in number as there are practitioners, so also one can find in these lists some congruent mode that resonates with your own deepest feelings.

In conclusion, I was struck by a quoted statement by Greta, that in a sense we are all climate crisis deniers unless and until we take cognizance of the impending and accelerating disaster that, unless and until we start to act to avert it, we are all precipitating. So read

this book, then get out there and join the fight for the survival of our planet - our home, that we inherited as a palace and are bequeathing to our children having turned it into a toilet; of animals, our neighbors and close friends on this planet, not some inferior species in a perhaps superseded six loka model; and to overcome the beguiling but malignant disease of our degraded and self-destructive Trump-nature [to borrow and update Jeff Wilson's quip/meme from his marvellous book Buddhism of the

Heart] and discover and recover our natural rigpa-Buddhahood, gently giving up and easing out [trekchod] of the rampant, obsessive and destructive individualism of our modern me first culture and relaxing into [thogal] our primordial essence, radiant nature and effulgent compassionate energy resurging as homo SAPIENS, knowers and tasters of our true nature, so that Gaia will welcome us back to our home.

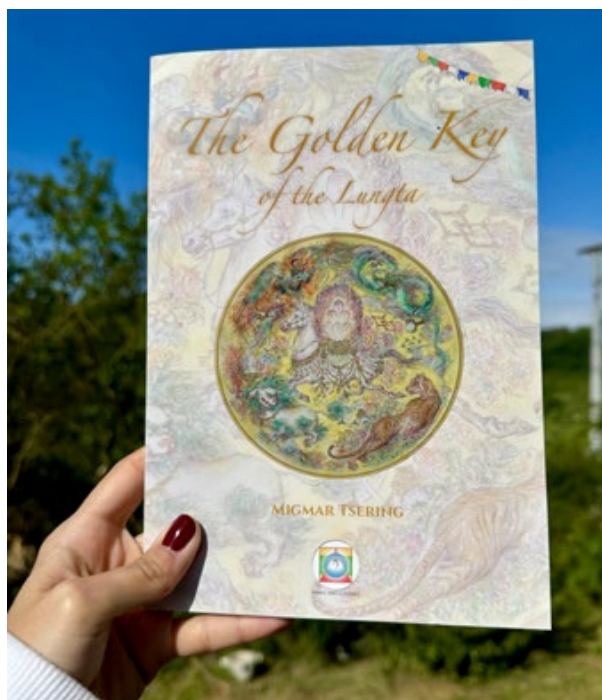
THE GOLDEN KEY OF THE LUNGTA

An interview with Migmar Tsering on his new book and an update on the Changchub Dorje Stupa Project

The Mirror: Migmar, your latest book "The Golden Key of the Lungta" has recently been published by Dynamic Space of the Elements. Can you give us some information about it?

Migmar: People often ask me about how to prepare *lungta* (Tibetan prayer flags) as they want to do something beneficial for their life, their health or their fortune. However, most people don't really know how to make them correctly or how to hang them so that gave me the idea to write this book to give people a clear idea about how to do it. All the information in the book I learned while I was studying at the monastery in Tibet.

The book starts by explaining the purpose and the meaning of the *lungta* and *jodar* and goes on to discuss the five elements of Tibetan astrology and their relationships to each other. Then it goes into details of the type and color of the support for printing the flags and the



different types of inks that can be used for printing.

Most people do not know that the ink that we use for writing on or printing the *lungta* can also be mixed with different substances such as precious stones or metals or even relics from famous masters that can harmonize the elements and increase the effectiveness of the mantras.

There is an explanation and diagrams to illustrate the colors associated with the five elements and the relationships between the different elements and how to harmonize them for each of the twelve astrological animals. The book goes on to help us understand the di-

rections that are most beneficial for placing the *lungta* according to our elements. We can see that this is closely linked to astrology and also *sa-chad* or Tibetan geomancy. Finally the book helps us to understand which days and even which hours are beneficial, or not, to hang the *lungta* according to our life, capacity and fortune elements.

The Mirror: Before this recent publication, you published another book "Mandala of Astrological Elements - Jung-We Kyil-Khor". Is it related to "The Golden Key of the

Lungta"?

Migmar: Yes, this first book presents more or less the basis of Tibetan astrology. It is based on the study and analysis of the astrological system called the mandala of the elements and is a lengthy and detailed explanation of how to create the mandala, a little similar to the construction of a *namkha*. You can learn how to calculate your elements such as life, fortune, capacity and so on and also how to calculate the *mewa* and harmonize it. This is important, because if the elements are not harmonized, we may live with conflict, the possibility of ill health, negative fortune and so on. In order to create this harmony we arrange our mandala of the elements in a partic-

ular way through colors and representations of the elements.

Both books are in English, in color, with beautiful illustrations and plenty of explanatory diagrams. They are available at Merigar, the Dzam Shop or can be ordered from Dynamic Space of the Elements dynamicelements@yahoo.com.

Next year I'm planning on publishing a new book on Tibetan geomancy in three parts: the first part will be pure Tibetan geomancy, the second part about the influence of the Chinese and Indian geomancy and the third part how to resolve negativity. The first part should appear next year.

The Mirror: We'll be looking forward to the new publication. By the way, I've just seen some photos of eight new stupas from the Changchub Dorje Stupa project that are on their way to Italy at the moment.

Migmar: This is the second shipment of eight stupas from the workshop in Chengdu. So in total we have managed to have sixteen cast. People have already ordered four of them and we are planning to take one to Ukraine and are looking for a donor to take one to Russia.

At the end of September, I'm planning on visiting the artist who is making them in his workshop, so the project is going ahead with eight stupas each year. The



models that are on the way are a little more intricate than the first eight that arrived and as we go ahead Changchub Dorje's designs are more and more ornate, more complicated, which means more work to cast them in metal and higher costs.

The Mirror: Thank you Migmar.

For more information on the Changchub Dorje Stupa project: <https://108-stupa.dynamicelements.org/en>

dynamicelements@yahoo.com

ARTISTS IN THE DZOGCHEN COMMUNITY

THE ILLUSORY GAME OF ART AND LIFE

By Giuseppe "Jaka" Giacalone

My much loved brothers and sisters in the Dzogchen Community, who over the years have always made me feel your love, appreciation and support, I am writing this article to basically tell you two things: first of all, that I could have no greater good fortune in my life than to meet the Master, and that every good thing in my life comes solely and

exclusively from following his example and teaching. Chögyal Namkhai Norbu also taught me to make peace with myself and my being an artist and a leader, and at a time when I thought that being an artist and practicing Dharma were two irreconcilable things, he taught me that everything in life can be spiritual practice.



The second thing is that, in my life experience as an artist, I have learned that true success consists in being satisfied with yourself and in harmony with what you do. Though making art a job

depends a lot on the approval of others and the industry that runs the system, I have learned to always do it my way, without any dirty games or following negative fads and trends, achieving extraordinary results relying mostly on my own strengths and those working with me.

I express myself in different ways: I am a songwriter, a singer, an entertainer, a musician, an MC, a DJ, an event organizer, a radio speaker, and also a professional educator who uses music as a therapeutic tool.

Where can I start? We were at the Yellow House at Merigar laughing and joking with the Maestro. At one point, Enrico Dell'Angelo said, "Jaka, tell the Master how you compose your songs!" And I replied that there are songs that arise by thinking, rehearsing, studying, correcting, and others that flow spontaneously, as if someone dictates them to you, lyrics and melody, in a flow. At that point, the Maestro, who up to that point had been listening to me without, apparently, showing much interest, raised his head and looked me straight in the eye. Since then, I have shown more and more interest in cultivating that state, even during the creative process, in which all expectations cease to exist and all judgment is momentarily suspended.

One of the songs that came about this way is called "Just Love":

Love is the cure, it is the answer,
and when everything collapses,
it is only what remains.
Love is not just a relationship
between two people,
and what we call love is only
a misunderstanding.
True love gives and asks nothing
in return,
love is much more, much more
than a feeling:
it is like a spring
without interruption,
with the strength of a mother
and the courage of a lion.
It is at ease among pleasures
as well as pains,
and savours good smells
as well as bad

where there is selfishness
there is no love
and it is not me who says so
but the heart
for me, love is not jealousy,
love is the answer, love is the way!

After many years of not performing this song live, in 2023 in Trapani, Sicily, I played it in front of 10,000 people dedicating it to a friend of mine who had been killed a few days earlier, near Trapani, out of jealousy by her ex-husband. At the end of the song, I let out a long, heart-wrenching scream that shocked the crowd. I believe that music should be authentic and serve to stir consciences, to elevate, to spread values that can help us be better and more respectful of ourselves and others, and promote uplifting behavior rather than glorify destructive.

The musical genre I practice most is called Reggae, which inspires positivity in me. I belong to the first generation of Italian artists who first began singing Reggae, Rap, and Raggamuffin (i.e., Jamaican Rap) in their native language. I think Reggae is a mystical and spiritual music, sensual and earthly, connected to nature and roots. I love many different genres of music and collaborating with artists from different genres, without limitations. For example, I have collaborated with artists from the Dzogchen Community such as Roberto Cacciapaglia on two tracks called "Music Paradise" and "Piano Paradise": an extraordinary encounter, just as extraordinary as when Roberto, during the teachings of His Holiness the Dalai Lama in Livorno, introduced me to Franco Battiato, who has always been my favorite artist. In fact, for me, music is healing and therapeutic. Music conceived solely as entertainment has never interested me much; instead, I am interested in music that expresses the culture of a people, that transmits positive values, that inspires us to be better, that opens the heart.

For this reason I've always used music as a therapeutic tool and worked for many years in the suburbs, holding rap workshops on the street. We had a camper van with a small recording studio inside and would meet young people for a drug prevention project using mu-



sic as a tool for contact and education. I've also held songwriting workshops in primary, middle and high schools, as well as universities. I also worked for many years in gypsy camps and immigrant reception centers although my greatest satisfaction comes from working in juvenile prisons.

I was the first in Italy to use Rap and Raggamuffin to do workshops in prisons, starting in Florence in the early 2000s and continuing until today. In the last few years I have held meetings at the famous "Malaspina" juvenile prison in Palermo. These workshops have a strong emotional impact. I use a method called "Maieutics," because by helping the boys to bring out what is inside, you help them to understand their emotions and get them to reflect on them. Music thus becomes an opportunity for self-knowledge, but also knowledge of the consequences of one's thoughts, emotions, words and actions. Emotional education through music. During these workshops in addition to freeing the voice we also work a little with the body and body expression.

I really like dancing and moving - it's liberating - and during my concerts I've always danced like crazy. But then I discovered that there could be another way of moving as well. When the Mas-

ter presented the Khaita practice it was a wonderful discovery for me. At first I didn't understand it and would run away or arrive late, and every time he would look at me as if to say, I see you!

Then when I moved to Tenerife in 2016, I spent a year in close contact with him every day, as his bodyguard, and I started dancing Khaita every day. At first, I danced just to make the Master laugh, because everyone went one way and I went the other, but then gradually thanks to his constant encouragement, I began to get into it. Every single day he would say to me, "Well done, you've got rhythm," or "you're good" even when I wasn't. I don't think I've ever been happier in my life than I was during that period. We danced for two hours a day or more in front of the Maestro, and the joy I felt was indescribable.

What's more, what the Maestro was doing with those songs corresponded exactly to what I had always tried to express in my music. For example, love for one's homeland and its positive values, because as a Sicilian I have always tried to overturn the stigma of Sicily as a land of the Mafia and talk instead about the generosity, goodness and honesty of our people. Rinpoche said he wasn't very interested in cheap love songs, and even though I have written a few sensual songs, most of the time I prefer to talk about unconditional love or respect between people, writing songs that glorify the beauty of wisdom and the happiness that comes with it.

This type of content is not only found in my records but also in my live shows and in my life. I'm not interested in singing about things I haven't experienced or know about. My shows are very energetic. I come from the school of punk, the 'Do it yourself' school, from the street, from the culture of popular festivals, from a long apprenticeship. I don't see the distance between the stage and the audience. For me a concert is not a performance but an exchange of energy, and I'm not there to show how good I am at something, what interests me is communicating with people, not staring into space but looking people in the eye when I sing. So for me, every concert is



a party that involves everyone, to the point that people sometimes come up on stage with us to dance, as happened during one of my concerts in Arcidosso [Youtube: "[Jaka at Merigar 30th Anniversary](#)"].

I've composed hundreds of songs and dozens of albums, but I never consider a song is "mine" but more that we are energy channels through which things flow. Music has an energy that goes beyond words, and I sing in Italian, Sicilian, English, and Jamaican. I think I've done tens of thousands of concerts and DJ sets in my life, playing everywhere in Italy from north to south, but also in London, New York, Paris, Barcelona, from Kiev to Jamaica. Perhaps it is also thanks to my energy and experience that many great artists have always invited me to sing with them during their concerts, and I have performed duets with true international legends such as Alton Ellis, Max Romeo, Luciano, Morgan Heritage, Eek-a-mouse, Alborosie, Macka B, Michael Franti, Dub Fx, and in Italy with artists such as Piero Pelù, Boombash, Roy Paci, Frankie Hi ng, Alma Megretta, Sud Sound Systems, Africa Unite, and many others.

To sing live like that you have to have some ability to improvise because you never know what song you're going to be invited to but you have to get on the stage and rock it. This is the hard school



I come from: good from the start, no time for another opportunity, giving your best in the present moment, no second chance.

I am happy when I sing if I even get to one person's heart; it doesn't matter if it is in front of 30 people in a remote place, or 30,000 like it happened to me on the main stage of Rototom Sunsplash or at the Olympic stadium in Rome. Going out and playing live over the years has helped me create a very intimate, direct and sincere relationship with my audience. The support from my fans is very strong and when I launched a crowdfunding to self-produce my album "Il suona dell'isola" ("The Sound of the Island"), we gathered 15,000 euros in donations in two months because my support is not based on fame or publicity but on real human relationships. I am not a superstar, just a normal person.



More than once someone with tears in their eyes has said to me, "Jaka, I was going to kill myself but your music saved my life!". That's real success for me.

Then I came into many people's lives thanks in part to Controradio/Popolare Network, an alternative radio station that is very popular in Florence, Tuscany, and around the world via the web, where I have broadcast daily as a speaker for many years. Today I still host "Bongoman," my program specializing in reggae music, which is one of the longest-running formats in global radio, on air for 34 consecutive years, using language that has even been the subject of a thesis.

One last beautiful story: a few years ago, during a retreat, a practitioner from the Community threw a wonderful party. The Master and some of us were invited to this party. When we arrived, we crossed an enormous garden and entered a beautiful old house, belonging to a noble family, decorated with paintings and precious objects. In the center of this beautiful living room sat the Master in a very comfortable armchair with a relaxed look on his face. We performed a little Khaita dance for him and the hosts, then the Master asked Roberto Cacciapaglia to play something on the piano, and Roberto played some

beautiful music, and the atmosphere in the room was very pleasant but a little formal.

At one point, the Maestro looked at me and, with a simple nod of his head, invited me to sing something, knowing what to expect. I went to Roberto and asked him to play three simple major chords on the upbeat, and I started improvising rap rhymes, and it was as if a hurricane had suddenly swept in and turned the situation upside down in a paradoxical way. The Maestro began clapping his hands in time and laughing, and in no time at all the atmosphere became exhilarating and everyone began clapping their hands and responding in unison to my back-and-forth exchanges. The session ended with the Maestro laughing hysterically and looking at us knowingly. From that moment on, everyone at the party became a little more relaxed and at ease. For me, this was the most satisfying moment of my life as an "artist" and, probably, the moment when I understood most clearly that there is no point in taking yourself too seriously, because the illusory game of life and that of art coincide.

And even today, my rhymes continue to flow like a source of light with no beginning and no end:

I love those warriors who share
the path with me
they go forward in life
in their sincere way
they bring peace where there is war,
light where it is cold
color where it is dark
I love my enemies, I can't help it
Because I know that if I hated them,
I would be no different from them

LINKS:

www.youtube.com/iljaka

www.instagram.com/jakaworld

www.facebook.com/JakaOfficial

REFINING PURE GOLD IN THE YEARS OF LEAD: WHAT CAN BE ACHIEVED EVEN IN DIFFICULT TIMES

John Shane

I still have the copy of the Magazine section of the Observer UK National newspaper that I bought at a London airport on Sunday 18th June, 1978 when I was on the way to attend a retreat with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu.

The magazine contained a long and lavishly illustrated article with the title 'Italy In Extremis' that detailed the political upheaval in the country to which I was traveling. Those turbulent years of political upheaval in Italy became known as the 'Anni di Piombo', 'The Years of Lead'.

The Years of Lead

The Years of Lead was a period of social and political turmoil in Italy that lasted from 1968 to 1988, marked by a wave of both far-left and far-right political terrorism in the country that continued until mid-1988, by which time 428 people had been killed in the political violence.

Far-left groups such as the communist Red Brigades and the anarchist Potere Operaio and far-right groups such as the National Vanguard and Ordine Nuovo (backed by the ultraright Propaganda Due secret society) engaged in street clashes against each other, and they also launched terrorist attacks such as bombings (targeting government buildings, each other's rallies and homes, or public areas and assassinations (targeting judges, lawyers, policemen, or rival militants.)

In 2025, as all over the world we are living through difficult times, I remember that, despite everything that was going on - and very serious things were going on - in the difficult times of 'The Years Of Lead', we were able, with our teacher Chögyal Namkhai Norbu to found Merigar.

I was present in Italy in the earliest

days of Merigar during the very difficult times of The Years Of Lead, and I have many hair-raising personal stories of dangerous incidents that I personally went through in the earliest days of Merigar as a young foreign person in Italy, who - although I was not and had never been in no way affiliated or associated with any political group of any kind - was considered 'suspicious' in the eyes of the authorities just because of my youthful appearance and my association with the Dzogchen Community, a group who were then seen as being 'outside the norms of the day' and were thus officially 'suspect'.

I had intended to write an article for 'The Mirror' about what I and many of the 'pioneers' of Merigar went through at the time of the founding of Merigar during 'The Years Of Lead', but, unfortunately I am having some serious health problems and am not well enough to do so.

I will try to write that article in future and publish it either in 'The Mirror' or on my Substack, but, for now - as a reminder of what can be achieved as a spiritual community even in difficult times - I would like to share with you an article I wrote about the early days of Merigar that was published in 'The Merigar Letter' newsletter in 2011.

It was possible for us to refine the pure gold of study and practice even in the difficult times of 'The Years Of Lead' in Italy as we founded Merigar, and we can do the same in the difficult times we are facing today in so many parts of the world.
JS.

(If you have not already done so, please also take a look at the work I have published on Substack at <https://johnshaneywayofthepoet.substack.com> and, if you enjoy it, it would mean a lot to me if you would

please support my work by subscribing there to my newsletter. Thank you.)



The cover page of the edition of the Magazine section of the Observer UK National newspaper that I bought at a London airport on Sunday 18th June, 1978 when flying to Italy to meet up with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu in Toscana.



The first page of the Observer Magazine article about the political problems in Italy.



Another page of the Observer Magazine article.

**Rainbow Over
The Fire Mountain:
The Early Days Of Merigar.**

By John Shane

Article published in the Merigar Letter newsletter in 2011

In 1981, perhaps the least likely thing that the inhabitants of the town of Arcidosso imagined would happen is that Tibet would arrive on their doorstep.

And yet that was precisely what was about to happen.

In those days hardly anyone in rural Tuscany gave a thought to the far off and almost mythical 'Land Of The Snows', that had remained closed off behind the high Himalayas for so many centuries.

The people of Italy were, in any case, at the time, preoccupied with problems much closer to home.

The day in 1981 on which I set out to fly from London to Pisa to look at the land that would become Merigar, a few weeks after the contract had been signed for its purchase, I bought 'Time' and 'Newsweek' in a kiosk on the way to the check-in desk at the airport, and saw that the cover articles of both magazines were about the latest activities of the Red Brigades who were terrorizing the country, with lurid photos of bombed-out buildings and bullet-ridden bodies in various Italian cities. Together with the ongoing problems caused by organized crime, Italy's recurring economic troubles, the prevailing political turmoil was the main topic in the headlines.

In the midst of the continuing national crises of the day, Chögyal Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche, who was at the time the Professor of Tibetan and Mongolian language and culture at the Oriental Institute of the University of Naples, had

been searching for a place to serve as a base for the growing community of individuals from all the world who had sought him out, hoping to receive spiritual teachings from him.

If Norbu – as he then permitted us to call him, using his first name – had been reluctant to assume the role of a spiritual teacher in the first place, preferring to remain a private person working to maintain his family life, he was even more reluctant to found the kind of center that he saw springing up around other Tibetan Lamas. 'The real principle of the Teachings is to be found in the individual,' he would say, 'the individual is the true center'.

And yet such was the quality of his teaching and his growing reputation that people continued to seek him out, and as their numbers grew he found that the pressure on him and his family, as well as the needs of the students, required him to act.

Aware as he was of the tendency for formal religious institutions to develop in ways that can come to obscure and contradict their essential message, he was instinctively wary of forming any kind of organization.

And so, for the first years that he was teaching, all the retreats at which he taught were held in a variety of improvised locations, such as out of season hotels, resorts that were taken over for a few weeks, and - on one occasion - in a large ruined farmhouse with no windows or doors in the mountains in northern Italy, where, appropriately enough, he taught us about death and dying. His students became used to following him from place to place like the nomads, setting everything up for the duration of the retreat, and then dismantling it all, before moving on to the next place.

Perhaps it was only when he felt that a few of his students understood that the essence of the spiritual teachings he was conveying should not be mistaken for the trappings of culture or for the structure of an organization that he felt he could take on the challenge of the purchase of a place of our own as a base for the teachings. But in any case, when, after much searching, a suitable place was finally found on Monte Amiata, just to remind his students not to forget why he had been reluctant to allow any





Norbu Rinpoche playing one of his favorite games with Community members in the courtyard at Merigar. Notice again the total absence of trees and greenery.
Photo John Shane

centers to be created around his teaching, he called it a 'Gar', which in Tibetan means a nomad's encampment - in this case 'Merigar', the encampment of the fire mountain, Monte Amiata being an extinct volcano. Rinpoche has said recently, 'I never had a plan as to how I would go ahead... I have always worked with circumstances as they arose'.

When we speak about the Dzogchen teachings, we are, after all, talking about a teaching that insists that one lives in the present moment, which is all we can ever know. The past is, of course, over and done, and will never return, and the future does not yet exist.

A Master, such as Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, always remains present, without distraction, and his undistracted presence has enabled him to respond with extraordinary precision to the challenges of developing his Community around the world, overcoming great difficulties with remarkable clarity, patience, and perseverance.

When I arrived at Pisa airport that day in 1981, I hired a car and drove up to Arcidosso for the first time. After looking around the town, I found a room at the Hotel Giardino, and persuaded the local real estate agent who had been involved in the purchase of the property for the Community to drive up the mountain with me to show me the house and land that we had just bought.

It was an overcast day, and low clouds hung over Monte Amiata. When we arrived at the end of a long dirt road, we came to a locked gate, and parked our cars. I climbed over the gate, and turning a corner, could see what looked like a ruined farmhouse in the distance.

At that moment, the sun came out, and a huge rainbow arose that went from one horizon to the next, and at the same time, a herd of small goats came running out of the building down the track towards me.

I took out my camera to capture an image of the moment, and I still have the

photo. But, of course, as well as being a symbol of auspicious circumstances, a rainbow is also a symbol of the illusory nature of all that manifests, and I have never forgotten that when I am at Merigar.

No matter how solid it appears, even Monte Amiata, even Merigar, are, from the ultimate point of view, only as real as an appearance in a dream.

Yet the dream arises, like a rainbow, illusory but apparent, the product of the play of impermanent causes and conditions, with no inherent self-nature.

And in the dream of our lives we act to accomplish our aims, even as we are aware that their nature is, from the absolute point of view, illusory.

I am always amazed at Rinpoche's courage: with very little in the way of financial resources - much of which he provided himself from his own savings - and with only a group of young people who were more blessed with enthusiasm than with experience, he bought a



'Podere Nuovo', the farmhouse that became Merigar in 1981, seen just after it was purchased by the Dzogchen Community. Photo:1981 John Shane



In the photo above you can see John Shane on the first day that he set foot on the land at the place that would become 'Merigar', with one of the 17 goats that lived there. In the background you can see the old farmhouse that what would later become the 'Yellow House'. Notice the absence of trees on the hillside before we planted all the trees you see today.
Photo: John Shane

ruined farmhouse on a remote mountainside in Toscana and proceeded to turn it into a major center for the preservation of the essence of the teachings of Tibetan Buddhism and Tibetan culture.

Together with a small number of others from various countries around the world, I moved to Toscana in 1981 to

help with the founding of Merigar. If I ask myself now what on Earth the inhabitants of the local towns must have thought of us at the time, I know that it was confusing for them.

We were young, we had long hair, we wore strange clothes, a high proportion of us were foreigners who spoke very little or very bad Italian, and we had no visible means of support.

Yet the local people welcomed us into their homes, their restaurants, their shops and their offices with an open-heartedness that does credit to the great traditions of hospitality of the region, and I will always be deeply grateful to them for that.

Somehow or other, in the midst of the political confusions in Italy at the time, when the hard-working people of the Amiata region saw on the TV news every day reports of young people who were losing their heads in ideological dogma that led them to commit acts of violence against the state, there was still enough trust in the hearts of the local people to

welcome us, no matter how strange we – and what we were doing up on Monte Amiata - must have seemed to them.

At first we all lived in the same house together with Rinpoche. There was no other place to sleep. In the main rooms of the first floor of what is now the Serkhang, or Golden House, Rinpoche had the only bed, and the rest of us slept on the floor, like caterpillars, in our sleeping bags. There was no electricity, no telephone, and no running water. We had no indoor toilets.

We had very little capital, so we had to try to do everything ourselves, rather than hiring professional builders. Everyone worked, and Rinpoche himself led from the front as always, working harder than everyone else.

I stood shoulder to shoulder with Rinpoche digging out the cowsheds that are now Merigar's shop and kitchen. I wheeled barrows of cement to him as he built the retaining wall behind the house that keeps the hillside from sliding down.

In the early days, when we were get-



View of the ruined building that would become the Yellow House. Those of us working at Merigar at the time lived in the house while there was no roof on a major part of the building. Photo John Shane.

ting the house in order, everyone worked and ate and slept in the same large open-plan upstairs room together, and everyone played together, too. There was endless laughter.

Rinpoche taught us many things in the formal sessions at the retreats that took place at intervals, but we learned so much from just living with him, from just being with him. We did a lot of practice, we worked hard, and we had so much fun.

Of course, there were many difficulties, but Rinpoche never seemed to get discouraged.

I have the abiding image of him sitting with a group of students around him in the garden playing a board game with one student at a time. Each student in turn would try to beat Rinpoche, but he would always win. No matter how much we tried, no one could beat him. After a while, this was not much fun for Rinpoche. So he began playing with one person, and as usual he won. But then he turned the board around, and, taking the hopeless losing position of his opponent, he began to fight back, until he had once again cleared the board of his opponent's counters and had won again. Then he turned the board around, took

the losing position again, and once more turned it into a winning position, repeating this over and over again, much to everyone's astonishment and amusement.

The same was true when we encountered difficulties with planning applications, bank loans, or people who let us down in one way or another: once he had set out to do something, Rinpoche never gave up.

Some of that must have rubbed off on us. We, his students, learned from his example, and became stronger ourselves in our own lives. The Dzogchen Community developed, and, in time, more centers were founded all around the world. But Rinpoche has always referred to Merigar as 'the navel', in the sense, that it is from the navel, where the umbilical cord connects, that a baby develops in its mother's womb.

Just as my experience of Merigar began with a rainbow appearing out of nowhere, so these words have appeared on my computer screen as the imprint of thoughts passing through my mind, and now they will travel as digital bits and bytes via wi fi and down cables from country to country to another computer from which they will be printed out and reassembled as words on paper which

you will read to create images in your mind of the early days of Merigar.

It is my hope that this article will help those visiting Merigar for the first time to understand the conditions in which it came into being and will also help those of us who are responsible for Merigar to remember to continue to maintain it in the spirit in which, all those years ago, its founder intended.

John Shane©2011

John Shane is the Editor of 'The Crystal And The Way Of Light: Sutra, Tantra, And Dzogchen', a book of the Dzogchen Teachings of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, published by Snowlion Publications.



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