

THE MIRROR

Newspaper of the International Dzogchen Community

May/June 2005 • Issue No. 74

Schedule Chögyal Namkhai Norbu 2005 - 2006



2005

ITALY MERIGAR

July 1-5
Merigar Retreat I
Vaidurya'i Chunphyangs of Paltrul Rinpoche
Web cast

July 8-10 **Santi Maha Sangha** Base Level Exam
July 11-15 **Santi Maha Sangha** Level I Training

July 22-24
COURSE OF MOXABUSTION sponsored by Shang-Shung
Institute, Italy (Limited only to people who have studied medicine)

July 25 – August 5
PERSONAL RETREAT

August 5
BLESSING ANIMALS in the small forest at Merigar

August 10-16
MERIGAR RETREAT II
Lama Yeshe Khadroi Thugthig, The Essence of the Heart of Guru
Jnanadhakini and the simple practice of Guru Jnanadhakini

SPAIN
September 30
Leave for Spain

October 5-9
**BARCELONA
SPANISH RETREAT**
The 25 Spaces of Samantabhadra
(Terma of Jangchub Dorje)

SOUTH AMERICA
October 10
Leave for **SAO PAULO, BRAZIL**

October 14
**PUBLIC TALK
SAO PAULO, BRAZIL**

October 15-19
BRAZIL RETREAT
The main teaching will be a Guru Dragphur Donwang and other
Dzogchen Instructions

MARGARITA, TASHIGAR NORTE
October 28
Leave for Margarita

November 4-8
LONGSAL TREGCHÖD RETREAT in Tashigar Norte

November 25-29
SANTI MAHA SANGHA TEACHER TRAINING
Yantra Yoga and Vajra Dance

December 5-8
LONGSAL JNANADHAKINI RETREAT in Tashigar Norte
(Initiations of Jnanadhakini limited to 75 people each time).

December 26-January 1
LONGSAL LONGDE RETREAT



Dancers on Mandala, May 10, Khandroling

R PIRO

UNIVERSAL MANDALA DEDICATION AT KHANDROLING MAY 10, 2005

SACRED LAND OF KHANDROLING, BUCKLAND, MASSACHUSETTS

by Jacqueline Gens

Driving toward Khandroling from Tsegylgar becomes a journey that moves toward the future yet embraces the past. In other words, Khandroling is both a timeless place and a state of mind. As one nears the Dzogchen Community retreat land of Khandroling in Buckland Massachusetts, the roads transform from paved to unpaved dirt roads increasingly more rugged at every turn until barely a semblance of a road exists at all but more of a forest trail emerges. So isolated is the property of Khandroling that in winter for several miles, the roads remain unplowed as they have for centuries. A couple of hundred years ago these woods were cleared for sheep farming with sweeping views of the Connecticut river valley below from the Mary Lyons' birthplace located at the base Khandroling. Today new growth maples, fir trees, birch, densely grow up to the

many stonewalls, the once open fields a cluster of wild vines and forest debris. However, one landmark stands firm against the vicissitudes of time. At the pinnacle is the massive boulder next to the Universal Mandala, an ancient monument deposited millennia ago when those gentle rolling hills were as magnificent as the Himalayas or the Grand Tetons. Here Community children gather behind an elegant makeshift throne built for Rinpoche – little sentient barnacles adhering to this strange rock monument in giggles and carefree fun at all the solemnity.

On May 10, 2005, for the dedication of the Universal Mandala, the sounds and smells of Spring permeate the air, as we pass through the gates and upwards to the pond with its ripples shimmering, past Rinpoche's house, the Guardian cabin and the Stupa, with its finial curtain gently moving in the breeze. Daffodils poke up after a long and difficult spring, the mud

on the ground barely dry now. New greenery is on the edge of unfurling their final display. Reaching the top of the mountain where the Universal Mandala resides, juniper crackles in the sang fires set out at the four quarters surrounding the Mandala, their smoky lasung refreshed with water at intervals to keep the smoke offerings rising to the guardians. White silken banners with Rinpoche's secret symbol written in gold also hang at the four directions along with slabs of rock deeply carved with seed syllables for the four directions made by stone mason and master singer, Lobsang Gyalsten. Prayer flags radiate out in all directions surrounding the mandala and are tied with a long katak midway along the prayer flags facing at each direction. To the East, Rinpoche's throne sits before the Mandala - huge and splendid in the morning light.

By 10:00 AM, the sun is already strong and the sky overhead a

brilliant blue. Men, women and children from around the globe have come together to dedicate the Universal Mandala at the site of its first emergence into the human realm and the mind of our Master's treasury. For a few brief moments, Khandroling opens its doorway into another dimension as the dancers clothed in their sacred outfits enter the mandala after an extended practice of Sang and the Goma Devi Guru yoga - they are no longer individuals with names and histories but *pawo* and *pamo* moving in unison in their brilliant silk raiments. Surely, the denizens of the Sambogakaya realm are summoned to this sacred place. Like a great universal heartbeat, a shiver of energy courses through us all, as the dancers begin. Tears well up for the unsurpassable beauty of it all. The Song of the Vajra and its dance remains our most precious unification with the mind of the lineage. We have all entered the

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Chogyal Namkhai Norbu
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May 10 Universal Mandala Inauguration
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Yartse Hunting
by Daniel Winkler
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Today is the last session of this retreat. It is most important that we try and integrate the teaching into daily life. To integrate the teaching into daily life, we must first be aware of how our life is. Sometimes we do not have much time, and there is not sufficient time to have realization if we practice only a few hours a day. Integrating means that in any circumstance in our lives we use that time for practice, so it is important that we know how to practice for all twenty-four hours. That doesn't mean that we become like Milarepa, although it is not bad if we become like Milarepa, but in general it is not possible. It may be possible for some, but most people have their families, jobs, and work, particularly in modern society, so we should consider that..

You know very well that if you live in a city you need to find a house in which to live. When you finally find a house, you know how difficult it is to pay all the bills that arrive at the end of the month. We all know that life is very complicated today, so we must understand how that is and try to be aware of our situation. For that reason, even if we know many wonderful Tantric and transformation practices, different kinds of methods, most remain only as a good idea. We are always thinking, "Oh, how nice this teaching and practice is", but it doesn't help us toward realization if we don't really integrate with that. It is not so easy to integrate. When you do a transformation like the development and accomplishing stage in a more traditional way, it takes a long time. We do not have that kind of time, so we should go into the essence of the teaching. Integration means that we go into the essence of the teaching. Integration means we learn the essence of teaching, not that we learn so many practices.

Many people have the idea that integrating means we put together all we have learned in our life. Then we only have confusion, not integration. When we follow different kinds of teachings we receive different kinds of wonderful teachings and that is good, but then we are only continuously learning. That is not sufficient in life. You should practice. It is not sufficient to go to many good doctors who are experts on different illnesses; you need to decide to follow one doctor and listen to his/her advice. You need to listen to the doctor's advice about diet, attitude, and which kind of medicine you should take. That means that you integrate and have no problem.

ESSENCE

The main point is to discover and integrate the essence of the teaching. In the Dzogchen Semde there are some twenty-two or twenty-three different kinds of attitudes students should follow to learn and apply the Dzogchen Teaching. The first attitude is that we should be like a bee in the summertime; the bee goes to the right and left, to different colors, forms of flowers and takes the nectar. In the same way, when you are interested to follow different teachings from different



Rinpoche at Universal Mandala Inauguration

R. PIRO

INTEGRATING THE TEACHING INTO DAILY LIFE

Last session of the Dzogchen Longsal Retreat, the Simple Practice of the Guru Inanadhakini

Tsegyalgar, Conway, Massachusetts
May 6th – 8th, 2005

teachers that means you are acting like a bee. The aim of this activity is to discover your real nature.

Maybe you go to a teacher and he gives you a Yogatantra style initiation. You discover that the initiation does not help you get into your real nature. Indirectly there is some kind of relationship. You can go to ten different kinds of teachers; some go a little more and some a little less, into the essence. One day you discover the essence and when you discover what you should do, there is no reason to continue with the attitude of the bee. There is no sense. It doesn't help for your realization if all your life you are using the attitude of the bee. Once you have discovered the essence you try to integrate into that state and that is called practice. Otherwise there is no benefit.

I am not saying that you shouldn't go to different teachers. That is wonderful, but it is better that you don't finish your life going here and there only listening to teachings. That doesn't help you. In the Dzogchen teachings there is direct introduction. We try to understand and discover the state. If you do not discover it, you try to find a better teacher, transmission or teaching. Why not? When you discover the state you integrate your body, speech and mind, everything integrates in that state. When you work, do practice, walk, in any circumstance you integrate and this is called practice. Then you discover that there is a possibility to do practice in daily life and that life is practice. Practice is not only going to a temple and sitting

and praying for half an hour. That is practice, but not the main point.

GURUYOGA

It is very important in the Dzogchen teaching to know that the principal practice is Guruyoga, always Guruyoga. Any kind of teaching you receive from different teachers may be related with different kinds of deities and mandalas. In the real sense, the teaching you receive from your teacher in any kind of tradition is given by a teacher and you receive it from a teacher. It is important that you unify your teachers together in Guruyoga. This is something very important, otherwise you cannot keep your samaya commitments. If you receive any kind of practices or teaching belonging to Vajrayana there are commitments because there are initiations. After an initiation, even Kriyatantra or Yogatantra, there is always a commitment. Some people say that you can receive a teaching like a kind of blessing and there are no commitments, but that is not true. If there is no commitment why did the teacher introduce you to the path? The teacher introduces you to the path of transformation empowering with mantras because you need to do practice and want to realize. We always have commitments. When we are not maintaining commitments it becomes negative. Some people think they can receive this and that initiation and never do any kind of practice, but that becomes an accumulation of negativities.

So you should do Guruyoga in the Dzogchen way and unify all your teachers. It doesn't matter

if your teachers are in the Buddhist, Bönpo or Hindu tradition. If the teachings are related to your Vajra, your real nature, that teacher is called Vajra Guru. In the Medium Thun when we do the visualization of Padmasambhava, Guru Padmasambhava represents the union of all our teachers and when we take the empowerment we take them in a more Tantric or Vajrayana way. When we pronounce Om A Hum we sing slowly because a white Om, red A and blue Hum, one by one, appear in the three places of Guru Padmasambhava. That represents the unification of all three Vajras of all our teachers. We unify all our teachers and take empowerment.

When we use a very short Dzogchen method, we only sound A and do a visualization of a white A and thigle that represents our primordial potentiality and the primordial state of our teacher; all teachers and all enlightened beings. There is no difference in our state and the state of the teacher; we are in that state, we do Guruyoga and we keep all the samayas we have received. We keep our samayas because the samayas are related to our teacher, not only to the kind of teaching. The teachings are methods, and the main point is that the teachings help us to get in our real nature.

Some people go to their teachers, like a Gelugpa teacher for example and say, "Oh, Namkhai Norbu said you can only do white A and be in that state and unify all and then you can keep samaya. Is it true?" When that Lama says no, what do you do? You have no benefit. If you ask another Lama if you can do this kind of Guruyoga, that means you have no confidence in me, otherwise there would be no reason to ask. That Lama says no because the Gelugpas follow the Tantric teaching in a gradual way. You remember that in the Gelugpa system there is the supreme teaching called Lam Rim. Lam means path and Rim means gradual. Gradual Path. The Gradual Path never accepts direct introduction. Even if you want to talk with your Gelugpa teacher about direct introduction, it is better you don't. They negate it and what do you do then? It is not only the Gelugpas, but also Sakyapas and Nyingmapas have this system. So if you have confidence, there is no reason to discuss direct introduction with other people. You do your practice that way, keep samaya and you have no problem.

You can understand the essence of the teaching and the practice is Guruyoga. You not only think white A and thigle, but white A and thigle is for being present in your instant presence; the instant presence you received in your direct introduction. If you didn't discover your instant presence then you try to discover that. That is the main practice you should do. And then you can integrate. After the retreat when you go back to daily life, you should do Guruyoga. You can do Guruyoga as a sitting practice with A, and sing the Song of the Vajra. That is wonderful and good. If you don't have the time,

even if you only sound A in any moment and you are in the state of Guruyoga for only a few seconds or minutes, that is already Guruyoga. You can do Guruyoga many times a day, not only one time. If you realize the value of Guruyoga, of course you can repeat it many times. In doing Guruyoga you can purify your obstacles and the potentiality of negative karma. Your clarity and knowledge progress because Guruyoga is the main path, the main practice. The Dzogchen teaching is not asking you to do a kind of yidam practice or deity practice saying this deity is my yidam. That is a Yogatantra system. Some people ask a Dzogchen teacher which is their yidam. If a teacher is a Yogatantra style teacher, then they check which kind of aspect you have related to some different of families, etc., and they give advice. A Dzogchen teacher will tell you that your yidam is your state. There is no other yidam, if you recognize. If you don't recognize you are always in samsara. So for being in that yidam state what should you do? Do Guruyoga. Simple, very simple. You can't say you don't know how to do Guruyoga. You already know how.

PRESENCE

Another important thing in daily life is being present and not distracted. This is something very important to learn. Being present is like driving a car. How was it when you started to drive a car? Not so easy, but then you learned. After a little while you had no more problems, you became familiar and now when you drive you look to the right and left, you talk with friends. You are being present when you drive because if you are distracted while driving then you have an accident. So you can understand what being present means. Life is not only driving a car. In life there are many things, so you should learn presence in everything.

Presence is a very important practice. In general many people do not consider presence as practice, but it is something much more important than chanting mantras, etc. If you are present and become familiar with that and are not distracted, it is not so difficult to integrate that presence in instant presence. Being in instant presence means you are in the state of Dzogchen and the state of contemplation and that is the main point of the practice. It is not so easy to be in instant presence because we are living in dualistic vision, and for that reason it is very important we learn being present and pay attention. Attention and not wanting to be distracted is not really instant presence, but it helps very much and for that reason it is a very valuable practice, a very high level practice, and very useful for living in daily life. In normal life it is much better if you are not distracted.

VAJRA RECITATION

Another very important practice is Vajra Recitation like in the Medium Thun. These three sounds of Om A Hum represent

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the three states and three Vajras. We can do this as a sitting practice or walking somewhere in a garden. It is not so easy at the beginning, but when you become familiar with it is effortless. When you have the idea of the Vajra Recitation it comes naturally. It helps very much because when you do Vajra Recitation it means you are not distracted and you are present. It means you have integrated the power of the three Vajras in your breathing, in your prana vital energy and for that reason it becomes a very powerful protection for you. Its function is to coordinate and strengthen your energy just like the practice of Long Life. It also purifies all our negativities because Om A Hum is the essence of all mantras, representing the three states of all enlightened beings and for that reason it is powerful. If you don't know how to do the direct and indirect breathing you must learn through Yantra Yoga.

DAILY LIFE

EMOTIONS

All these practices are important in daily life. We don't need anything special for these practices. For example, if we do a collective practice, particularly in a city, it takes a long time to meet with people. There are more important practices in daily life. When you wake up you immediately remember Guruyoga with A. If you want to sound it you feel more presence. That depends on your situation. If you wake up and sound A and you are sleeping with your husband or wife or friend, and you wake that person up, they are nervous. That is not good. We are learning how to be present and not distracted, that means we learn how to respect other people. If there are ten people there are ten dimensions and we must respect that. This is something important. Sometimes a husband and wife, or engaged people, fall in love and become blind with their emotions and don't see anything else. It seems perfect, everything is fantastic, but then it is like a color and color slowly, slowly disappears. When there are fewer emotions you discover that you and your friend have different points of view and there are some problems between you. First you are so very happy so that even when you eat lunch, you want to stay on one chair instead of two. Sometimes even the chair breaks. Later, even two chairs are not comfortable. So you see, this is the real condition.

It is very important if you have a relationship, particularly if they are brother and sister of Vajra, that you construct a serious love, not only emotions. Emotions are relative. It is not necessary that you reject. You know there are two dimensions and you decide to live together, collaborate, pay respect, and help each other, until you become old people. That is the idea. If there is something like this, it is nice. But this is very difficult in this modern society. So this is related to our awareness and we should work that way.

EATING & DRINKING

Then we have the moments of eating and drinking. We always try to be aware, because eating

and drinking are for maintaining our physical body, not only for enjoying. Of course sometimes we can enjoy, but if some food or drink is harmful for us, we know the limit. Practitioners know how to eat and drink with a Ganapuja, but we are not only aware for a Ganapuja; a Ganapuja is an example of how practitioners eat and drink.

In a Sutra teaching, for example, alcohol is forbidden because people have no capacity to control by themselves. For that reason it is forbidden. If something is forbidden, you don't drink it and there is no problem. In the Dzogchen teaching nothing is forbidden and we must be responsible for ourselves, someone else is not responsible. So we need to have capacity to control eating and drinking.

Some people have many problems and become vegetarian and don't eat meat. If you are vegetarian you are not obligated to eat meat. But in the Ganapuja we have meat and alcohol as two objects of samaya. The Ganapuja is not the Sutra system, it is the Vajrayana system. The Vajrayana system means one breaks something forbidden, and learns there is more knowledge, deeper knowledge, so when we say we don't eat meat, we don't want to kill more animals - it is true that when we eat more meat we kill more animals - we must understand the condition of samsara.

For example, the cow is cow, not a human being, not on the path, not following the teachings, and there is no possibility for the cow. A cow can be a cow again, infinitely, someone kills a cow again, but it is not the last time the cow is killed. The cow is killed infinitely, this is the life of the cow, the life of an animal, so in this case then you know that and you use that meat of cow in the Ganapuja, offering to the three roots, offering to your inner mandala and you integrate that meat with your existence empowering with contemplation. Of course that cow has a great relationship with you because you are on the path and you will have realization sooner or later, you have that guarantee. So if you are realized you have infinite quality and quantity of wisdoms. Who can receive these wisdoms? Whoever has good relations with you. At least a bad relation - if they don't have any kind of relation with you cannot communicate. That is why we need to do *trondu*, sending lights and communicating.

So we can understand in this life that you meet a teacher, a teaching, and maybe you think this happened an extraordinary way, but in a real sense there is already a connection with the teaching and teacher. For that reason you meet and that is how you receive wisdom. You follow the teacher and receive the teaching. So these animals can join on the path later because they received that wisdom and they can have an end of samsara and suffering. Otherwise they have no end to samsara. If you know this, then that you have a much higher and deeper knowledge than not killing and eating cows. You can understand. A Dzogchen practitioner not only thinks about cows, meat and animals, but when we eat foods like rice and bread, if you go and see how we produce

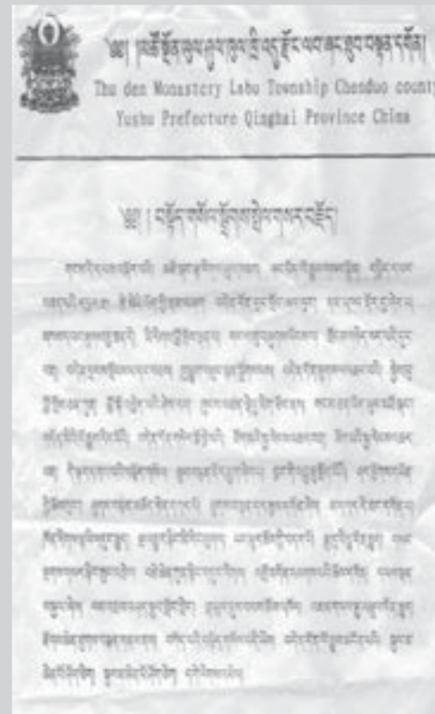
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PRAISE TO CHÖGYAL NAMKHAI NORBU FROM THE THUBTEN DARGYE MONASTERY, QINGHAI

The "Light of Kailash", just like a thunder heralding the grandeur of spring, illuminates the history of Shangshung and Tibet, the high land of divine ancestry surrounded by snowy mountains, explaining the truth in a straightforward manner.

Namkhai Norbu, a scholar with a vast mind (*thugs rgya can*), has blown the conch of the courage of truth, like the sweet song of the cuckoo, to awaken from the sleep of ignorance all the intelligent ones, wherever they might be. As a consequence, all intelligent people interested in the truth (*bden don phugs la 'chang ba*) have obtained an authentic key of knowledge to open the door of their mind, so that the first dawn has arisen (*thog ma'i skya rengs 'char brda*) when the treasury of the true and long history of the ancient people of the high and luminous snowy land has been opened...

With this praise we greatly exhort you to disclose the true history!



SOME CLARIFYING WORDS FROM CHÖGYAL NAMKHAI NORBU REGARDING THE SHANG-SHUNG INSTITUTE, THE REORGANIZATION PROJECT AND INTERNET

Gakyil Meeting at Tsegyalgar Conway, Massachusetts May 19, 2005

"The Shang-Shung Institute is the Dzogchen Community. The Shang-Shung Institute does not exist outside of the Dzogchen Community. The Shang-Shung Institute is more public and the Dzogchen Community is more related to the teaching, the spiritual path. The base is the Dzogchen Community, not the Shang-Shung Institute, not ASIA, and not The Mirror. My clarity is what Yeshe [Namkhai] is working on in Merigar. We should see Merigar as an example. Merigar is connected with all the other Dzogchen Communities, particularly the Gars. Yeshe is working for the entire International Community, even if he works from Merigar. One day it [the Reorganization Project] will become something concrete. The Gars need to work directly with Yeshe before using this model or it will not work.

You can invite Yeshe, but he is very busy and his time is very limited. Of course, if there is a possibility he would like to come, but to go to four or five different Gars is not so easy for him. In this case it is better that the four or five Gars try and send someone to learn and work with Yeshe a little more. They can come back to their Gar with an understanding of what to do. That way we can develop something more alive, otherwise it is not so easy.

The Gars should inform Yeshe that they are sending people to Merigar. These people can come to the retreat and also come to learn from Yeshe. That doesn't mean that Yeshe is giving lessons every day, but he will work together with people and show them how to proceed. It is best if these people have a little more skill and know computers. Today everybody has a little expertise in computers; at least they know how to look at the Internet. People can look at Yeshe's and Merigar's program on the Internet and then better understand the project. I do not look so much on the Internet, but it is really very important to look at all parts of the Dzogchen Community and different Dharma centers; particularly Dharma centers we some connection with. You should look a little and see how they are manifesting. Then you can understand how they work and you are not ignorant. I have been studying the Internet and looking at all these Dharma centers. I have discovered many things I had no idea about."

INFORMATION FROM THE MERIGAR GAKYIL

Dear Friends,

As you know, in the context of the ongoing reorganization of the Dzogchen Community, membership is becoming of fundamental importance.

Thanks to a careful revision of the different types of membership and to the quality of services offered, it is now possible for everyone to become a member, regardless of one's income (those who have a monthly income equal to, or less than 700 euro, can have membership for 50 euro and also receive a 50 % discount on courses and retreats).

For this reason, all complimentary passes for Rinpoche's retreats, as well as work exchange, have been cancelled. Those who collaborate in organizing the retreats, at any level, either qualified or in a general way, are encouraged to do so in Karma Yoga.

Nevertheless, in the present process of growth, the Community very much needs the support of sustaining members. For this reason a lot of benefits are offered to these members. If we are able to reach the goal of 1000 sustaining members in the whole of Europe, financial support for the Community would be guaranteed without having to depend on our Master's retreats.

So we warmly encourage those who have a role of responsibility within the Community (teachers, instructors, Gakyil members and so forth) to apply as sustaining members, if their financial conditions permit them to do so.

With our best greetings

The Merigar Gakyil.

Dancing on the Universal Mandala

The Inauguration of the Universal Mandala
May 10, 2005
Khandroling, Buckland, Massachusetts

Some Words from the Dancers

I was not so excited about inauguration of Universal Mandala [May 10, 2005] because I was so nervous about the Santi Maha Sangha Level II exam that was to take place the next week. I was very nervous about the SMS exam because many mice eat my memory box continuously. There is nothing else to say other than dancing on the Universal Mandala was quite an unexpected experience for me, an experience that all came together through the



costume. Now back home, I am in a kind of shock as I try to verbalize the experience and wonder if I sound like a new age, babbling and kind of annoying girl. Maybe I have seen too many star war or science fiction films.

In general, costumes have never has been very appealing to me, probably because of strong karmic vision from my theater background. I have always been bigger than the very small size girls most costumes are designed for. The result was that I always felt restricted in the movement of my body by the costume; it was not nice and a bit frustrating. I felt like I did not fit in an image, an image that doesn't fit the size of my body.

The costume of the Vajra Dance is really wonderful for me - its weight, colors, shapes, sound, really, it makes me fully happy, like I have finally found my real skin. The costume deepens the movement of the Vajra Dance for me and gives me an experience of infinite joy. I am very lyrical about it, but that is how it is for me.

I had a kind of memory when I saw all the Vajra Dancers in their costumes, maybe of my true nature. When I saw Adriana and Anastasia, Bodhi from the back with Rinpoche's symbol sewn there, all the *pawos* and *pamos* in their costumes, I seemed to recognize everyone better; they were all more familiar. Then we started the practice with Rinpoche and everyone around the big Universal Mandala that was so generously donated, painted and

made beautiful by the collaboration of the people of Tsegylgar! We got up and entered from the east entrance the Mandala. We stood around, *pamo* and *pawo*. It was a big walk from the edge of the Mandala of the Universe to the red thigle of our earth mandala, like traversing time and space. We started the same as always, that Vajra Dance we know, with A, and we entered the Dance. It was like my *yab*, Bodhi, fell from another dimension, out of the sky and into my arms. Was it because it was a new Mandala? It was a surprise, all of the dance, like learning a new kind of Vajra Dance.

"Mind blowing" are the only words to describe how it was to dance on that Mandala at Khandroling, on that big, colorful mandala, with the colors of *pamo* and *pawo* passing through my vision, color shooting everywhere, opening spaces through the five colored triangles and *thigles* that seem to emerge everywhere we moved; opening new spaces and ways in our dimension, in our bodies, energy and minds. The trees turned and the sky was so blue, a part of this all, in it all and containing all of this true beauty.

This Dance still working somehow and I do not understand what is really happening, but it is strong and I am full of happiness. I am curious about where all this comes from and goes to and then,



in the end, it doesn't really matter. It is part of my state and just another experience. It was so joyful to have our Master and all our dear practitioners around the Mandala singing the Song of the Vajra, making the dedication, listening to the bells on our costumes as the sign that we are to walk out of the mandala and spend time with all.

Taking off the new skin that felt strong, I put on my normal clothes because it is not possible to go around in our world with these clothes and skin. We need to integrate that knowledge in a way that corresponds with the local attitude. During the inauguration, while wearing the Vajra



Impressions from the Dance

Dancing on the Universal Mandala on May 10 was like dancing in a dimension beyond time, where the security of steps and movements done countless times guided me through. The dualistic mind, unusually, was not full of judgments, thoughts or noise. At the beginning there was some fear that quickly dissolved. Dancing with all the Vajra Dancers in their costumes was a very interesting experience. Somehow we were no longer separate identities on the Mandala, but instead, twelve people as a vortex of color and movement led by a profound sound.

Adriana dal Borgo

A
Essence Mandala
Pure Color Dimension
Effortless Relaxed
Timeless Movement

Presence Instant
Thigle Total Universe
Energy Singing
Vajra Body Resonating

Natural Bliss Manifestations
Vajra Samaya
Vajra Dance
Vajra Family

Sky Blue
Jewel Dreamer
HA!

Bodhi Krause



Something happened after putting on the costume and entering into the Universal Mandala. At first the costumes looked a bit silly outside of the Mandala, but when the 12 dancers moved inside the costumes began to make sense. They merged and blended with the Mandala. Magic emerged. Unknown vibrations were running through my body; I felt no separation from the other dancers. I had a feeling of joy and bliss that lasted for days after the ceremony.

Kyu



Dance costumes, *pamo* and *pawo* in good timing on the Mandala, everything manifested so strongly that it shifted something deep inside and it feels like I arrived at or recognized my home. At this moment I am in a bit of a weird space; I feel to cry from happiness especially when I write and think about this Dance on the Universal Mandala. Now I had better move in a more practical way and see if I can be as happy cleaning the house!

Stoffelina Verdonk

My experience when we danced on the Mandala during the inauguration was as if a key was opening or a flower was bursting open. It was very powerful.

Marit Cranmer

ALL PHOTOS BY ROMAIN PIRO

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu's Visit to Mexico City

Introduction to Dzogchen
March 20-27, 2005

by Carolyn Bass

Rinpoche and Fabio arrived in Mexico City on March 20th and a small group of us headed for the hotel where we swam daily with Rinpoche on the warm spring afternoons at his

day. Four people that met three days prior to the retreat on an obscure beach on the Mexican Pacific Coast arrived in an RV camper after receiving a flyer about the retreat from a Frenchman on the beach that had gotten it from a friend in a discotheque in France! Miracles do occur! Several children attended as well, and everyone seemed blessed to have received the



Aerial view of 2 mandalas welcoming Rinpoche

C BASS

hotel. On that first day, we enjoyed a big Mexican lunch complete with a trio from the State of Veracruz and prepared for the public talk Rinpoche would give on March 22nd.

We were a bit worried about the turnout during Easter Week, called *Semana Santa*, as the majority of the city takes off for the holiday. However, as we greeted and registered the attendees, we had to keep asking for more chairs, and happily report that two hundred eighty-five listened attentively to Rinpoche's Introduction to Dzogchen.

Many participants picked up retreat information. We had planned to hold the three-day retreat near Mexico City to ensure that Our Master would be comfortable at a lower altitude and clean air (though the smog is usually very light due to reduced traffic), so we rented a camp facility for kids in Valle de Bravo, two hours from Mexico City.

A very generous family of practitioners donated a helicopter and plane for travel, so we made the trip in eighteen minutes, with Rinpoche viewing the city and the countryside as we approached the site. We had placed our two Mandalas on the grass near the landing site (soccer field) and Rinpoche smiled and pointed and said "Mandala" as we flew in. The pilot did a brief detour to show us the natural lake in Valle and then turned and made a couple of turns over the camp and we landed. About thirty people had arrived to greet us, though the retreat did not begin until the following day. Rinpoche stayed at a private home there and enjoyed many gourmet meals prepared by Monica, a renowned chef in Mexico. He also was able to swim daily in a warm, indoor pool and had a few people over to play pool volleyball.

Two weeks prior to the retreat, we had eighty registrations. By 3PM, on March 24th, the opening day, we had 218! For the Ganapuja on the 26th, over 250 attended. Most stayed in fifteen-bed dorms, over forty camped in a beautiful open space and others came from town each

Teachings from Our Master.

We held the teachings in the covered basketball court, which we decorated with *thankas*, banners, an altar, and we hung prayer flags throughout the grounds. Rinpoche gave an in-depth explanation of the Dzogchen Teachings that included many of his own experiences. The majority of those attending practice some sort of Buddhism or Hinduism traditions. Jey Clark from Tsegylgar West gave explanations of the teachings on two days. Nelida Saporiti served as Rinpoche's translator and offered dance instruction for the Dance of the Three Vajras. There were so many people attending all events that it was hard to bide by the time constraints for the explanations for the Dance and the Yantra Yoga course offered by Fabio Andrico, but all were very enthusiastic. After dinner all three evenings, we built a bonfire and sang songs, listened to eclectic tunes by the group, enjoyed a standup monologue and laughed and shared.

On Monday morning after the retreat we took Rinpoche on a small tour that included interaction with several peacocks, parrots and dogs. He asked the largest male peacock to manifest and he did, right on cue! We took the helicopter to Toluca Airport, west of Mexico City, and then boarded a private plane to *Los Cabos*, thanks to our generous donors.

We spoke with Rinpoche and now have a *Ling* in Mexico City, with six *Gakyil* members. On Rinpoche's advice, we were able to make a donation to the Baja Gar. We are completing a survey to determine the number of persons interested in the practices, and hope to continue to grow and host Rinpoche again next year. We are truly blessed to have had him in Mexico and pray for Long Life to Our Master and the Dzogchen Teachings.

TWO RETREATS WITH CHÖGYAL NAMKHAÏ NORBU MERIGAR, SUMMER 2005

Please note that the SMS Level III exam and Level IV training have been cancelled. The SMS Base Level exam and Level I training will be held instead on the same dates in July.

JULY

Fri. July 1st - Tue. 5th
Retreat with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu
(Open to everyone)
'Vaidurya'i Chun-phyangs of Paltrul Rinpoche,
Advice on how to follow the teaching and do practice'
The retreat starts on Friday at 16.00
Cost: 250 euro
This retreat will be also transmitted via web cast

AUGUST

Wed. August 10th - Tue. 16th
Retreat with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu
"Lama Yeshe's Khadro'i Thugthig,
the Essence of the Heart of Guru Jnanadhakini &
A simple practice of Guru Jnanadhakini.
The retreat starts on Wednesday at 16.00
Cost: 350 euro (open to everyone)

Merigar - 58031 Arcidosso (GR) - Italy
Tel.: (39) 0564 966837
Fax: (39) 0564 968110
Email: merigaroffice@tiscali.it
Web site: www.dzogchen.it

The office is open every day from 9.30 to 13.00
On Saturday it is also open from 14.30 - 17.30
Closed Thursday and Sunday

Safeguarding Rinpoche's Talks & Teachings

An important message to all Gars and Gakyils about new norms to respect when recording Chögyal Namkhai Norbu's talks and teachings.

Merigar, April 7, 2005

Dear Gars and Gakyils of the International Dzogchen Community,

As many of you know, for a long time the Shang-Shung Institute of Merigar has been given by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu the task of maintaining the Central Archives of His teachings and to protect His Copyright and image (likeness), within the International Dzogchen Community. The protection of Rinpoche's copyright and likeness has become more and more delicate and important in our age of easy duplication of digital recordings and of rapid diffusion of content via the Internet and other means. To cope with these new circumstances, the old informal arrangements are no more sufficient.

In the context of the Reorganization Project under way in Merigar, a new legal arrangement has been envisaged to provide better copyright and likeness protection for Rinpoche, both inside and outside the Community. Effective the 1st of October, 2004, Yuchen Namkhai, as Director of the Shang-Shung Institute, has been legally appointed by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu as the Proprietor of His copyright and license, worldwide. Thanks to this assignment, Yuchen Namkhai and the Shang-Shung Institute will be legally entitled to effectively protect the copyright and likeness of our Master, both inside and outside the Dzogchen Community. As part of this legal arrangement all Gars and Gakyils, when organizing teaching retreats or public talks by Rinpoche, are required to sign a contract with Yuchen Namkhai and the Shang-Shung Institute. This contract is indispensable to legally record Rinpoche's teachings/talks.

Please find an attached copy* of this Authorization, which must be printed, signed by a legal representative of the organizing Gar or Gakyil, and sent to: Yuchen Namkhai, Director, Shang-Shung Institute for Tibetan Studies, Loc. Podere Nuovissimo 58031 Arcidosso (GR) Italy.

Please find attached* a copy of the new official Dzogchen Community Policy regulating recording activities during all teaching retreats and public talks given by Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, all over the world, as well as copy of a Recording Report to be filled by the local Gakyil and sent by email to the Shang-Shung Institute of Merigar.

Local Gakyils members and Shang-Shung Institute Staff will be in charge for applying this policy and procedure during all relevant events.

The documents mentioned above are drafts and will be finalized on the basis of the feedback we will receive from you. Please do not hesitate to write to the Shang Shung Institute at ssinst@tiscali.it in case you need any clarification.

Thanking all of you for your collaboration,

With Tashi Delegs,
Sergio Quaranta, Director, Merigar Gakyil
Yuchen Namkhai, Director, The Shang-Shung Institute

* The Mirror is not able to provide all these documents. Please email Shang Shung Institute at ssinst@tiscali.it for further information.

Baja 2005 - View from a Mountain

THE *DZOGCHEN RIGPAI KUJYUG* (SONG OF TOTAL PRESENCE) INSTRUCTIONS RETREAT

Baja California, Mexico
April 1-4, 2005



by John Bidleman

View is everything. No matter what you think you see it is tempered by the nature of your view. That's one of the essential aspects of working in groups, forging everyone's individual outlook into a unified vision and moving ahead with a consensual view.

Not every person under the sun is able to temper his or her view to accommodate the whole. This is one of the daily activities that cement a community, the ability to see as a group. It's not the problems that occur, there will always be problems; it's how we deal with those problems. We don't wish for "no problems", that is a dualistic and futile endeavor. Instead we deal with problems as a group; never an easy task but always necessary.

The 2005 retreat at the Jardin de los Naranjos was no exception. Every retreat sees its share of problems. After seeing the Community in Baja coalesce from an uncoordinated group in 2002 to a real Community in 2005, I became aware that one of the hallmarks of this group was the ability to drop personal outlooks and move ahead as a group. While the retreat preparations began early enough in January (and before) the urgency increased as February came to a close. The realization that we had too few people and very little money became a looming cloud. Scott Schroeder's inspired design for a teaching area, the toilets, the kitchen not to mention the all-important accommodations for the Master, were slowly eating into the little time we had before the retreat.

Somehow, by pulling together, every goal, small and large, was accomplished. True, there was work going on when the first retreatant pulled up the driveway and work going on throughout the retreat, but there was also a unified feeling of Community. As March rolled out of February and obstacles arose, there were some incredible efforts both individual and group. Rodrigo Villalobos, Andres Orvananos, Joel Crisp greeted Melissa Johnston and Charlene Mc Laughlin who came to design and manage the kitchen. While the kitchen was expanded Scott, Andres and Joel, along with Agustin and others, finished the construction of the teaching tent.

As the few remaining tasks

were accomplished Jacob Braverman, John Bidleman and Andres greeted Rinpoche as he arrived via private jet from Mexico City (compliments of the Couchonnal family). Even as Rinpoche was driven up the

mountain, work was being performed on his casita. While details came to haunt us (garlic, soap, etc) there was a general feeling of relaxation as soon as the Master was relaxing in his room.

As 250+ people from all over the world arrived for the retreat more and more of the lacking elements began to coalesce. Scott and Jacob made the final connections to the extended water system while Paddy and Marek knocked out the last of the badly needed tables. While this may seem less than compelling reading it's best to understand that the details underlying this retreat highlight personal endeavor beyond the normal call of duty. Gakyil members and pioneers alike extended their personal energy as well as funds to overcome what seemed at times to be impossible roadblocks.

The moment arrived when Rinpoche made the walk from his casita and began a surprise teaching of *Dzogchen Rigpai Kujyug* (Song of Total Presence) absorbed by all. The fact that he was in the throes of an upper respiratory distress he managed to shine for all of us, later reminding us that he has given over 350 retreats in his lifetime; a fact that carried immense meaning to everyone, meaning beyond numbers.

While retreats are rarely about revenue, the Baja Community saw most of the basic infrastructure that was sorely needed for the future being put into place. This is no small feat.

While there are always a few echoes of displeasure after a retreat, the most prevalent comment was how everything went well. It's a great reminder how view can determine your experience. A new Gakyil was elected and plans for the future sparked through the group. Rinpoche gave us all a direction for the land. As people dwindled and things again became quiet there remained a feeling of progress. Progress not only in achieving the retreat preparation, of installing some infrastructure and living through it all but rather of weathering what seemed at times to be a storm and doing it together. No greater was the sense of being "in the boat together" than here in the hurricane desert of Baja.

The Eagle Soared above the Canyons of Topanga

THE *KHYUNG CHEN DINGWA*, SOARING EAGLE RETREAT WITH CHÖGYAL NAMKHAI NORBU RINPOCHE

April 13-17, 2005
Los Angeles, California

by Chiara and Dani Colajacomo

Topanga Canyon is where we live: my husband Daniele, the kids, the dogs, the cats, the turtle, and me, and being such an harmonious place for all different kinds of beings we thought it a good place for Rinpoche to rest during his retreat in Los Angeles.

Topanga means "between the sea and the mountains" and used to be a sacred burial place for the Chumash [Native American] people who inhabited these magic canyons many, many years before the traffic turned it into a short cut for Los Angelinos commuting between the mountains and the sea.

The community house of Topanga is just a 15-minute car ride, and this is where we have decided to hold the "Soaring



Rinpoche and Peter at the fundraising dinner

N ZEITZ



West Coast Community meeting

N ZEITZ

Eagle" retreat with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche this spring of 2005.

Before the winter our LA Sangha had reserved the space for the teachings, found hotels and sleeping accommodations for the guests, contacted a friend who is a caterer to give easy access to meals in this relatively remote area of LA. We had reserved the Yantra Yoga and Vajra Dance teachers' time, even started the process for opening a bank account for managing the retreat finances. As usual, the illusion here in LA is that the whole "production" is completely under control and then the rain started.

As the saying goes: "when it rains it pours", and it couldn't have been more literally true in Topanga this winter. The first effect of the record breaking rain was that a two-story high boulder, now known as the "Topanga Rock", then known as "the mother of all pebbles", rolled down the canyon's wall and landed in the middle of the highway that runs through Topanga Canyon, the only road from the valley to the sea, and immediately became an object of worship that gave birth to the "save the rock" movement.

After the Rock was blasted away, the rain continued and there were more and more mud and rock slides. The road to our house was washed out on one side and covered with a foot of slippery mud on the other; the water pipes that ran up the side of the hill were washed off with part of the hill just below our house. The house that was supposed to accommodate our great Teacher Chögyal Namkhai Norbu now had no access and no water.

It could have been a difficult situation for some, but here in Topanga if there is enough room for a car to slip by in and out of the Canyon there is still hope and here is where faith spontaneously arose, after all we were the lucky practitioners with the amazing task of bringing Rinpoche's perfect teachings to the people of LA, many of whom had never met him before. What was some rain and mud going to do against this powerful event?

Needless to say that my faith was continuously interrupted by attacks of fear about the color of the curtains not matching the bed spread in Rinpoche's bedroom, and nightmares of forgetting about Rinpoche's diet and adding salt to his food; all in all though I reminded myself all along of our Teacher

most succinct advise "relax, relax and relax".

Rinpoche and Fabio arrived at our home on the late afternoon of April 11th, the end of a perfectly warm spring day; the rains were long gone and the hills covered with a luscious green the birds busily chattering all around the house. A few moments later Rinpoche was sitting just outside the kitchen door and my heart was pounding and tears of relief were pushing through. Finally the day had arrived, this was the beginning of a wonderful journey with Rinpoche as our beloved guest, a fortunate possibility to give all that I'm able to give, with my limited capabilities, to my root master who is giving more

than anybody is able to ask for.

After three days the retreat started, about 200 people attended, enough to fill the space we had available without leaving anybody out. During the retreat Rinpoche, who had not taught in

Southern California for seven years, clarified the profound meaning of one of the first five Dzogchen texts translated into Tibetan by Vairocana, the great 8th century teacher:

Listen, great being! As all that appears to perception is one's pure and total consciousness, there is not object of the view. As all is in the non-discursive state, all is equality. This is the state of the sky, and this named "yoga" [knowledge of the authentic condition].

When objects of the five senses are perceived in their natural clarity, without judging, they too are the state of the sky: the yogin abides in this condition.

When tries to examine the absolute state by means of words and letter and then recognizes that the absolute cannot at all be examined in this manner, one remains in the natural condition of the non-discursive state: this too is the state of the sky.

Like the sky, this reality, that cannot become the object of thought, has existed since the beginning.

The retreat, for the first time ever, was video web cast to all the Gars, thanks to the tireless efforts of the Ambient Web team! Between the people at the Gars, and the people who connected to the audio web cast, we estimated that over 1,500 individuals attended the small Topanga retreat!

Every morning Anastasia McGhee would teach Vajra Dance, at 10am Rinpoche would start the teachings, sometimes patiently waiting a few minutes until all the web cast "glitches" had been ironed out and Yeshe [Namkhai] from his house in Grosseto, Italy, gave the "all clear" signal through a chat window. In the afternoon Jey Clark explained the practices and Oni McKinstry taught Yantra Yoga.

On the eve of the last day, after the Ganapuja, Sue Hall organized a dinner in honor of Peter and Alison, who have donated the land in Baja to the Dozgchen Community. Through tireless work, Sue also contacted well-known artists who then donated some of their work to the evening auction, with proceeds going to the winter Gar of North America.

The following day after the retreat, a jolly gathering of practitioners celebrated our Master and the precious opportunity he has once again donated to awaken us from the slumber of our clarity.

The tiny Southern California Community has since grown to accommodate the lucky practitioners who found themselves ready to step on the path after the retreat. Besides biweekly explanations and practices, in June, we will have our first Santi Maha Sangha Base retreat, which is truly a great step for our little Community.

A L A L A H O

NEW YORK CITY RETREAT WITH CHÖGYAL NAMKHAI NORBU

Dzogchen Semde Teaching and Transmission of Tsalchen April 27 – May 1, 2005

by Oscar Montero

There is a festive, town square feeling at the beginning of any retreat. Then there is the quiet as Chögyal Namkhai Norbu strides purposefully to the stage. This moment of transition was especially poignant on the second night of the New York retreat, Thursday April 28, 2005. After Rinpoche went up to the stage, sat down and arranged his papers, there was a long period of silence. It seemed to be the unspoken introduction to a recurring topic in this retreat's teachings: observe yourselves. This, he would later explain, is the base of all of our practice.

The New York City retreat took place in the social room of St. Vartan's Cathedral, at the corner of 34th St. and Second Avenue, the heart of a bustling New York neighborhood. On Wednesday, April 27th, the retreat began with an opening talk that introduced Dzogchen Semde, the topic of the teachings. Over two hundred people attended it. In his comments Rinpoche pointed out the role of dreams and the importance of transmission in the teachings.

Friday evening Rinpoche explained what happens when an individual encounters many different teachings. Of course it is possible to integrate all teachings, but "problems with the teachings" may arise out of our limitations, which are not at all inherent in any teaching. If an individual is like a bee, hopping from flower to flower, from teacher to teacher, problems may develop, not because teachings are incompatible, but because of the limitations of individuals.

In a sense the Saturday teaching proved to be the heart of this retreat. Rinpoche translated directly from the text of Dzogchen Tsalchen and discussed the significance of "emptiness," for example as manifested in the space between one thought and another, he said. Sutra teachings emphasize emptiness, and there are many techniques for discovering instant presence, but these techniques themselves are

not instant presence. The teacher may ask: What is the function of the mirror? What is the function of eyeglasses? One reflects; the others are to see with. They are quite different. The mirror is the representation of our real nature; the eyeglasses are a tool, like many different kinds of practices. Rinpoche also gave a compact definition of Dharmakaya: pure dimension, emptiness; Sambhogakaya, the manifestation of infinite potentiality; Nirmanakaya, the material level, the physical level.

Rinpoche explained that when speaking of the path, people often say that there is point of view, meditation and attitude. In Sutra and Tantra teachings the point of view involves studying and developing the capacity to carry out various practices. In Dzogchen, the main point of view is "observing yourself, since you have already that since the beginning." The problem is that in samsara, Rinpoche added, our nature hardens and becomes like a rock, in the same way that water hardens and becomes ice in a cold dimension. The same substance can have dramatically different qualities, just as our real nature is immutable yet it can manifest in so many ways, fluid and clear like water or as hard and gray as a block of ice.

Characteristically, Rinpoche presented anecdotes from his own experience to clarify certain points. For example, he said that as a young man he studied in the Sakyapa tradition. Then he learned the Gelugpa way, and thus, he added, a person might come to think that one way is better than the other. But "presence" is not about that. The comparisons and limitations we impose on ourselves are the product of the confusion of samsara. Integration is not about a potpourri of teachings. Presence might be compared to the experience of driving a car, something that is familiar to many of us, he said. Many things go by as we drive; we may talk to our friends in the car, but we must remain focused on the road ahead, or we may have an accident! Of course secondary practices are useful, in the same way that an umbrella is useful when it rains, but later, when the sun shines, we don't need that umbrella any longer. It is excellent to dedicate an hour for practicing everyday, but what happens the other twenty-three

hours? So in daily life and in dreams, we must carry on the practice of being present. Otherwise, he said, an individual may be like a baby, happy one moment, wailing the next. On the contrary, instant presence governs all circumstances. And then one might enjoy the fruits of our practice: nothing to reject, nothing to accept, no heaviness, less physical problems, happiness of mind, dreams of clarity, less reliance on words, less questions. All of these manifestations benefit not just one individual but all sentient beings. Even in suffering, you need not be afraid; it too is integrated.

On Saturday evening, there was a Ganapuja, smoothly orchestrated by members of the New York community and many volunteers. There was a very successful auction, organized by Johanna Bennett. During the weekend Andrea Nasca gave an informative presentation on Asia, and Steve Korn presented a compelling account of the different manifestations of the Dance Mandala, with images beamed in from all over the world. Every morning, there was expert dance instruction from Adriana dal Borgo, assisted by Anastasia McGhee, on the two Mandalas set up over the carpeted floor. In the afternoons, there was Yantra Yoga, taught by Paula Barry.

On Sunday, May 1, Rinpoche concluded saying that if it is properly applied, the teachings become useful for living in society. The teachings end, which is a sign of impermanence, but they must become concrete in daily life: it is, he said, a way to achieve "relaxing governed by presence: nothing in Dzogchen practice is forced. We work with circumstances and pay respect." The teachings concluded with further detailed explanation of Guru Yoga. As he often does, Rinpoche generously provided transmission of many important teachings. As we day throughout the retreat, we concluded with a practice of Guruyoga.

As I was leaving, I overheard a woman talking to her friend about what she had just heard. "I've had many wonderful teachers," she said, "but Namkhai Norbu..." Then she made a forceful gesture, cutting through the air with her right arm, like a karate chop. "You mean he cuts to the heart of it", her friend replied.

ChNN Teaching continued from page 3

rice in the fields, killing millions and millions of animals, then indirectly there is really no difference between a cow and a small piece of bread. It is very important you are always aware, eat with awareness and create a good relationship with these sentient beings. The first thing is your presence and the second thing is that you empower with Om A Hum, the supremely powerful mantra. If you have knowledge, even you don't use any kind of words or pronounce mantras, etc., and you are just in a state of Guruyoga for only one second, you can empower in that way. It is important not to eat and drink in a distracted way.

NIGHT PRACTICE & DREAMS

Another important time is nighttime. Nighttime is half our lives. In the nighttime we sleep, and while we sleep we should do practice. We call that the practice of night, practice of dream, but in the real sense we are doing Guruyoga. We get in the bed and remember Guruyoga, the presence of the white A and thigle, we relax and relax and then fall asleep. For some people this practice is easy and some people find it difficult. Some people have a problem

ChNN Teaching continued on page 20

THE ESSENCE OF THE HEART OF GURU JNANADHAKKINI LONGSAL RETREAT WITH CHÖGYAL NAMKHAI NORBU RINPOCHE TSEGYALGAR, MAY 6-8, 2005



Rinpoche greets Tibetans at the SSI Dinner at Tsegialgar

R. PIRO

by Janis Page

As Rinpoche continues to share with us his precious and profound Longsal Teachings with such patience and generosity, at Tsegialgar this May we gratefully received his Longsal Teachings on "The Essence of the Heart of Guru Jnanadhakini." These teachings have a very special importance among our teachings and practices in the Dzogchen Community, because these are the teachings Rinpoche received of the Dakini Gomadevi here on the retreat land at Khandroling – the teachings that gave birth to our beautiful Vajra Dance, which Rinpoche has said is our most profound practice.

This retreat was an important part of a long-awaited event – the dedication of the Universal Mandala at Khandroling, the Land of Dakinis where the Vajra Dances were born. As such, the retreat brought several hundred of our Vajra brothers and sisters from near and far, including many long-time practitioners from Europe and elsewhere, to participate in this most auspicious occasion; having experienced the dance as the profound and precious practice that it is and wanting to receive these teachings and participate in this historical event. Rinpoche explained the importance of Khandroling as an important pilgrimage site for those interested in the transmission, the teachings, and the Vajra Dance.

The first evening of the retreat, Rinpoche introduced the Dakini and told us about some of the dreams he had with Gomadevi, who represents the essence of all Dakinis. He explained that the main point of the teachings is the essence of our real nature, and that we should try to discern that, to understand that the practice is good for realization, but also good for living in real life...

The next morning began with instruction of the Vajra Dance of the Three Vajras, taught ably by Adriana dal Borgo. Then, Rinpoche gave us the transmission and the practice instructions for the Guruyoga of Guru Jnanadhakini (*Lama Yeshe Khadro'i Thugthig*). That afternoon, Constantino Albini, Santi Maha Sangha teacher visiting us from Merigar, kindly offered an explanation of this simple, eloquent practice. Saturday evening we celebrated a Jnanadhakini Ganapuja, followed by a Tsegialgar fundraising auction/party with John LaFrance, Mark Angevine and Malcolm Smith as the noble auctioneers. The auction went late into the evening, and proceeds from the wonderful array of donated items, including beautiful calligraphy of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, brought in funds for the many projects planned for Khandroling – a cover for the Universal Mandala is needed, more retreat cabins built, the road improved, work needed on the farmhouse on the land, and much more.

Sunday, the morning began with further instruction in Vajra Dance with Adriana dal Borgo, then this final day of teachings for this retreat with Rinpoche, he led us in this lovely Gomadevi Guruyoga practice, and offered advice and comments. Later, Fabio Andrico presented an introduction to Yantra Yoga, followed by additional instruction and practice with Constantino Albini.

There was yet another special event Sunday evening – a fundraising dinner for Shang-Shung Institute, to which the local Tibetan community was invited – a feast with delectable Tibetan food. The Tibetan singer Lobsang Gyalsten delighted us with his amazing Tibetan singing, and then all the Tibetans performed traditional folk song and dance. The microphone was open, and many other community members offered song as well. The feast was ample and delicious, and the entertainment was delightful!

As always, it was wonderful to greet old friends and meet new ones, and inevitably, the bookstore was a hotspot with its wealth of practice materials. All of the Tsegialgar staff worked hard and well to organize such a lovely and smooth retreat.

What a precious opportunity to receive the transmission of the Gomadevi Guruyoga, and then to practice it with Rinpoche at the Dedication of the Mandala on the beautiful, magical land at Khandroling. We hope that many of our Vajra brothers and sisters do make the pilgrimage to visit Khandroling, to see and dance on the Universal Mandala on this magical and empowering land of the Dakinis, where Rinpoche was when Gomadevi came, and the Vajra Dance came to be. Thank you Rinpoche for your unending kindness and generosity to us!

Universal Mandala Day, J Gens, continued from page 1

vortex of this energy in the presence of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu who is the source from which this all emanates.

This day is a happy one for everyone especially Rinpoche who presides over the events bundled in blankets and fleece against the spring chills which come and go. One by one practitioners sing songs of dedication and joy, tell stories. Last but not least, Phuntsog Wangmo and Lobsang Gyalsten lead everyone in a Tibetan line dance as Rinpoche sings along before retiring to an old fashioned picnic. We could be in Tibet or Buckland, Massachusetts, no matter which, the transmission is alive and well. On this day we transcend the personal and enter the Universal Mandala – true Vajra brothers and sisters forever bridging the ancient past with future generations who will continue to dance this most sacred of practices for all time in the human realm.

**SHANG-SHUNG INSTITUTE US
INAUGURATES NEW FOUR YEAR PROGRAM
IN TIBETAN MEDICINE**

Beginning in the fall of 2005, the US branch of Shang-Shung Institute will begin a newly designed four-year program under the direction of Dr. Phuntsog Wangmo that will closely parallel the training of a traditional Tibetan physician. To accommodate the different needs of individuals participating in the course several options are available. These include a residential program taught in classes at the Shang Shung Institute in Conway, Massachusetts beginning September 6, 2005, an accelerated apprenticeship program for people with some background in Tibetan medicine, and an eventual on-line program utilizing live web casts in an on-line learning environment and balanced with brief residencies at SSI every semester. A fourth option exists which allows individuals to take smaller modules on specific topics on Tibetan Medicine that can later be applied toward the four-year curriculum. The National Certification Commission has approved the Kunye Massage module for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine – (NCCAOM) for Continuing Education Credits (CEU's).

The core of Shang-Shung's Tibetan medicine program is based on the book *rYud bzhi* (gyud-zhi), the major teaching and clinical reference in all Tibetan medical schools. Other course content in the program include: ethics for Tibetan doctors, Tibetan astrology, Tibetan medical history, Tibetan language, elements of Tibetan Buddhism that relate to Tibetan Medicine, Tza- rLung practice (Tibetan Yoga), and Tibetan Element Therapy. The residential program consists of eight semesters meeting 20 hours a week at the Shang Shung Institute in Conway, Massachusetts amounting to about 320 hours of class time each semester. The apprenticeship program will be determined on an individual basis balancing class time with work in the clinic under the supervision of the director of the program, Dr. Phuntsog Wangmo.

Over the **four-year duration of the program**, students should expect to engage in the following class formats:

Combination of **fundamental theory classes** and **other related courses** outlined by semester.

Herbs & Medicine Preparation: students will spend time outdoors observing herbs in their natural settings, as taught in traditional Tibetan medical schools.

Clinical training: over the first three semesters all students will spend time in clinical observation with one instructor. From the fourth to sixth semester, three to five students will share a teacher as clinical supervisor. Over the last semester, students will intern with their supervisor, demonstrating a proficiency in the knowledge they gained over the previous three and a half years.

Affiliation with some Tibetan medical colleges and Menzikhang (a regional/local traditional hospital). This affiliation will enhance the quality of the program by providing opportunities to visit schools and hospitals in their local settings. This experience will also form the basis for a rich cultural exchange. Dr. Phuntsog Wangmo is currently negotiating a location in Tibet.

In this program students will develop an understanding of the basic knowledge of all the different aspects of Tibetan cultural studies. In particular, students will specialize in Tibetan medicine by correctly understanding the origin, conception, principles, physiology, characteristics, purposes, contents, classifications, birth, living, death, prevention, and diagnoses, and treatment of Tibetan medicine to alleviate human physical and mental suffering. One objective of the program is to conduct scientific research on the efficacy of Tibetan medicine.

Diagnostic Tools:

Observation: Urine observation, and observation of body shape, complexion, eyelids, eyes, tongue, and nails.

Palpation: Pulse readings, and palpating to sense temperature, growths, and changes.

Interviewing: Asking questions about a patient's age, gender, general health more subjectively, environment, condition and its cause.

Treatment:

Students will understand the basic concepts of tastes, properties, and post-digestion to modify and apply appropriate treatment.

The principle of treatment follows the guideline that states, "The body, the disease, and treatment share a principle which is the element theory." By following this guideline, students will be able to correctly diagnose, and treat diseases.

For further information and to request a complete brochure outlining the curriculum, financial information, dates and other details, please contact the US Shang - Shung Institute at liz@shangshung.org or www.shangshung.org to view a PDF of the brochure.

THE KA-TER TRANSLATION PROJECT

The Ka-ter Translation Project is the main activity of the Shang-Shung Institute, Austria. We would like to inform you about upcoming events related to the Project.

THE THIRD 'TRAINING FOR TRANSLATORS FROM TIBETAN' WORKSHOP

From July 6th until August 9th, 2005, the Shang-Shung Institute Austria will hold the third workshop of 'Training for Translators from Tibetan' at Merigar in Italy. With the kind support of Elio Guarisco, the supervisor of these workshops, qualified translators from Tibetan from all over the world have the unique possibility to improve their ability to translate the ancient wisdom-texts of great Tibetan masters. Most of the translators have also received scholarships from the Shang Shung Institute Austria for their precious work. The 2005 workshop will be the third Training for Translators. The first one took place at Merigar in the summer of 2003, the second in the summer of 2004 at Isla Margarita in Venezeula.

The intensive translation work allows the participants to enhance their knowledge of both Tibetan language and the principles of the Dzogchen teaching. Every year another text is translated.

Our precious Master, founder and president of the Shang-Shung Institute, Chögyal Namkhai Norbu, has suggested that this year the important Dzogchen Tantra called "The Primordial State Equal to Sky" should be translated. The fruit of these Training workshops should be available for all interested people in the near future. The first publication will be the translation of the latest book of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu on Tibetan Medicine entitled, "On being born, living and dying". We hope that this book, the result of the first Training for translators' workshop in 2003, will be available in August 2005.

THE DZOGCHEN-TANTRA PROJECT

At the end of June 2005, Elio Guarisco, Adriano Clemente and Jim Valby are meeting at Merigar in order to continue the translation work of the Me Jung Tantra, the study-text for the second 'Training for translators' in 2004. This meeting will be the second following that of December 2004 during which Elio Guarisco and Jim Valby worked on this text for more than a month in the USA. Adriano, Elio and Jim are putting an enormous effort into their work in order to make a qualified and correct translation of this Tantra that is so difficult to understand and to translate. We would really like to thank them for the wonderful work they do for the Dzogchen Community.

THE PROJECT FOR THE PRESERVATION OF THE TERMAS OF CHANGCHUB DORJE

Another project of the Shang-Shung Institute in America and of the Shang-Shung Institute Austria is to finance the digitalizing of the numerous Tantras of Changchub Dorje in Tibet. The work is progressing very well and the first financing has been sent to Tibet. The next amount will be sent in the very near future.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT AND DONATIONS

I would like to thank everyone for the donations we have received up to now. With your support we can go ahead with all our activities and initiatives. In that way we will be able to guarantee access to the unique wisdom and understanding of Tibetan Masters and Tibetan Culture for future generations.

As the Ka-ter Translation Project is financed only by donations, you are welcome to support our work. You can also make your donation through our website: <https://ssl13.inode.at/ssi-austria.at/creditcard-offering.htm>.

For more information about the Ka-ter Translation Project please visit: <http://www.ssi-austria.at/ssi-engl/ka-ter%20frame%20engl.htm>

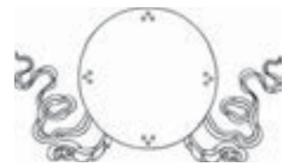
*Oliver F. Leick
Shang Shung Institute Austria
www.ssi-austria.at*

**Shang-Shung Institute
Italy**

*Organization of Courses
with Dr. Nida Chenagtsang*

In order to constantly improve the organization of our didactic activities, all Gars and Gakyils wishing to host seminar and courses with Doctor Nida Chenagtsang, are kindly requested to get in touch directly with our secretary, stating which kind of course they are interested in. On preparing the 2006 schedule, the institute will consider first of all courses in progress and then depending on the waiting list, will decide which new courses to open and where. The schedule will be ready within 2005 autumn and in case of new courses, Gakyils and Gars involved will be informed well before in order to reach all the necessary agreements and provide all the information.

The Management of the Shang-Shung Institute
www.istitutoshangshung.org



The Mirror
Newspaper of the
International
Dzogchen Community of
Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

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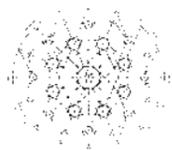
Printer:
Turley Publications
Palmer, MA
USA

Distribution:
Tsegyalgar at
Conway,
MA, USA

Subscription Rate/6 Issues:
\$35US available
through
Tsegyalgar
35 Euro
through Merigar
Visa and Master card
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merigar

MERIGAR PROGRAM SUMMER 2005

Please note that the SMS Level III exam and Level IV training have been cancelled. The SMS Base Level exam and Level I training will be held instead on the same dates in July.

JUNE

Fri. June 24th – Sun. 26th
Workshop of the 4th group of **Yantra**
with Laura Evangelisti
The workshop starts on Friday at 10.00
Cost: 90 euro

JULY

Fri. July 1st - Tue. 5th
Retreat with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu
(Open to everyone)
'Vaidurya'i Chun-phyangs of Paltrul Rinpoche,
Advice on how to follow the teaching and do practice'
The retreat starts on Friday at 16.00
Cost: 250 euro
This retreat will be also transmitted via web cast

Fri. July 8th – Sun. 10th
Santi Maha Sangha Base Level exam
with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

Mon. July 11th – Fri. 15th
First Level Santi Maha Sangha Training
with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu
(Reserved to those who pass the base level exam)
Cost: 250 euro

Fri. July 15th
Explanation of the Guru Yoga practice
Related to the World Transmission Day
(Open to everyone)

Sat. July 16th
World Transmission Day
Anniversary of Master Padmasambhava
(Open to everyone)

Fri. July 15th – Sun. 17th
Course of Dance of Liberation of the Six Lokas
with Adriana dal Borgo
(Open to everyone)
The course starts on Friday at 10.00
Cost: 90 euro

Fri. July 29th– Thu. August 4th
Yantra Yoga Level I Teachers' Training course
with Fabio Andrico & Laura Evangelisti
The course starts on Friday at 17.00
Cost: 210 euro

AUGUST

Fri. August 5th
Blessing the animals
with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu
In the wood at Merigar

Fri. August 5th – Sun. 7th
Course on 5th group of **Yantras**
with Fabio Andrico & Laura Evangelisti
The course starts on Friday at 17.00
Cost: 90 euro

Mon. August 8th
Supervision of 1st level **Yantra Yoga** instructors
Starts at 10.00
Cost: 30 euro

Wed. August 10th – Tue. 16th
Retreat with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu
"Lama Yeshe's Khadro'i Thugthig,
the Essence of the Heart of Guru Jnanadhakini &
A simple practice of Guru Jnanadhakini.
The retreat starts on Wednesday at 16.00
Cost: 350 euro (open to everyone)

**SANTI MAHA
SANGHA**

**BASE LEVEL
EXAM &
FIRST LEVEL
TRAINING
MERIGAR, ITALY
JULY 2005**

July 8-10: Santi Maha
Sangha Base Level Exam
July 11-15: Santi Maha
Sangha 1st Level Training

The retreat fee is 250 Euros.

For more information
contact:
Igor Legati,
edizss@tiscali.it
Santi Maha Sangha
Coordinator

Merigar

Dzogchen Community in Italy

Arcidosso 58031

GR Italy

Tel: 39 0564 968 837

Email: merigaroffice@tiscalinet.it

Web site: web.tiscalinet.it/merigar

Merigar Program continued

Fri. August 19th – Sat. 27th
2nd level **Vajra Dance** teachers'
training course
With Adriana dal Borgo &
Prima Mai
The course starts on Friday at
16.30
Cost: 270 euro

Sat. August 27th – Mon. 29th
Yantra Yoga course for beginners
With Laura Evangelisti
(Open to everyone)
The course starts on Saturday at
10.00
Cost: 90 euro

SEPTEMBER

Fri. September 16th – Sun. 18th
Intensive Chöd practice retreat

*Merigar – 58031 Arcidosso
(GR) – Italy
Tel.: (39) 0564 966837
Fax: (39) 0564 968110
Email: merigaroffice@tiscalinet.it
Web site: www.dzogchen.it
The office is open every day
from 9.30 to 13.00
On Saturday it is also open from
14.30 – 17.30
Closed Thursday and Sunday*

POLICY REGULATING RECORDING ACTIVITIES DURING
CHÖGYAL NAMKHAÏ NORBU'S RETREATS AND
OTHER EVENTS, AND THE DISTRIBUTION OF SUCH
RECORDINGS.

1) RECORDING

1.1) During Chögyal Namkhai Norbu's retreats, public talks etc. recording activities cannot be indiscriminately allowed. As a rule, only the official operators appointed by the **Shang-Shung Institute of Merigar** are authorized to install and use professional or semi-professional recording equipment at the location of the event. The same events can also be professionally recorded by operators working for the local Archives of the **organizing Gar or Gakyil**, on condition that the **legal representative** of the local Gar/Gakyil signs the **Authorization to Record** (attached) and sends it to the Shang-Shung Institute, Loc. Podere Nuovissimo 58031 Arcidosso (GR) Italy, before the event takes place. **1.2)** All possible **exceptions** to the above rule require a **specific written permission** by Yuchen Namkhai, Director of the Shang-Shung Institute and Chögyal Namkhai Norbu's copyright proprietor. Such written permissions must be obtained well in advance of the date of the event. All requests must be addressed directly to Yuchen Namkhai, Director, Shang-Shung Institute for Tibetan Studies, Loc. Podere Nuovissimo 58031 Arcidosso (GR) Italy, email: ssinst@tiscali.it. **1.3)** Individuals attending a retreat or other events with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu may be allowed to record **exclusively for their own personal use**, using consumer pocket-size recording equipment, but precise limitations must be applied. Only official operators as specified in 1.1 and 1.2 can install **camera tripods** at the place of the retreat or place **microphones** on Chögyal Namkhai Norbu's desk or close to him, or use **extension cables** of any kind, or connect their equipment to the power outlets; no other person attending the event can put microphones around Chögyal Namkhai Norbu using extension cables, nor connect to power outlets, nor install any tripods, even of the smallest size, for their pocket-size cameras or mini-recorders or microphones.

Students must always record from where they are seated, without moving to find a more favorable position, without using extra space for bags or equipment, without ever standing or kneeling, - in short, **always avoiding to disturb the other students around them.**

1.4) The number of official operators must be kept as small as possible. There is no need for additional operators to come to the place of the event to record on behalf of other Community bodies besides those specified in 1.1 and 1.2. Audio and video recordings of any event can be obtained by all Gars and Gakyil from the Central Archives of Merigar, so there is no reason to allow redundant operators to crowd the location with more tripods and other equipment. **1.5)** The Central Archives and the local Gakyil must at all times work in a co-ordinated way and with full collaboration in order to ensure that the event is properly recorded and the recording is preserved both at the local and at the central archival levels. So whenever the Central Archives cannot have their own operator present, the local Gakyil representatives – after duly signing and sending the Authorization to Record as explained in 1.1 - should arrange the audio/video recording and make sure that a **100% quality (1:1) digital copy is sent to the Copyright Proprietor**, as specified in the Authorization to Record. ?

2) DISTRIBUTION 2.1) The only Community body currently authorized to **edit, duplicate, stock and distribute** Chögyal Namkhai Norbu's audio/video recordings is the **SSI Central Archives**, located in Merigar and directed by Yuchen Namkhai. **2.2)** All **Gars and Gakyils** wanting to distribute/sell recordings of teachings or other Community productions must receive a case-by-case written authorization from SSI Merigar. In absence of this written authorization, to duplicate and distribute/sell any of the recordings made locally by the Gar/Gakyil for archival purposes, would be

e u r o p e

Oddiyana Shang Shung Editions

The German Gakyil announces the reorganization of the Oddiyana Shang Shung Editions. From today the responsibility for Oddiyana Shang Shung Edition is no longer delegated to one single person. The blue Gakyil entrusts the different jobs to an open team of experts.

Contact: Oddiyana Shang Shung Editions
Email: oddiyana@dzogchen.de

Phone/fax: 0049 (0) 211 – 68 26 57
M 6:00-8:00 p.m.
M - Fr. 10-12 a.m.

New Gakyil Rome

Yellow: Piero Lippolis [pietro.lippolis@fastwebnet.it](mailto:piero.lippolis@fastwebnet.it)

Red: Giovanna Ribotta giovannaribotta@libero.it

Blue: Christiane Rhein c.rhein@libero.it

New Gakyil Germany

YELLOW

Helga Betz Dzogdus@aol.com

Margarita Eidemüller-Jucknat maggie-rainbow@gmx.de

Gerhard Seeliger gerhardseeliger@web.de

RED

Natalia Gershevskaya nataliager@web.de

Angelika Pottkämper (Director) apottkaemper@t-online.de

Christian Lang cristianl@gmx.de

BLUE

Georgios Arvanitidis georgios_arvanitidis@web.de

Thomas Eifler t.e@dpsn.de

Christine Trachte trachte@t-online.de

You can easily contact us by the colors:

YELLOW gelb@dzogchen.de

RED rot@dzogchen.de

BLUE blu@dzogchen.de

Dance of the Song of the Vajra for Beginners Riga, Latvia

July 17 – July 28, 2005

with Luda Kislichenko

Riga (Latvia) Dzogchen community is planning to organize a course of both parts of the dance of the Song of Vajra for beginners with Luda Kislichenko. The approximate cost of the retreat is 60 EUR, but the final price depends on the number of participants. To register for the retreat please pay 50% of that sum (30EUR) by July 1, 2005.

We will be glad to assist with any information about accommodation, etc. To check for direct cheap flights to Riga see www.airbaltic.com

<<http://www.airbaltic.com>> and Easy Jet and Ryan Air.

If you are interested and would like to know bank account number as well as other details please contact Agnes Rudzite (agnes@rigath-isweek.lv).

New Gakyil, Slovakia

blue:juraj sladek slademan7@yahoo.com

red: tomas chaban panoramatix@yahoo.com

yellow: martin simcalak bigbang@pobox.sk

The Course of the Vajra Dance The Song of the Vajra / Part I

with Stoffelina Verdonk

July 24th - 29th, 2005

Karma Ling Institute
(French Alps, near Chambéry)

Registration: Before July 10th

Cost: 210 EUR (without meals or accommodation)

Please note that the current Karmaling's discounts for the Dzogchen members are as follows:

20% for ordinary & reduced membership

40% for sustaining membership

100% for meritorious membership

For all information about the course & for the registration please contact Nicole Morineau: morineaupeju@aol.com or +33 4 79 25 78 90

For information about accommodation & meals please contact the Institute Karmaling accueil@karmaling.org or on the web site www.karmaling.org or +33 4 79 25 78 00

VAJRA DANCE CLOTHES

As originally transmitted by

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

Beautiful, pure silk, custom made

Information and orders

at vaddress@yahoo.com

ACCOMMODATION SERVICE IN MERIGAR INFORMATION FOR PEOPLE WHO INTEND TO COME TO MERIGAR FOR RETREATS OR TO FOLLOW COURSES

If you are looking for accommodation, airport transfer, local car hire or only logistic assistance, you can contact the following information and reservation service:

Accommodation Service

(Information available in English, German, French and Italian) Information service and reservation of accommodation during retreats, local transport, & logistic solutions:

Christina von Geispitzheim

Email: acomodationservice@libero.it

Tel: 0039 0564 957542

Mobile phone: 0039 339 1370739

We cooperate with local hotels, family pensions, residences, agriturismo, Community members who have rooms or houses to rent or sublet. Also we can advise on car rental (at airports or locally), on the best itinerary and time tables of trains and buses, and we have now a circuit of residents who offer various useful services like transfer from the airports, local taxi service, translations, baby sitting, etc.

DZOGCHEN RETREAT with CHÖGYAL NAMKHAI NORBU BARCELONA - SPAIN: OCTOBER 5th to 9th, 2005

“The 25 spaces of Samantabhadra”

Terma of Changchub Dorje

Venue:

C.E.M. (Complex Deportiu Municipal) la Mar Bella
Avinguda Litoral, 86-96

Transport: Bus 41 - Subway L4 (yellow) Stop: Poble Nou

RETREAT SCHEDULE

WEDNESDAY 5th

5-7 p.m. - Introduction to the Teaching of the Retreat

THURSDAY 6th

10-12 a.m. - Tagdrol Tantra empowerment

FRIDAY 7th

10-12 a.m. - The 25 spaces of Samantabhadra

SATURDAY 8th

10-12 a.m. - The 25 spaces of Samantabhadra

5-7 p.m. - Ganapuja and more

SUNDAY 9th

10-12 a.m. - Tridlungs and Advice

The retreat will finish with Guruyoga

During the retreat two courses will be held:

VAJRA DANCE COURSE OF THE THREE VAJRAS (OM A HUM)

with Adriana dal Borgo (International Instructor)

INTRODUCTION TO YANTRA YOGA

with Fabio Andrico (International Instructor)

Information about further activities during the retreat will be provided later.

Cost: 180 whole retreat

45 one day

Discounts: Reduced member (pensioners, students) 50%

Ordinary member 20%

Sustaining y meritorious member 100%

Registration: On line and more information (lodging, transport) at web page: www.dzogchen.org.es

Info email info@dzogchen.es, kungaa@wanadoo.es

Tel. 00 34 93 4111563 // 00 34 639311640



Passages

Died
Claude Casabianca
April 11, 2005

Claude Casabianca left us at the age of 76. We were all deeply touched by his sudden death on Monday, April 11, 2005 at 9:45am in a car accident. Claude met Rinpoche in 1994 and put all his faith in our Master. He applied his devotion in a continuous contribution to the French Community. Together with Françoise, his wife, he danced for one week every month at the French land of Dejamling, the place of infinite bliss. Claude fully participated in the French

Community in good and more difficult times, from the president of the Gakyil, organizing, archiving, buying the Dejamling land, painting, cleaning, to the cooking of delicious high French cuisine. We send our light to him and support him with our practice. We also send our light to his wife Françoise and family to support them in the letting go.



New Tsegyalgar Gakyil and helpers

N ZEITZ

**TSEGYALGAR, CONWAY,
MASSACHUSETTS
TEACHINGS, PRACTICE RETREATS &
COURSES**

Summer and Autumn, 2005

June 25 & 26

Dream Yoga Weekend with Michael Katz

July 10 & 11

Chökyi Nyima Rinpoche teaching at Tsegyalgar

For more information please contact Tom Lesser at cnrteachings@yahoo.com or lesser@lnsn.com.

For information regarding accommodation at Tsegyalgar for the retreat please contact: secretary@tsegyalgar.org

August 1 - 19

SMS /Yantra Yoga/ Vajra Dance Retreat on Khandroling with Jim Valby, Lynn Sutherland, Anastasia McGhee and Bodhi Krause (see details this page)

September

(Date to be announced) **2nd Third of Dance of the Song of the Vajra** with Anastasia McGhee

October

(Date to be announced) **Last Third of Dance of the Song of the Vajra** with Anastasia McGhee

TSEGYALGAR NEWS

NEW GAKYIL

Blue Gakyil:

Christina Svane, President
csvane@comcast.net

Janis Page

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Yellow Gakyil:

Patricia Shahan, Treasurer
patriciashahan@starpower.net

Mark Angevine

vajratiger@hotmail.com

Red Gakyil:

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Naomi Zeitz, The Mirror Editor

mirror@tsegyalgar.org

RETREAT WITH RINPOCHE MAY 6-8, 2005

Thanks to everyone who worked so hard to make the retreat with Rinpoche such a success. We hope everyone felt at home and will come again soon! It was like being handed a precious necklace, to hear Rinpoche tell a few of his dreams involving Gomadevi, on the first evening of the retreat. Then, to receive the transmission of the Gomadevi Guruyoga, and practice it with Rinpoche at the Dedication of the Mandala, was like being given the key that makes all the rest fall

continued on next page

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Coast

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carolmfields@aol.com**

Web site www.bajasangha.org

SANTI MAHA SANGHA SUMMER RETREAT

WITH JIM VALBY, LYNN SUTHERLAND, ANASTASIA MCGHEE

AND BODHI KRAUSE

AUGUST 1-19, 2005

KHANDROLING

TSEGYALGAR announces a **SANTI MAHA SANGHA SUMMER RETREAT** to be held at **KHANDROLING**, our sacred retreat land in the beautiful hills of Western Massachusetts, from August 1 – 19, 2005.

This is a golden opportunity to deepen your experience and understanding through intense practice and study of:

Santi Maha Sangha (Base Level) teachings with **Jim Valby**

Yantra Yoga (Beginning and Advanced) with **Lynn Sutherland**

The Dance of the Song of the Vajra (First 3rd), with **Anastasia McGhee**, (August 5 -7)

The Dance of the Liberation of the Six Lokas, with **Bodhi Krause**, (August 12-14)

The retreat will be divided into four sessions of four days each, with a day of rest in between. Jim will teach Santi Maha Sangha each morning and afternoon in Rinpoche's Cabin, followed by Yantra Yoga or Vajra Dance, for both beginning and advanced groups. From 1pm to 4 pm each day, there is free time to explore the Land of the Dakinis, swim in the pond, or find a secluded place to practice. On August 10 and 15, there will be organized karma yoga projects to choose from, such as helping with the completion of the retreat cabins, or transplanting wildflowers to enhance the Mandala.

The cost for the retreat is \$800 (not including bed or meals). The meal program is optional, and costs \$300. Accommodation possibilities include camping on Khandroling (\$10/night), staying at the Schoolhouse Dorm, (\$10/night), or booking a private room in the Farmhouse on Khandroling, (\$30/night).

People may also register for individual sessions:

Session I: \$200	Aug. 1 - 4 SMS, Yantra Yoga,
Session II: \$350	Aug. 5 - 9 SMS, Yantra, Dance of the Song of the Vajra (Aug 5-7)
Session III: \$300	Aug. 11-14 SMS, Yantra, Liberation of the Six Spaces (Aug 13-14)
Session IV: \$200	Aug. 16-19 SMS, Yantra Yoga

There is a 10% discount on Retreat Fees for early registration, by July 1. Participants should plan to arrive on the afternoon of July 31, to have time set up their tent, register, and attend a group practice at 6pm in Rinpoche's Cabin.



Khandroling Pond

R PIRO

This retreat is open to anyone who has received transmission (including via video) from Chögyal Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche. May it be of benefit to sentient beings everywhere!

To register, please email Tsegyalgar Secretary Ed Hayes, at secretary@tsegyalgar.org or call 413-369-4153.

into place. Thank you Rinpoche for your endless generosity to us!

On May 10, we joined Rinpoche in the Dedication of the Mandala of the Universe at Khandroling. Volunteers from around the world collaborated to prepare the site, digging stairs, planting flowers, making fire pits, building the throne, hanging prayer flags and banners, etc. Thank you to everyone for their sweat and cheer!

MONTHLY SCHEDULE

Yantra Yoga with Paula Barry, Mondays 6 pm

Vajra Dance, Thursday evenings 7 pm, Friday mornings 8 am, Sunday 11 am

Ganapujas at 7:30 pm, (except for when they're announced to be held earlier, at Khandroling)

Longsal Practice, Sunday 9:30 am

GEKÖES

The Gakyil decided to wait until next spring to find a new Geköes to begin the job June 1, 2006. Applications will be accepted until March 1, 2006, and a decision made by April 1.

KHANDROLING PROJECTS

RETREAT CABINS

Thanks to a very successful auction, we'll be able to complete two retreat cabins that were begun last year on Khandroling, one for Mandarava practice, and one for Thögyal practice. Eventually there will also be a Gomadevi retreat cabin, a Simhamuka cabin, and one or two more Thögyal cabins. Thanks to everyone who participated in the auction, made donations, or pledged, as "Friends of Khandroling," to be an ongoing support for completing Khandroling projects.

BATH HOUSE

The bathhouse is now functioning, with shower, toilets, and small kitchen. This summer we'll put wood siding on it, milled from our own trees.

FARMHOUSE

The Community is now using the old dairy farm adjoining Khandroling that we bought in 2003 from Larry Pike. We have been painting and repairing the Farmhouse for use as a guesthouse, a gathering place for karma yoga projects, and base for supporting people in retreat. During the SMS retreat in August, the Farmhouse will be used as a dining hall, and hopefully we'll be eating fresh vegetables from the garden that's being planted.

FOREST MANAGEMENT

We are continuing with the project Rinpoche started in 2003, of cutting some of the hulking, dark pines that dominate our woods, to allow the hardwoods such as white birch, maple and beech to grow. This is letting more air and light onto the land, as well as making it possible to see the beautiful views across the rolling hills.

MANDALA PAVILION

The best way to build a cover, or pavilion, for the Mandala of the Universe, is being researched by the Design Committee: Jim Smith, Vern Harrington, John Foster, and Stephen Korns, with input from dancers Kyu Khandro, Dominik Niceva and Christina Svane. Rinpoche had many questions and suggestions about it at a meeting we had with him before he left Tsegylgar. He said the roof should be translucent, and the supporting columns high enough to let in a lot of light.

GUEST HOUSE

Rinpoche has said we should build a Guest House at the base of Khandroling to accommodate members of the Community wanting to come on pilgrimage to the source of the Dance. The idea of a Guest House is inspiring ideas of being able to accommodate whole families, such as offering a summer camp for kids while their parents do a retreat.

STUPA

The Stupa was repainted, and looks radiant. Jim Smith and Jeff Krouk have begun a project to cast miniature versions of it for the Community.

CONNECTING ROAD

There are three routes connecting the farm, or lower Khandroling, to upper Khandroling, and we are clearing dead trees and other obstacles that have fallen across them.

For more information contact Tsegylgar:

Dzogchen Community in America

PO Box 277

Conway, MA 01341

USA

Tel: 413 369 4153

Fax: 413 369 4473

Email: secretary@tsegylgar.org



DONRUB LING DZOGCHEN COMMUNITY WEST COAST
ADVANCED YANTRA YOGA RETREAT**
May 13-18, 2005

A 6-day retreat taught by Oni Mckinstry under the supervision of Laura Evangelisti covering the 3rd & 4th groups of Yantras and their corresponding Pranayamas

big baja news

The fortunate Baja Gar (Tsegylgar West) has been given a challenge grant for 2005 of \$15,000!!! (So far, since 2002, the Community has matched \$50,000 in challenge grants, making us eligible for more).

IF WE CAN MATCH THIS, there will be another, larger grant for this year.

Your contributions are FULLY tax-deductible in the U.S. PLEASE GIVE!!! This is a marvelous opportunity to double your impact—and see the results in finished casitas, self-guided nature trails, improved campground, teaching area, staff quarters, and the beginnings of a . . . SPA!

We will be offering time-share possibilities for completed casitas on the land shortly.

If you are interested, please write: carolmfields@aol.com

Participation in the time-share program will count toward the challenge grant match, since the funds are being used to complete and furnish these charming casitas.

Send your contribution made out to Dzogchen Community West Coast, to Baja Gar, c/o Carol Fields, 755 Euclid Ave., Berkeley, CA 94708, USA.

BAJA PIONEERS



(from left to right) Amare, Agustin, Paddy, Marek, John, Jacob, Rosie and Joel

Dear Vajra Brothers and Sisters around the World,

Greetings from Jardin de los Naranjos! Currently we are moving ahead with many exciting projects, and are seeking Community members to volunteer their skills here for any length of time.

Particularly we are seeking people with experience in construction, such as concrete and plaster, dry and wet stonework, bricklaying, tile, carpentry, and all forms of innovative building such as cob and straw bale construction. We are also looking for someone who is fluent in Spanish, and ideally in both Spanish and English. We have a small team of strong and able hands here already, and hope to be collaborating with local builders and artisans as well in the coming months. Our immediate goals include completion of the 22 casitas already begun here by the previous owner, as well as the construction of more remote retreat cabins, and basic infrastructure such as permanent bathroom and shower structures.

Volunteers will have all basic living expenses covered, and can stay in one of our tent cabins or in one of the unfinished casitas on the land. We now also have a fantastic kitchen, an office with satellite Internet service, and all basic camping equipment to provide for volunteers.

For more information or to volunteer, please contact us at: gakyil@bajasangha.org.

Thank you all very much!

Sincerely,

The Baja Gakyil

A SPECIAL THANK YOU

Thanks to a generous anonymous donor who offered to match all of the new and renewed Tsegyalgar [East] memberships during the retreat in May. Tsegyalgar increased its memberships by 37 members and received \$10,000 above the membership amount.

NEW GAKYIL BAJA MEXICO

BLUE

Scott Schroeder (Pres.)
Joel Crisp
John Bidleman

YELLOW

Carol Fields
Carolyn Bass
Rodrigo Villalobos

RED

Jacob Braverman
Carisa O'Kelly
Andres Orvananos (Vice Pres.)

Email to Gakyil members - gar@bajasangha.org

Subscribe to Baja Email List - ati@bajasangha.org

<http://www.bajasangha.org>

NEW SUMMER CATALOGUE TSEGYALGAR BOOKSTORE

The Tsegyalgar Bookstore would like to announce the publication of its new Summer, 2005 catalog!

Those of you who received a copy of the catalog at one of ChNN's North American retreats already know: the new catalog is much updated, with better design and organization! The greatest change is that there are now sections for each practice, with all of the materials for each particular practice listed in one place!

One can download the word file version from our website at:

<http://www.tsegyalgar.org/bookstore/bookstore.html>

There is a new paper version of the catalog available as well! If you would like to be sent a paper catalog free of charge please email, phone, or fax in to me your address, mentioning that you would like to receive the new catalog, and I will get it in the mail to you asap.

Many thanks to Kathy Cullen and Ben Marder for their hard work in helping me create this beautiful new catalog!

Thanks very much, and I look forward to hearing from you all!

Anna

Tsegyalgar Bookstore
Phone/Fax: 413-369-4473
bookstore@tsegyalgar.org

Tashigar South
Rosa Altamirano – Secretary
Comunidad Dzogchen
Tashigar
Calle pública S/N
Tanti 5155
Pcia. de Córdoba
Argentina
Tel & Fax: 0054- 3541-498 356
Email: tashigar@dcc.com.ar

Tashigar North
Finca Tashigar
Prolongación de la Calle Bolívar
Valle de Pedro González. Isla de
Margarita
Tel: 00 58 295 415 5800
Email:
tashinor@mail.dzogchen.ru
Web site: www.dzogchen-venezuela.org

NEW ITEMS AT THE TSEGYALGAR BOOKSTORE!

If you would like to place an order you can email, fax, or call in to me the following information:

Credit card number (MC or Visa) with expiration date
Your billing and shipping addresses
The list of items you would like to order

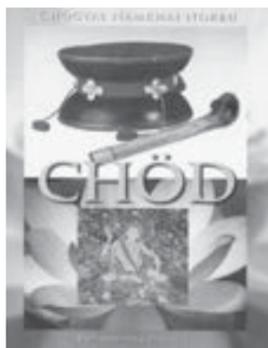
Thanks!

Anna
Tsegyalgar Bookstore
Phone/Fax: 413-369-4473
bookstore@tsegyalgar.org

THE BASIC YANTRAS OF THE 3RD, 4TH, 5TH SERIES AND THE 7 LOTUSES #204E

\$10.00

Drawings and description of the asanas of the 3rd, 4th, and 5th series and the 7 lotuses of Yantra Yoga.



CHÖD DVD

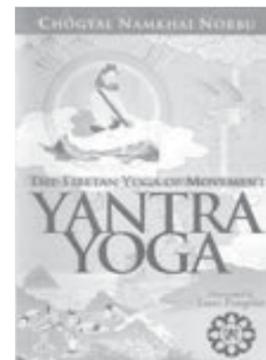
#v10054

\$30.00

The Practice of Chöd in the Dzogchen teachings has always been considered a part of chopa or behavior, and its' fundamental aim is to overcome attachment. In this teaching from Japan 1993 Chögyal Namkhai Norbu gives a detailed presentation covering all aspects of the rite as well as insightful historical information important for all who wish to deepen their understanding of one of Tibetan Buddhism's most famous practices.

Duration: 108 minutes

Language: English



THUN DVD

#v10055

\$30.00

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu explains the invocations, mantras, mudras and visualizations specific to each of the three Thuns (short, medium, and long). The corresponding practice follows each explanation. The DVD menu is structured so one can select whichever explanation or practice one wants, making it an excellent practice aid.

Duration: 134 minutes

Language: English

GREEN TARA DVD

v10057

\$30.00

Tara represents the function of Compassion, the energy of all the Illuminates and their wisdom. For this reason the ancient generations of the Indian and Tibetan people considered Tara as having great importance as a Divinity and a Yidam. This DVD contains the teachings

Chögyal Namkhai Norbu gave in Peru where he explained the historical origins of Tara, how to do the practice in general as well as giving precise and detailed instructions for doing a personal Tara retreat. Rinpoche teaches in English and is translated into Spanish.

GENERAL INTRODUCTION TO DZOGCHEN

v10059

\$30.00

In this two-hour video, Chögyal Namkhai Norbu answers the question: What is Dzogchen? Dzogchen is a path of self-liberation. It is not a path of renunciation or transformation, but rather one of seeing directly the nature of mind, as pointed out by a teacher who has realized this freedom for him or her. This video gives the student the opportunity to receive these teachings from an accomplished guide. (UN-RESTRICTED)

south america

NEW GAKYIL AND GEKÖES OF TASHIGAR SOUTH

YELLOW

PRESIDENT

Ricardo Joaquin Martinez ricardomartinez@duoangel.com.ar

TREASURER

Mario Cech mariocech@arnet.com.ar

BLUE

Griselda Galmez grisegal@hotmail.com

Marta Trillo martatrillo@yahoo.com.ar

RED

Martin Bortagaray martinborta@hotmail.com

Horacio Toledo Bustos karma779@hotmail.com

GEKÖES: Luis Olivera lao11@yahoo.com.ar

New Gakyil in Buenos Aires, Argentina

Yellow: Graciela Molina and Silvia Bertellotti

Red: Mahateo Leeaum and Luis Alberto

Blue: Daniel Lange and Miriam Brusa

NAMGYALGAR GAKYIL UPDATE
April / May 2005

Namgyalgar Retreat Program 2005

- 11, 12, 13 June - Karma Yoga & Practice Weekend
- September - Santi Maha Sangha Retreat - to be confirmed
- October - Vajra Dance Course with Rita Renzi
- December / January - Summer Retreat period - activities are in planning
- January 2006 - Tibetan Medicine courses with Dr. Nida

The weekly program at the Gar includes collective practice on Wednesday nights, the 4 Ganapujas per month, and Santi Maha Sangha Base Level and Level 1 study sessions.

Regional Events

Sydney

Sydney will host 2 practice weekends with the SMS Base instructors, one in July with Elise Stutchbury and a weekend in September with Angie Gilbert.

Melbourne

In Melbourne there will be a Dzogchen Information night in June, two weekend SMS retreats with Angie in July and a Death and Dying Workshop is being planned.

Singapore

A Base level SMS study program led by SMS Base instructor Cheh Goh commenced in April.

Japan

Jim Valby led a 10-day retreat of the SMS Base Level in Tokyo, Japan recently.

Namgyalgar Gakyil

Blue

Graeme Horner
Lisa Kempster
Catherine Simmonds
Catherine Williams (outgoing Blue)

Yellow

Helen Castle (Treasurer)
Ivan Barker
Madeleine Fogarty

Red

Joanna Tyshing (President)
Jean Mackintosh

Communication

The Gakyil is currently considering ways of improving communication and enhancing connectedness within the community and will be discussing ideas and developing guidelines to encourage a two-way flow of communication between Namgyalgar members and the Gakyil.

Mirror Correspondent

Marcel Veldhoven is the new Mirror correspondent who will be seeking news and stories about Dzogchen community activities and events happening throughout all the regions within Australia and the Asia-Pacific rim which are connected with Namgyalgar.

Mandarava Retreat

Some 35 practitioners greatly enjoyed and appreciated the Mandarava Retreat that was led by Nina Robinson at Namgyalgar in March. Practitioners in Singapore and New Zealand also benefited by Mandarava retreats led by Nina in their regions.

Happenings at the Gar

Catherine Williams continues to be temporary Geköes and besides overseeing the general maintenance, she warmly welcomes visitors to the Gar and provides support for practitioners in personal retreat and for the SMS scholarship holders in residence. In a collaborative spirit, Catherine is assisted by the red Gakyil, SMS students Angela and Rabgyi, and other local practitioners, who meet on a weekly basis for collective practice, SMS study sessions, and for a cuppa to share news and ideas.

Namgyalgar Personal Retreat Policy

The policy has been altered so that payment for personal retreats undertaken in cabin Tsamkhang #1 can be made in the form of an offering to Namgyalgar, the suggested donation amounts being:
Victorious members - Free; Sustaining Members - \$100. Per week;
Basic Members - \$150. Per week.
Information about doing personal retreats at Namgyalgar is available from the secretary at: <namgyalg@acr.net.au> / Tel: 02.4473 7668

Gonpa Altar Project

Over \$400 has been raised for the construction of a shrine table for the Gonpa. This was done by way of auctions, sales of Dadar kits and CD's during retreats at the Gar. People have also generously offered donations. Thanks to all those who have contributed so far. Fundraising is still continuing and any donations are most welcome.

Namgyalgar Gonpa Reading Room & Lending Library

The library area in the Gonpa has undergone a major cleanup and reorganization creating a more inviting space. Books in the General Collection have been covered and a large volume of back copies of the

Namgyalgar Dzogchen Community in Australia

**PO Box 14 Central Tilba,
NSW 2546**

Tel/Fax: 61 02 4473 7668

Email: namgyalg@acr.net.au

Web site: www.dzogchen.org.au

Namgyalgar Update continued

Mirror have been collated, creating an archive set and a general one for reading in the library area. A computerized catalogue of General and Reference books is almost complete and a lending system for the library is being devised to enable practitioners to borrow books and materials whilst at the Gar.

Road Repairs

Major repairs were carried out on the roads at the Gar just prior to the Mandarava retreat at Easter that has greatly improved the safety and ease of access onto the Gar, up to Gawaling and to the retreat cabins.

Namgyalgar Project Management

Project Management procedures, which were introduced to previous Gakyils, were recently revised during a workshop at the Gar and will be implemented by the Gakyil in the management of future projects.



Jim Valby and practitioners in Japan

**Santi Maha Sangha
Base Retreat**

**with Jim Valby in Tokyo
April 29-May 8, 2005**

by Edgar Cooke

During a period of mild weather, free of earthquakes and typhoons and other natural disasters, Jim Valby arrived in Japan. After a week of travels with his youngest son Mehta, centering around Nara and Kyoto, the two ancient capitals of Buddhist Japan, where they overdosed on temples but otherwise enjoyed the delights of Japanese civilization (public hot spring baths; tiny morsels of mutually distinct culinary delights served on more dishes than are owned by an average family of 4 in the U.S., filling you with flavor experiences rather than calories; people counting money in public just withdrawn from ATMs without being mugged; all kinds of tasty and generally well-behaved food of every sort available everywhere; public transportation that runs on schedules you can set your watch by; even low-wage workers smiling and trying to do a good job).

This was the season of the "Golden Week" - the one time

in the year when several public holidays occur in close proximity so that Japanese workers can take a relatively extended vacation without feeling they are inexcusably letting their fellow workers and boss down. Also, due to unusually cool early spring weather, some of the later cherry blossoms were still lingering when the azalea and other flowers had arrived, making it a truly special atmosphere for Jim's retreat.

We were able to rent a large room at a beautiful temple (Joen-ji) just a few minutes walk from the busiest station in all of Japan, Shinjuku. After passing through the temple gates, the sounds and tensions of a busy metropolis seemed to evaporate into eternal placidity. The room was located under the ground floor of the temple building, which allowed us to practice and shout four-letter mantras to heart's content without disturbing anyone or anything else. Even the party after the final Ganapuja - with entertainment ranging from Jim's bluegrass violin solo, to the 1000-year-old Japanese national anthem, to a counter-tenor version of a Handel aria, to the unbelievably thunderous bellowing of a rice wine-lubricated cheerleading

section - failed to disturb the above-ground emptiness experience of the Mahayana temple precinct.

The approximately 20 (sorry, I was busy translating, not counting) Japanese Vajra brothers and sisters who attended, volunteered to arrange, coordinate, and run the retreat, all expressed their immense satisfaction and awe of Jim's teachings and knowledge. Jim wears his scholarship lightly, and specializes in explaining the most opaque points of the teaching in ordinary language with many amusing and memorable examples and illustrations, not fearing to repeat important points throughout the retreat, so that by the end, they finally sink in.

Like many other Communities, we in Japan have our share of interpersonal and other problems, but Jim's powerfully good vibrations cut through all such memories of past grudges and all who attended felt good with themselves and the world and grateful to be connected to the precious lineage of our Master. Thanks, Jim! We welcome you again, anytime!

New Gakyil for Aotearoa, New Zealand

Yellow: James Hoadley
Red: Anne Brabant
Blue: Gabrielle Kearney

Email: rana@pl.net

Special Practice Calendar for Four Months

Wood Bird Year 2005-2006

PART III covering the 6th, 6th double, 7th and 8th Tibetan months
(Western calendar - Sunday 10th July – Tuesday 1st November 2005)

GLOBAL TIMETABLE

Anniversary of Padmasambhava
6th Tibetan month – 10th day
Celebration at 8 a.m. Oddiyana time

Friday 15th July 2005

17:00 Hawaii
20:00 San Francisco, Los Angeles, Vancouver
21:00 Denver, Salt Lake City, Pagosa Springs, Edmonton
22:00 Lima, Quito, Chicago, Mexico City
23:00 Caracas, San Juan, Santiago, New York, Conway, Montreal, Atlanta, Detroit, Havana, Kingston, Indianapolis, Ottawa
00:00 Buenos Aires, Sao Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Bermuda

Saturday 16th July 2005

00:00 Newfoundland
03:00 GMT, Reykjavic,
04:00 London, Dublin, Lisbon
05:00 Johannesburg, Rome, Berlin, Oslo, Paris, Madrid, Amsterdam, Copenhagen, Brussels, Geneva, Prague, Salzburg, Stockholm, Budapest, Vienna, Warsaw
06:00 Kuwait City, Riyadh, Tashkent, Helsinki, Athens, Ankara, Beirut, Jerusalem, Tallinn, Vilnius, Istanbul
06:30 Tehran
07:00 Moscow, Murmansk, Baghdad
07:30 Kabul
08:00 ODDIYANA, Islamabad
08:30 New Delhi, Bombay
08:45 Kathmandu
09:00 Dhaka
09:30 Rangoon
10:00 Bangkok, Jakarta, Saigon
11:00 Singapore, Beijing, Lhasa, Manila, Hong Kong, Kuala Lumpur, Taipei, Perth
12:00 Tokyo, Seoul,
12:30 Darwin, Adelaide
13:00 Brisbane, Melbourne, Sydney
14:00 Valdavostok
15:00 Fiji, Wellington, Auckland, Kamchatka

6th Month, 4th day
Sun. 10th July 2005

This is the **anniversary of the Dharmachakra (the first turning of the Wheel of the Dharma)**: the first time that Buddha Shakyamuni gave the teaching of the Four Noble Truths to his disciples at Sarnath, after his illumination. To honor the Lord Buddha on this special day you can do a Ganapuja with your Vajra brothers and sisters.

6th Month, 10th day
Sat. 16th July 2005

Today is the **anniversary of the birth of Padmasambhava**. On this day when it is 8 am in Oddiyana Chögyal Namkhai Norbu will give the transmission of Guruyoga with the specific practice linked to the anniversary of Padmasambhava. In this way the transmission will be live because the transmission has no distance. Rinpoche will transmit and throughout the world people who do the practice at the same moment will be in the transmission and will thus receive the transmission. (In Italy, this practice will be done at 5 am.)

It is also the **anniversary of Yeshe Tsogyal**, the main consort and disciple of Padmasambhava so it will be beneficial to do a Guruyoga of Padmasambhava with

the Long life *mantra* and a Ganapuja as we usually do, otherwise you can do the Long life practice “Union of Universal Wisdom”.

SEE THE GLOBAL

TIMETABLE

6th Month, 14th day
Wed. 20th July 2005

This is the **anniversary of the Third Karmapa, Rangjung Dorje (1284-1339)**, a disciple of Rigdzin Chenpo Kumaradza and a famous master of Dzogchen Upadesa. On this day it is good to do *Akar Lamai Naljor*, Guruyoga with the White A, collectively or alone.

6th Month, 15th day
Thu. 21st July 2005

FULL MOON. This is the **anniversary of Gampopa**, the main disciple of Milarepa, founder of the Kagyupa School and author of “The Precious Ornament of Liberation”. It is, therefore, an excellent day to do *Akar Lamai Naljor*, the Guruyoga with the White A. It is also good to do the Long life practice “Union of Primordial Essences” of Guru Amitayus and, if possible, a Ganapuja.

6th Month, 25th day
Sat. 30th July 2005

This is a **Dakini day**, so it is a positive day for reinforcing the function of our energy and creating a vital contact with the energy of the universe by doing a Ganapuja with our Vajra sisters and brothers. If there are no other practitioners nearby you can do a Medium Thun on your own. In either case, when you transform into the Dakini Simhamuka, recite her heart mantra as many times as possible.

6th Month, 30th day
Thu. 4th August 2005

NEW MOON. This is a very important day to do purification practices, especially the “Purification of the Six Lokas”. If you have the chance, you can also do a Short or Medium Thun or a Ganapuja, collectively or alone.

THIS YEAR THE SIXTH MONTH IS DOUBLED

6th Double Month, 4th day
Tue. 9th August 2005

This is the **anniversary of the Dharmachakra** (the first turning of the Wheel of the Dharma): the first time that Buddha Shakyamuni gave the teaching of the Four Noble Truths to his disciples at Sarnath, after his illumination. To honor the Lord Buddha on this special day you can do a Ganapuja with your Vajra brothers and sisters.

6th Double Month, 10th day
Mon. 15th August 2005

Today is the **anniversary of the birth of Padmasambhava**. It is also the anniversary of Yeshe Tsogyal, the main consort and disciple of Padmasambhava so it will be beneficial to do a Guruyoga of Padmasambhava with the Long life *mantra* and a Ganapuja as we usually do, otherwise you can do the Long life practice “Union of Universal

Wisdom”.

6th Double Month, 14th day
Thu. 18th August 2005

This is the **anniversary of the Third Karmapa, Rangjung Dorje (1284-1339)**, a disciple of Rigdzin Chenpo Kumaradza and a famous master of Dzogchen Upadesa. On this day it is good to do *Akar Lamai Naljor*, Guruyoga with the White A, collectively or alone.

6th Double Month, 15th day
Fri. 19th August 2005

FULL MOON. This is the **anniversary of Gampopa**, the main disciple of Milarepa, founder of the Kagyupa School and author of “The Precious Ornament of Liberation”. It is, therefore, an excellent day to do *Akar Lamai Naljor*, the Guruyoga with the White A. It is also good to do the Long life practice “Union of Primordial Essences” of Guru Amitayus and, if possible, a Ganapuja.

6th Double Month, 25th day
Mon. 29th August 2005

This is a **Dakini day**, so it is a positive day for reinforcing the function of our energy and creating a vital contact with the energy of the universe by doing a Ganapuja with our Vajra sisters and brothers. If there are no other practitioners nearby you can do a Medium Thun on your own. In either case, when you transform into the Dakini Simhamuka, recite her heart mantra as many times as possible.

6th Double Month, 30th day
Sat. 3rd Sept. 2005

NEW MOON. This is a very important day to do purification practices, especially the “Purification of the Six Lokas”. If you have the chance, you can also do a Short or Medium Thun or a Ganapuja, collectively or alone.

7th Month, 10th day
Tue. 13th Sept. 2005

It is a special **day of Guru Padmasambhava** as well as the anniversary of Jomo Menmo (1248-1283), a famous yogini, terton and reincarnation of Yeshe Tsogyal and consort of the terton Guru Chowang. Therefore it is an ideal day to do *Akar Lamai Naljor*, the Guruyoga of the White A, and a Ganapuja, if you have the possibility.

7th Month, 15th day
Sun. 18th Sept. 2005

FULL MOON. This is the anniversary of Tsarchen Losal Gyatso and Padma Karpo, a famous 17th century Drugpa Kargyupa Master. Therefore it is an excellent day to do the Long life practice of the Dakini Mandarava, “Cycle of Life’s Vajra”, with a Ganapuja if possible as well as *Akar Lamai Naljor*, the Guruyoga of the White A collectively with your Vajra brothers and sisters or alone.

7th Month 19th day
Wed. 21st Sept. 2005

This is an important day for the practice of **Ekajati**, so try to do a Long or Medium Thun in the usual way, reciting the heart mantra of Ekajati as many times as possi-

ble.

7th Month, 25th day
Tue. 27th Sept. 2005

This is a **Dakini day** and also the anniversary of Phagmo Drugpa (1110-1170), the chief disciple of Gampopa. Try to do a Ganapuja together with your Vajra sisters and brothers. If there are no other practitioners nearby, you can do a Medium Thun on your own. In either case, when you transform yourself into the Dakini Simhamuka, recite her heart mantra as much as possible and then do an intensive practice of Ekajati.

7th Month, 30th day
Mon. 3rd Oct. 2005

NEW MOON. This day is ideal for purification practices. Try to do either the Purification of the Six Lokas or the *Namchos Shitroi Naljor*, the Yoga of the Peaceful and Wrathful Manifestations, either collectively or on your own. Try to do a Ganapuja as well, if possible.

8th Month, 10th day
Wed. 12th Oct. 2005

This is a special **day of Guru Padmasambhava**; therefore you can do the Guruyoga of Padmasambhava. If you have time and the possibility you can do a Ganapuja with the Guruyoga and the Long life practice of Guru Padmasambhava together with your Vajra brothers and sisters. Otherwise you can do the Long life practice “Universal Wisdom Union”.

8th Month, 15th day
Mon. 17th Oct. 2005

FULL MOON. This is an important day to do the **Long life practice of Amitayus**, “Union of Primordial Essences”. It is best to do it early in the morning and a Ganapuja in the evening.

8th Month, 19th day
Fri. 21st Oct. 2005

This is an important day for the practice of **Ekajati**, so try to do a Long Thun with your Vajra brothers and sisters, or if that is not possible, you can do a Medium Thun alone reciting the heart mantra of Ekajati as many times as possible.

8th Month, 25th day
Thu. 27th Oct. 2005

This is a **Dakini day** and also the anniversary of two great Dzogchen masters, Rigzin Kumaraja, who transmitted the Dzogchen teachings to Longchenpa and to the third Karmapa, and of Rigzin Tsewang Norbu (1698-1755), a great Dzogchen master of the Nyingmapa School. It is therefore an excellent day to do *Akar Lamai Naljor*, the Guruyoga with the White A. If you can do it in the morning, that is best. Then, if you have the time, you can do a Medium or Long Thun later in the day, with an intense practice of Simhamuka, or a Ganapuja, if you have the possibility.

8th Month, 27th day
Sat. 29th Oct. 2005

This is an important day for the practice of **Ekajati**, so try to do a Long Thun with your Vajra brothers and sisters, or if that is not possible, you can do a Medium Thun alone reciting the heart mantra of Ekajati as many times as possible.

8th Month, 30th day
Tue. 1st Nov. 2005

NEW MOON. This day is excellent for practicing the “Purification of the Six Lokas” if you know how to do it. Otherwise you can do the Medium or Long Thun or a Ganapuja.

A Personal Tribute to Ven. Dr. Trogawa Rinpoche (1931- 2005)



I first met Dr. Trogawa in 1989 through the NY Shambhala Center which had invited him to teach for a week and see patients. Having recently moved to New York from Boulder, Colorado, I was asked to help coordinate his visit. On the eve of his arrival, the other coordinator unexpectedly had to travel to visit her dying father and I was left alone to coordinate his visit. I spent many weeks in his clinic helping out and cooking in a marathon of hard labor. Over the years, I saw him and here or there often spending time in his household, which tended to be

at John Giorno's wonderful loft on the Bowery in New York City. Poet, Allen Ginsberg was on his Chakpori board of directors along with Sir James George and other interesting people like John, and Shakya Dorje. Once, I spent a week in Boulder at the invitation of one of his students,

Dr. Phil Weber, to cook for the doctor there. In addition to being a great lama and physician, I found him an interesting man in his observations about Western life with a subtle but wicked sense of humor. He had his quirks which always endeared me to him. One never knew what kind of odd ingredient he would request for his medicine preparations. He was my first real introduction to undiluted Tibetan culture. I will always hold him in high esteem.

A rarefied and aristocratic lama, I was impressed by Dr. Trogawa's uncompromising dedication to his vocation as a physician and the contrast of his sensitive nature in relation to the grittiness of dealing with so much human illness and suffering. Over the years, I observed him with hundreds of patients, many terminal. There is no doubt in my mind that he brought a healing presence to so many people, including myself. Although he was an incarnate lama, his path was different than most because his primary vocation was that of a physician. From morning to night he would see patients. He forwent many things by maintaining his own personal practice life in the midst of this kind of busy schedule. He worked really hard on behalf of others. Given his somewhat frail constitution, this always seemed so telling of his dedication. In this respect, he was something of a "Hidden" yogin—working by day, and practicing all the time. Like any great lama he was able to transmit the essence of the teachings with the slightest gesture, word or nuance of feeling. I consider him among my principle teachers—someone who delivered me from grossest ignorance so that I could continue on the path.

Ven. Dr. Trogawa, Rinpoche was born in 1931 into a noble family in Thro Thralung, near Gyantse, in the province of Tsang, in west-central Tibet. His father was an important officer in the Tibetan government. As child he was identified as the tulku of a Buddhist master and physician. Later, at the age of sixteen, he was sent to Lhasa to study medicine under the great physician Nyerongsha Rigzin Lhundrub Paljor who was a successor to the lineage of the Chagpori monastic school of medicine and a widely famed physician. He had at that time his own clinic, medicine production facility and apprenticeship program. Ven. Dr. Trogawa, Rinpoche studied with him for nine years, and became accomplished in all aspects of Tibetan Medicine becoming one of his master's principle successors. As an incarnate lama, he also studied and practiced the Buddhist path in depth during this time,

In 1957 Dr. Trogawa moved to Sikkim (then an Indian protectorate) in the company of the great Buddhist Master, Dzongsar Khyentse Chokyi Lodro. After his master's passing in 1961 he moved to Darjeeling, in the foothills of the eastern Himalayas, where he lived and practiced. After the fall of Tibet, he was one of the last masters free to teach and practice Tibetan Medicine. In 1963, he was appointed chief medical teacher at the Tibetan School of Medicine and Astrology, in Dharamsala, India, the institute directed by H.H. Dalai Lama. After some years at this school he left for health reasons, and then spent a number of years in retreat in the forests of Bhutan, periodically emerging to treat patients. He returned to Darjeeling in the 70's, where he lived and practiced until the present. Chögyal Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche invited him to the First International Conference on Tibetan Medicine at Merigar in 1983. Since that time, he taught at various conferences and dharma centers including the Dzogchen Community throughout the world. In 1994 he founded the Chagpori Institute of Tibetan Medicine to propagate his lineage of medicine. Dr. Trogawa, Rinpoche is considered one of the pre-eminent masters of Tibetan Medicine.*

Because of him, I believe in the efficacy of Tibetan medicine, its genius as an indigenous healing art infused with the noble view of Buddhism. He was a true manifestation of the medicine Buddha and the power of compassion as the basis for healing. With him there were no hopeless cases. With his passing, we have lost another link between old Tibet and the present. It was a great privilege to spend the time I did with him. So many memories flood my mind at this time—passing remarks, dreams, fragments of inner experiences in his midst, the simple elegance of his presence, and the subtlety of his mind. I wish him well on his journey from this realm to another where no doubt he will continue his ministry to the suffering of beings

*biographical details were extracted from the website of Shakya Doinje at www.shakyadorje.org

Jacqueline Gens
May 15, 2005

In April, I had the occasion to meet with Andrea Dell'Angelo, the primary organizer for the Association for International Solidarity in Asia (ASIA), which he helped to co-found with Chögyal Namkhai Norbu and others in Italy in 1988, and whose primary offices are in Rome, Italy and Lhasa, Tibet. I learned how ASIA has operated and developed over the past couple of decades and we discussed strategies for the development of ASIA-USA. As a current board member in the US, this encounter was very valuable. Also attending were Giorgio Minuzzo, who has worked in the field in Tibet for ASIA for a decade, as well as Michael Hess, and Dr. Philip Nasca, PhD, who are interested in lending their talents and expertise to ASIA.

ASIA has successfully accomplished over 100 major and minor projects in Asia since 1990, mainly aimed at aiding the Tibetan minority populations in eastern Tibet, China and India, in the sectors of education, health, cultural preservation, and emergency disaster relief. Given the difficulty of working in Tibet's intense climate and terrain and that of working with various governmental bureaucracies, this is a great accomplishment. ASIA has built grammar schools, a full-scale hospital, clinics of traditional Tibetan Medicine, rebuilt monasteries and schools in the traditional Tibetan style, as well as currently sponsoring over 1,200 children through the Adoption At A Distance, long-distance sponsorship project and more. ASIA is also a part of ECHO (European Community Humanitarian Organization), which allowed ASIA to provide emergency relief in the form of food, medicine and replacing lost livestock, caused by a severe blizzard several years ago.

Projects can range in budget from \$5,000 to \$3 million dollars. Funding has typically come from various governments, embassies, the European Union, international agencies and local bodies. However, due to changing global trends in economics and politics, there is less governmental funding available and the competition for those funds greatly increases every year. Thus, ASIA has now had to change its fund-raising strategy to target more non-governmental sources. To help develop this strategy, ASIA Onlus has hired a marketing and development specialist for a 3-month period (April-June 2005) to provide detailed analysis of ASIA's operations and to aid in developing a strategy through 2007.

One of the key components of ASIA's success is that projects are structured with long-term sustainability within the culture in mind. When a school needs to be built or refurbished, ASIA functions as an overall organizer, while all contractors, workers and staff consist of local people. A school functions as a central aspect of its community, and other sustainable components are integrated. For example, in one community, a gas station was also built, which provides the ongoing revenue needed for the maintenance and operation of the school, as well as providing employment for local people. Roads and aqueducts were also built to further strengthen that community's infrastructure. The idea is that these projects are done in a way that they will continue to function and benefit the people into the future, without the need for ASIA's constant presence. In addition, ongoing assessments are performed, to ensure that projects continue to operate in congruence with changing circumstances. This has been ASIA's recipe for success: providing infrastructure on both the physical and cultural levels.

A top priority in 2005 is to organize our international ASIA branches, in order for us to fully operate as an international organization, each with our clear and specific annual priorities. Targeting the non-governmental sector will be a primary focus for ASIA as a whole, and will involve foundation research, development of informational materials, a central website with links to the various branches, and maintenance of a central database of people related to ASIA, to help increase our human resources. ASIA-USA will operate mainly as a fundraising entity, to begin with. ASIA Germany is doing the same, in accord with their recently developed charter. ASIA Germany has successfully found several hundred sponsors at a distance for children, as well as raising over \$100,000 annually.

In the health sector, there will soon be a large-scale assessment done by ASIA to identify and clarify the areas of need and how to proceed. ASIA has already implemented wide scale health education, focusing on prevention through basic health and hygiene instruction. Nomads and other people living in very remote areas without adequate access to even the region's local health clinic (the closest of which may be a 3 days journey), benefit from training in basic hygiene, wound care, water sanitation, and prenatal care. In each local region, for example, there is usually a small monastery, and the monks are liked and trusted by the people. ASIA has trained the

monks to train the people. Thus, the information is getting widely disseminated, giving people basic knowledge and skills to cope with rudimentary health issues and thus, increasing the quality and span of life. Educators and students alike, are also receiving training in preventative health measures at the elementary and higher educational levels.

Water sanitization in Tibetan areas is "a disaster." The infant mortality rate is high partly due to this factor. Addressing this problem is a priority. There is a Water Sanitization project in 2005, for example, in the TAR (Tibetan Autonomous Region) that is already half funded by the Trace Foundation, in the amount of \$135,000 Euros. For a development project such as this, there is usually one major funding source that offers to cover 50% of the budget. Then, the NGO (non-governmental organization), ASIA, in this case, has the task of coming up with what are called matching funds, which represent the remainder of the budget. This may be one of the projects that ASIA-USA attempts to find funding for this year.

The most successful and significant sector of intervention has been by far in the area of education. In general, we vastly take for granted the value of education in our modern society. In a real sense, most of us assume that we, and our children, will have access to at least a basic education. In the case of ASIA, children are provided, precisely through the *Adoption at a Distance Project*, a chance to make an enormous difference not only in their own lives but for those of their families as well. One educated family member may wind up providing support and income for their whole family. I recently reread an ASIA Onlus article, where a young Tibetan man was thanking Rinpoche and ASIA for providing his education and training through this project because without it, his whole family would have met with disaster. At every level, children and young adults are provided not only with education and training but each sponsorship also allows for the provision of food, housing, educational materials and basic health care for each student. According to Andrea, the *Adoption at a Distance Project* may be the most successful thing ASIA has done to help maintain Tibetan culture and aid the Tibetan people who are most in need. The poverty of the poorest people in Tibet rivals that of most of the world's most impoverished nations. Providing people with education is the basis for creating inner stability and sustainability within the culture.

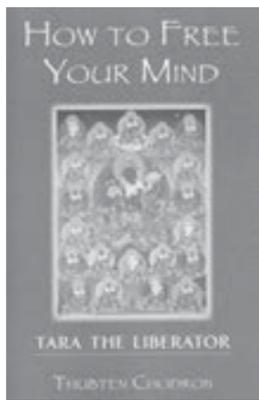
Currently, over 1,200 children are sponsored through this very successful project. ASIA-USA has two main goals for 2005. One is to help double the number of children sponsored. We hope to find at least 100 more sponsors before the end of the year. If you or someone you know would like to sponsor a child through ASIA's *Long Distance Sponsorship Project*, feel free to contact our office or visit the website at www.asia-onlus.com. The cost is US\$360 yearly, which is \$30 a month. In the aim of sustaining Tibetan culture, children are taught how to read and write in their native language. There are also possibilities for monks and nuns to engage in other traditional studies, including traditional Tibetan medicine (which is nationally recognized), art, dance, astrology, literature and of course, spiritual studies.

ASIA-USA's other main goal is to strengthen its relationship with the Dzogchen Community. In Tashigar del Norte earlier this year Rinpoche advised us that we should continue with ASIA's work and do our best. At this time, it also became apparent how very interested Dzogchen Community people were in ASIA. One simple way of participating is to become a sponsor of a child. You can also contact your local ASIA branch to inform us of your desire to participate and if you have any special skills, as well; there are many possibilities. We will increase communication with the Dzogchen Community about ASIA's activities and development. We will also be sending ASIA material to all the local Gakyils to share with people who are interested. To this end, I look forward to speaking with you and hearing from you again soon. I would like to thank all the people that responded to our last appeal for volunteers for ASIA-USA and to those who made contact with us at the New York City and Tsegalgar retreats and who became sponsors – we are on a path of collaboration and I look forward to working with each of you.

Thank you and best wishes,
Andrea Maria Nasca, ASIA-USA board member

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Thubten Chodron. "How to Free Your Mind: Tara the Liberator." Snow Lion Publications, 2005 (224 pages, \$15.95)



I am always happy to hear that a new book about Tara is being published, since she is a deity whose energy has had a strong effect upon me, even before I truly knew who she was and what she represented. Her iconographic image happened to find its way into my life when I was twenty-five, through an ad for Japan Airlines (JAL) which featured, for some reason, an image of a female deity with one leg and one hand outstretched, and the other hand by her heart holding a flower. I was so struck by this image that I cut it out, framed it, and put it on my wall. The ad did not explain whose image it was, and it was only much later that I found out it was Green Tara.

The author of this particular book is Ani Thubten Chodron, a Western woman who has ordained as a nun in the tradition of Lama Yeshe. I met her a few years ago, and she struck me then as a pleasant, down-to-earth sort of person. What she has written here is really two books, combined as one. The first book deals with Tara, her iconography and devotions, particularly the famous *Twenty One Praises of Tara*. The other book is a basic explanation of the lamrim, or gradual path, from a Gelugpa point of view, including a Madhyamika-style analytical meditation on emptiness and dependent origination. The author ties these two trains of thought together in a chapter entitled "Tara's Ultimate Nature," in which she states that "Tara symbolizes wisdom, the correct view of reality," and goes on to explain what that is in terms of the non-inherent existence of self and objects. The manner of explanation, here, is somewhat different from that of Dzogchen.

In terms of the sequence of chapters, the book starts by describing Tara in terms of the three kayas. The next chapter outlines the purpose and basic elements of a sadhana practice, from the point of view of the lamrim. Subsequent chapters present traditional formulations about Tara, such as her role as the Liberator from the Eight Fears, the popular "Homage to the Twenty-One Taras," and a "Song of Longing for Tara, the Infallible," by a 19th century master. The concluding chapters are a primer in Madhyamika philosophy.

My favorite passages in the book include the commentaries on the wrathful aspects of Tara, who is generally thought of as a very peaceful deity. However, in the *Twenty One Praises* there is a Tara who is black and fierce, standing amidst a raging fire, crushing spirits, spells, and all negative forces. And there is a Tara to whom all the ancient gods, spirits, zombies, and so forth pay homage. The author says, if this verse were adapted to a Western context the verse might be "Homage to you adored by Jesus, Mary, Moses, Zeus, Socrates, witches, gnomes, angels, and devils" (p. 75).

Other parts that appealed to me were when the author talks about developing "a love for others that goes beyond how they superficially act or think" (p.33), and her statement that letting go of "self-centered thinking" and "self preoccupation" also means letting go of guilt (p. 167).

by Paul Bail

A COUPLE OF DZOGCHEN WOMEN'S FORAY IN ACADEMIA "WOMEN PRACTICING BUDDHISM: AMERICAN EXPERIENCES"

SMITH COLLEGE, NORTHAMPTON, MASSACHUSETTS
APRIL 7 - 10, 2005

At the end of April, Dr. Phuntsog Wangmo and I were invited to take part in the conference "Women Practicing Buddhism: American Experiences" that was held at Smith College, Northampton, Massachusetts, on women's experiences of Buddhism, and sponsored by the Five Colleges (Smith, Amherst, Hampshire, Mount Holyoke Colleges and the University of Massachusetts). The theme of the conference was centered on issues of practice, focusing on experiences of Buddhism particular to women, as it spreads to North America and takes root in new contexts. Topics considered at the conference explored the many practice contexts of contemporary Buddhism, organized under categories such as: "Engaged Buddhism", "Buddhism and Creativity", "Buddhism and Sexuality", and "Buddhism and Healing".

Dr. Phuntsog's workshop introduced the basic principles of

traditional Tibetan Medicine and discussed their practice. It drew a large crowd and there were lots of very interested participants who wanted to learn more about Traditional Tibetan medicine and its relationship to the Dharma. While I was unable to attend the session because mine was scheduled at the same time as Dr. Phuntsog's, quite a few of my students and colleagues attended the workshop and, as always, they were all impressed by Dr. Phuntsog's sweet yet competent way of answering difficult questions about the tenets of Traditional Tibetan Medicine and its nature. It was also very beneficial to be able to let people know about the activities of the Shang-Shung Institute in the USA and give more exposure to the wonderful four-year program in Traditional Tibetan Medicine scheduled to begin this fall at Conway.

I spoke about the ways in which women have been involved in the practice and the development of Dzogchen, the Great Perfection, from its beginnings up to the present day. I had had some misgivings about the whole thing, because I have always felt that it does not make so very much sense to get attached to notions such as "womanhood" and "feminism",

and even more so in the practice of Dzogchen. However, after thinking about it a bit, I thought it may be beneficial to say exactly that, and to tell people how there have been and are many women practitioners in the Dzogchen lineage, so I wrote to Chögyal Namkhai Norbu and he seemed to like the idea.

My workshop was quite well attended, and it was fantastic to see the deep interest the people who came to listen had for the Dzogchen teachings, and it was wonderful for me to be able to tell them that Chögyal Namkhai Norbu was on his way to the East coast.

Overall, it was a very good experience, and we received very positive feedback. Thus I hope that in the future there will be many more opportunities for us involved with Shang-Shung Institute to make ourselves visible in all settings, so that our Teacher's vision for the Institute will be able to manifest even more clearly here in the United States.

Paola Zamperini is an Assistant Professor of Chinese Studies at Amherst College, Amherst, Massachusetts. She has recently become a board member of Shang-Shung Institute, USA.

Twice Around the Sun

by Adam Sokolow

It takes 60 years for Saturn to twice go around the sun; I am 59 and it is time for my Double Saturn Return. Wizards know that Saturn is the abode of the impersonal Lords of Karma. It is where our personal stories are recorded, not the story we imagine ourselves but the real story of who we really are. All debts are owed and paid to the keepers of the truth. Double Saturn return is a powerful and magical time; the deeds of the past that have formed into latent karmic seeds that are planted again to ripen in the fields of present circumstances. If life is a symphony Saturn return is the recapitulation, a condensed restatement of the major themes, a summation of all that has happened. While the symphony may end life continues so the spiritual task is quite clear, honor your lessons and move on or refuse to learn and get thrown back for another go around. I have earned the right to tell this story because I am in a state of grace; I have passed by the guardians and through the gates.

On January the 4th, 2005 at 7:30 in the morning I awoke with an unfamiliar pain in my chest, by nine o'clock I was in the catheterization lab in St. Luke's Hospital joking with my cardiac surgeon, Dr. Leber, about what one of the medical team called my EKG profile- a tombstone, a lethal 100% blockage of the coronary artery. I declined morphine, there was a lot going on and I wanted to be present. The room was kept cold, the proper temperature for all the high-tech computerized equipment; I was shivering as I watched the same four monitors that Dr. Leber was watching as he skillfully manipulated the high-tech catheterization instruments as he worked to save my life.

While all this was going on I was strangely detached from the gravity of my situation, I was reflecting on my kind Buddhist master, Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche and felt held in his presence. What follows is difficult to convey so I'll just tell it the way it was; I started to lean into the possibility of dying when I heard praying voices in my head. "You do not have my permission to die", said my brother, "I love you and you must not die, we still have so very much to do and I need you to do it with me". I heard many other voices too, "it is not time, we love you, and you must not go". I was startled when I heard this, and reflexively I asked myself, do I care about what they want? Then I saw my parents' concerned faces and I felt tangible waves of their love and I was sure that everyone was being honest with me. And then I asked myself, "do I feel love for them?" and then my whole being filled with love for everyone in contact with me. And I remember thinking, that's the answer; the whole thing turns on caring, on love. I really do want to live.

It was at this moment that Dr. Leber asked me if the pain was starting to diminish. He had successfully put two stints in my upper left coronary artery and pointed to them on the monitors. He pressed a button and said, "Here take these pictures and put him on your refrigerator" and put, the before and after pictures, in my hand. "Thank you very much; I guess the only technical glitch in this whole process is that I peed all over myself". He said. "Not to worry", the nurses would take care of everything, the operation was a success, and I was going to be OK.

I didn't break down and cry until I saw the sunlight as I walked out of the hospital. I turned west towards Riverside Park and walked home. I spent the next three weeks visiting my parents in Florida, staying with my brother in New Jersey, doing spiritual practices in my Upper West Side apartment and walking in Central Park. I kept thinking about the movie Jacob's ladder, it's a story about someone who actually did die but they didn't know it until they finally figured it out. It seemed that he just went back to his normal life except that strange things kept happening with increasing frequency. The joy I felt was tempered by my attentiveness to those strange occurrences that would tell me I really didn't make it.

I spent a lot of time in Central Park. I always go to nature to heal myself. I saw the very beginnings of Christo and Jeanne-Claude installation of The Gates, although at the time I didn't know that's what they were called. I marveled at the scale of the project and its industrial precision. The first thing I noticed where these ingots of steel placed on almost every pathway through out the park. Then there were the palettes of saffron colored 18-foot long plastic extruded tubes and palettes of saffron rolled fabric everywhere I walked.

On February 12th I was at Sheep's Meadow at 8:30am to watch the unfurling of the first fabric. By the end of the day I had walked the entire park again. But this day the park was filled with people and they were all smiling and talking to each other, I have never seen so many New Yorkers let down their guard. Up until this day I had been walking around in my own protected space and with each passing day I was becoming more convinced that I actually was alive. The opening of The Gates in Central Park became my party celebrating that I actually was alive. I experienced the whole thing very personally I heard that Christo and Jeanne-Claude had spent \$21 million of their own money to throw me this party. They brought all these people together in the park in mid-winter; they caused all these people to be happy and to smile. They had brought me the saffron symbols of life and renewal that I needed. They were my Gates and with each one I walked through I took another breath of life. But more than any single gate there were endless patterns to be enjoyed, with a slight turn of the head I could make them dance.

While the entire installation was meant to be impermanent, everything was to be recycled and nothing to be sold, I quickly found out the secret; if I went to one of the volunteers who with a long stick would disentangle the windblown fabrics and ask them for a memento they would hand me a 2 inch square of the very same saffron cloth. Within a week or so of walking in the park I had collected the pieces that were to be my gifts to those people who were in my thoughts and had touched my heart during this time of healing.

I have passed by the guardians and through the gates.

Thank you and I love you all very much.

Norbunet

The Mailing List of the International Dzogchen Community

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To subscribe:
send a mail to:
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Infested by the Caterpillar Fungus

A once in a lifetime experience (Part 1)

by Daniel Winkler

For three days we had been driving on a muddy track known as the Sichuan-Tibet "Highway." Thick clouds enshrouded peaks of freshly snowcapped mountains, and the monsoon clouds, causing the already bad roads to disintegrate even further, regularly released heavy loads of rain. The old Beijing-Jeep provided by Riwoche's Forest Police broke down frequently, one time stranding us in the middle of a flooded creek. Luckily we were able to locate a truck that pulled us out, although not without exacting a small fortune.

At first I was annoyed when the car broke down or got stuck. Soon I discovered that it was a great chance to explore the surroundings. In Bachan County I observed a Tibetan man very slowly walking along a green hillside while staring at the ground, paying little attention to his herd of yaks. Suddenly the nomad started digging. Thinking he might be digging medicinal plants I got curious. I rushed up the slope, but had to slow down quickly. Although I had been in Tibet for a week, hiking uphill at 14,500 feet gave me good insight into how old age will feel. My rest gave me the chance to marvel at crimson *Incarvilleas*, purple *Pedicularis* and bright yellow Himalayan Poppies.

Seemingly, the nomad had dug up two roots. When he realized that I was interested in his find, he proudly showed them to me. I never had seen such a life form before and had no idea what it was. It definitely wasn't a type of plant. Yet out of its head, just above its eyes, grew a long brown stalk, my Tibetan co-worker, Pema Gyatso, called 'grass'.

He explained that I had seen my first *Yartsa Gunbu* (*byar rtswa dgun 'bu*), which means "summer grass-winter worm" in Tibetan. It turned out Pema knew quite a bit about them, having collected them to help augment his family's meager income. "Bu" (worm), as he called it for short, start growing a grass above ground when spring comes to the grasslands and can be found for about a month. Tibetan herders collect them all over the grasslands and export them down to China. Pema and I accompanied two Tibetan forestry officials from Riwoche, Chamdo Prefecture, who had picked us up in Lhasa. A.S.I.A. had been requested to assist Riwoche County in supporting their reforestation and nursery development. The project unfortunately could not be realized due to a multitude of administrative obstacles.

Back home in July 1997, I learned that the ghost moth caterpillar had been infested by *Cordyceps sinensis*, an entomophagous (insect-eating) fungus in the Clavicipitaceae. The best known member of this family is *Claviceps purpurea*, wheat ergot, infamous for causing ergotism, a.k.a. St. Anthony's fire, with symptoms of vomiting, diar-

rhea, hallucinations, and possibly lethal gangrene and famous for providing lysergic acid. And while consuming *Cordyceps sinensis* will not provide any of ergot's symptoms, eating a caterpillar fungus specimen might well cause disgusted retching in some faint western souls, owing to cultural limitations regarding culinary appreciation of insect delicacies.

However, it is not only innocent ghost moths that become infested by *Cordyceps*, for apparently I too suffered an infestation. I won't claim that it is only *Cordyceps* that forces me to return to Tibet again and again, as it forces the moribund caterpillar to move to the place of its last rest, but my curiosity got seriously stoked. There seems to be no end to discovery when looking into such an elusive and complex - bordering on esoteric - organism endemic to one of the world's most fascinating areas.

As it turns out, the sprout that grows out of the caterpillar is the stroma, the fruiting body that is covered



Cordyceps



Daniel (left) and Soden searching for Yartsa



Yartsa Hunter

with spore-producing cells on its upper end. Each spore divides itself into 60 fertile propagules, an adaptation to increase the odds of the fungal "spore" actually making contact with its host larva.

"Host" might be too innocuous a term to describe this abusive and fatal relationship. For once the guest has made itself comfortable, having entered through orifices or attached itself to the outside, it starts feeding on the host. At first the "guest" dines respectfully on non-vital organs. As a last rite of their union, *Cordyceps sinensis* apparently makes the larva crawl into a position ideal for fungal spore dispersal - essentially taking the host on one last outing before immobilizing it for good. Infected larvae will wait out the harsh but arid Tibetan winter close to the surface, while the less fungally 'accommodating' larvae will hibernate deep down in the roots of *Polygonum* knotweed, *Kobresia* sedges or *Astragalus* milk-vetch, to mention a few of its favorite fodder plants.

Safely rooted, a healthy caterpillar might hibernate, daydreaming about metamorphosing into a beautiful moth fluttering for a mere few days above flower-studded meadows in hopes of scenting out a mate ready to have contact male-female, after three

to five years spent mostly as a lowly larva.

However, by the time spring kicks in, a fungally compromised larva is not much of an insect anymore. Although its remaining hull of the exoskeleton gives the illusion of a continued caterpillar existence, by then it functions solely as a fungal fodder fridge, ready to be completely raided when warmer temperatures allow the fungus to complete its hostile takeover. Once the fungus has replaced the complete interior of the larvae with its thread-like hyphae, it will grow its sporocarp - what Tibetans call a blade of "grass" - right out of the caterpillar's fontanel.

The fruiting body [sporocarp or stroma] will grow up to 12cm above the ground in order to have its propagules dispersed by the wind to land on yet another larva

of the 30 or so species of ghost moth (*Thitarodes*, formerly *Hepialus*) endemic to the Tibetan Plateau. The distribution of *Cordyceps sinensis* is thus completely dependent on the occurrence of the ghost moths. Both organisms are endemic to grassland ecosystems of the Tibetan Plateau and adjacent areas, between altitudes of 3000 to 5000m [9,000 to 16,500 ft], usually within a range of 500m [1,500 ft] around the potential tree line with an annual minimum precipitation of above 350 mm. To put it more simply, if you should come across good pastures in Central or East Tibet in spring and early summer, there is a good chance that *Cordyceps* is present. However, in dry areas like the



Yartsa Dealers

Changtang in Northwest Tibet *Cordyceps sinensis* is not present. After my first encounter, I kept running into *Cordyceps* while consulting western non-governmental organizations (NGO) on reforestation, non-timber forest products and rural income generation in Tibetan areas. Leaving my guesthouse one morning in Lihang, in May 1999, I had to literally watch my steps. Sidewalks, and even some sections of side streets, were covered with patches of thousands of caterpillar fungi spread out for drying. You definitely wouldn't want to step on them, since they lose a lot of value if the sporocarp breaks off the caterpillar.

There was a lot of money lying on the ground. In 1999, one specimen fetched anywhere from Yuan 1 to 5 (¥8.2=\$1), the bigger the

better. In 2004, a large specimen fetched up to ¥10. Prices have been driven up by a widespread assumption in China that "Dong chong xia cao" ("Chongcao" for short), as it is known in Traditional Chinese Medicine, would help against SARS. Often there were several pounds of Chongcao spread out on the ground, with one pound consisting of 200 to 2000 fungi. (Weight depends partly on size, but mostly on moisture content.) During Yartsa Gunbu season the main street in Lihang is hustling and bustling with deals, sellers mingling with buyers flashing their scales. Nomads and farmers arrive hourly from the hinterland, selling off their harvest, be it a handful from a day of searching or bagfuls from weeks of collecting with the entire family. The scene is male-dominated, but there are a few women, attracting mostly women sellers. Middlemen buy up the Yartsa and pass it on to big buyers, many of them representatives of phytopharma companies in Chinese coastal areas. Millions of Yuan are exchanged for Yartsa. These are substantial amounts when you take into account that the annual rural income is below ¥1000 (\$122). However, these deals are done in back rooms or



Yartsa Hunters' tent in the snow

homes.

It is interesting to note that Yartsa Gunbu is mostly collected by Tibetan nomads and farmers who still make their living by traditional herding and farming, although there used to be a traditional taboo placed on digging Yartsa and other medicinal plant roots as well as gold. Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche, who grew up in Derge, wrote in his book "Journey among the Tibetan Nomads" based on his travels in the late 1950s: "Ri rGya, the general laws that govern relations with the environment", forbid the digging of Yartsa Gunbu. Nomads of Dzachukha and Sertar regard Yartsa as a treasure of "the earth spirits". Digging

Yartsa Gunbu provokes these earth spirits who will strike the offender, his family and clan with sickness and punish his livestock with ill health.

This Tibetan belief regarding the earth spirits might predate Buddhist thought. However, in Lihang such beliefs were not practiced anymore. It might be due to a loss of these traditions or different local traditions. It is very plausible that the taboo has been lost in Lihang. I could imagine that Tibetans observed first Chinese and then some renegade Tibetan collectors digging without suffering direct ill effects throughout. Thus, the taboo might have been lost. Supporting this idea is the fact that in Golok Yartsa Gunbu was not really exploited by Tibetans in historical times, but large-scale exploitation

started after the Chinese took control in the 1950's. Before the take-over Golokpas were famous for keeping all outsiders, Chinese or Western, out of their territory, thus very successfully protecting their traditions, while Lihang was much earlier impacted by Chinese imperial policy. Lihang had a small Chinese garrison since 1720, but direct Chinese control was not imposed until 1906, when General Zhao Erfeng's armies quelled the 1905 rebellion in Kham against Chinese rule.

One night I found myself in the home of a Lihang party official. His house was selected since it was a beautiful traditional Tibetan house. The County government had hired his no less beautiful daughter and her friend as the official hostesses, a completely honorable function. After a welcome song (apparently a Tibetan melody recycled with Mandarin lyrics), I was served an opulent meal with all Tibetan specialties: deep-fried Tibetan bread, momos (noodle dumplings), dried yak meat ("please cut yourself a piece out of the hind leg"), and, for dessert, troma (tiny silverweed tubers with sweet potato taste floating in only slightly rancid melted butter). All this was accompanied by plenty of drink,

and it was there I ran unexpectedly into caterpillar fungus again.

I had yet to learn to resist the pressure to drink heavily at these functions. This particular evening turned out to culminate in imbibing barley schnapps enhanced by a floating caterpillar.

I felt brave enough simply drinking the Yartsa-infused schnapps, but I really started sweating and squirming (a bit like a bu worm myself) as I was offered that thing to eat. All eyes were fixed on the guest of honor, while my eyes were fixed on that alcohol-marinated caterpillar. I tried to insist that this was too much of an honor and the generous host should enjoy this delicacy, but there was no way out. Finally I closed my eyes, invoked the benefits of all the schnapps that permeated my digestive system (as well as the worm) and put it in my mouth. Unfortunately the caterpillar fungus was too big to swallow and I had to chew it.

It turns out *Cordyceps sinensis* has a pleasant fungal flavor. But maybe that's how larvae taste in the first place?

Daniel Winkler is trained as a geographer and ecologist. He works as researcher and NGO consultant on environmental issues of the Tibetan Plateau and Himalayas. He has published on forest ecology, forestry, traditional land-use practices, and medicinal plants and fungi. His articles and photo essays are published on his webpages [www.daniel-winkler.com], where there is also posted a much longer article with proper references on Cordyceps sinensis. Daniel lives in Kirkland, WA with his wife Heidi Schor and two daughters.

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HOW I MET CHÖGYAL NAMKHAJ NORBU

How I Met My Master

by Oliver Leick
May 2005

2005 seems to be an interesting year. It is not only the year of the consecration of the first Universal Mandala in Tsegalgar, but also the year in which we celebrate the 60th anniversary of the end of the Second World War. Furthermore, it is the 50th anniversary of Austria as a free and autonomous democratic country, it is the 15th anniversary of the inauguration of the Shang-Shung Institute in Merigar by His Holiness the Dalai Lama, and we could also celebrate the 5th anniversary of the Shang-Shung Institute, Austria. Many people of the Dzogchen Community will become 50 years old in this year... including myself.

I was born in June 1955 as the third child of my parents. When I was five years old my father died in a car accident. My mum, two sisters and I moved to Graz, the second biggest town in Austria, where I spent my childhood and my studies. In June 1976, my mum unexpectedly got very sick and died within 2 weeks. As one of my sisters had already moved to England and Andrea, my other sister, lived in India, I was suddenly alone and had to take over the responsibility of my life. It was quite a big shock for me, but as there were so many things to do and to become experienced at, I did not have enough time to ask questions.

In that period, my sister Andrea had already been studying Buddhism with Tibetan Masters, especially with the XVI

Karmapa. When she came back from India, she advised me to go to Denmark to meet some Buddhist Teachings and to stay with Ole Nydal, who was a family friend. For the first time in my life I listened to some Buddhist Teachings, which sounded very strange to me, especially when I received instructions on the meditation of Avalokiteshvara. I was very confused; how could a being have four arms. I tried to visualize that but I could not make it concrete, but at the same time my interest was awakened.

During my staying in Copenhagen I had the chance to meet a Tibetan Lama. The Lama told me that it would be good for me to read the books "The Way of the White Clouds" by Lama Govinda and "Milarepa - The Biography of a Tibetan Yogi" by Evans-Wentz and afterwards my life would change. After my return to Austria I read these books - I especially liked the book about the Tibetan Yogi - and then situations arose that really did change my life completely. In spring, 1997, the Venerable Kalu Rinpoche came to Vienna. I was really overwhelmed by the personality and by the expression of this fantastic Tibetan Master, even if I did not really understand His Teachings. In every moment I had the feeling that all the words of this extraordinary Master were a hundred percent based on actual experiences and totally integrated into his life. I took refuge with Kalu Rinpoche in the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha. I was not quite sure what "taking refuge" meant - for me it was

more a kind of ritual.

A few weeks later I received news that H.H. the XVI Karmapa was coming to Vienna. As I knew that the Karmapa was my sister's master and my mum had also taken refuge with the Karmapa, I was really very curious to meet Him. My sister, who was the translator for the Karmapa, said I could have several personal meet-



Rinpoche and Oliver

ings with the Karmapa. I also followed his retreat in Austria and was very deeply impressed. Even if I did not understand the Teachings at all, since there were so many new words for me that I could not make any sense of like "Dharmakaya", "Sambhogakaya" or "Nirmanakaya", I started to do some kind of meditation at home and I always felt quite relaxed afterwards.

A few weeks later, my sister called again and told me that another Tibetan Lama was coming to Vienna. As I did not have a car I had to take the train to Vienna. I went to the station but I missed the train since I was too late. I did not mind too much and waited for the next train. I got on the train in time and was happy that the train was quite empty,

only a very few people were sitting there. The moment of the planned departure came, but the train did not move. I wondered and looked out of the window and saw that the other train on the same platform had just left. Finally I discovered that I had missed the train again and that I was sitting in the wrong train. As I had never missed a train before,

I was very surprised by the fact that I missed the train two times. I was intensively reading the books of Castaneda in that period and was therefore immediately sure that this was a kind of omen; something doesn't want me to go to meet this Tibetan Lama, but if I manage to go there it will be beneficial for me. So I concentrated very much and finally managed to go to Vienna with the next train.

When I arrived there I was late by half an hour. I quickly took a taxi and went to the Buddhist center in order to meet the Lama. In the taxi I formed in my mind some excuse for being late, as I was quite ashamed that I did not manage to arrive in time. I ran up the stairs to the center and opened the door silently. My heart was beating and I felt guilty. My eyes searched the room, there was nobody sitting on the first throne, there was also nobody sitting on the second throne - there was only one person sitting on the floor wearing a Nepali style jacket. At that moment I experienced total happiness and relaxation as I thought that this was the secretary of the Tibetan Lama telling the small group of people sitting there that the Lama was also late and that he would come later on.

In one instance, my mind was absolutely free, all the feelings of guilt had disappeared, I was not worried at all, the whole situation seemed to be very clear - I just felt great happiness, bliss and relaxation. With a big smile in my face, I went to the small group sitting on the floor, greeted everyone, and then my sister said, "Norbu Rinpoche, this is my brother Oliver." So it was not the secretary as I thought, it was the Tibetan Master! In that instant I experienced total emptiness in my mind - nothing more. Without saying a single word, without even looking at me, Chögyal Namkhaj Norbu introduced me directly in the state of experiencing bliss, clarity and emptiness, and I immediately knew: THAT IS IT.

Since that time in 1977, now 28 years later, I have always followed our Master. I participated in many retreats of Rinpoche's, eagerly studied and practiced Yantra Yoga, have been very involved in retreat organization, Yantra Yoga and the Shang-Shung Institute for many years, became responsible for the Shang-Shung Institute Austria in 2000, and became an authorized teacher of Yantra Yoga in 2002 in Margarita. At the last retreat in Austria in 2002 I celebrated the 25th anniversary of my first meeting with Rinpoche. For the past year, I have worked mainly on the Ka-ter Translation Project of the Shang-Shung Institute, Austria. Words cannot express the deep love and devotion that I feel for Rinpoche and I can just simply say: THANK YOU RINPOCHE FOR EVERYTHING.

Teaching of ChNN continued from page 7

with sleep, mainly in modern society. If you have a problem with sleep you should do practice for having normal sleep. Many people sleep in a normal way, why don't you? You have this problem because your energy is disordered; you have a problem of *lung* so you can't sleep.

You know there are many ways to coordinate your energy, with diet, attitude of life, also different kinds of practices like Yantra Yoga and other practices that coordinate energy. There is also natural medicine to help if you do practice, so if you use these things together it is easier to succeed to coordinate your energy. There is some medicine for this purpose called Vimala*. Vimala is special because Vimalamitra, a very famous teacher of Dzogchen, gave this advice on medicine and its ingredients saying that in the future there will be many people with disordered energy, people who are very agitated and confused, and in this case this medicine can be good. There is not only Vimala medicine. You can ask Tibetan doctors for different kinds of medicines because all energy is not disordered in the same way. There maybe slightly different ways and if you consult a doctor, they can give you more advice and maybe you can sleep in a more normal way and also do practice.

If you have that kind of ten-

dency and you visualize a white A and thigle, you relax but still cannot sleep, it is better you do the practice of Guruyoga before you get into bed and dedicate this practice for two or three minutes. Then you take a break and go to bed and while you are in bed you do not do any visualization but you observe your thoughts. "Observe your thoughts" does not mean that you follow thoughts, you only observe, otherwise you will not sleep. In general, when we have thoughts, we judge, think and go after thoughts. When we only notice and observe thoughts they disappear. Another thought will arise, and then you go ahead in that way and fall asleep. If you succeed, later it becomes very important and you can have more dreams of clarity.

Generally we have many karmic dreams; karmic dreams mean some kinds of tensions in our lives have touched us deeply and we dream that repeatedly or sometimes we have karmic dreams of past lives when something very deep happened and then it repeats in this life in the dream and you know you did not have this experience in this life. These dreams repeat and repeat, always the same condition, the same aspect of place and situation, these are called karmic dreams. We can have karmic dreams not only when we are sleeping deeply, but also when we sleep a little lighter in early

morning. Early in the morning is when we only have dreams of clarity related to situation of the present or future. So when you have this kind of situation and your presence in dreams is increasing, dreams of clarity increase, and karmic dreams diminish, it means your practice of night is working. Otherwise it is not easy to notice if we are really having continuation of presence. We can also have awareness we are dreaming, any kind of dream, good or bad, and sometimes people have this kind of experience. This happens sometimes and is normal because we can have that kind of clarity. When you do practice you become familiar with that, with any kind of dream that seems a little interesting, you immediately notice you are dreaming. If you are aware that you are dreaming, then you use this awareness to develop your capacity of practice. For example, in your dream you have an idea at one moment of how a teacher taught a method of practice, and immediately you are in that state and maybe your teacher is there and you don't remember, so you ask the teacher and the teacher explains. Circumstances change and you do not need some kind of technique to enter another situation.

When you become more aware in your dreams you can understand what Buddha meant when he said, "Everything is

unreal just like a dream, a big dream." We know that intellectually but we always have a concrete view, our lives are concrete and we always have very strong attachments. When you have the dream capacity, you can observe in your daily life how you feel and you can easily feel that everything is unreal; you don't need big effort. That means that now you are conquering all those attachments and fears, tensions from attachments and your practice becomes more concrete in the daytime. You work together in that way and you can progress much more in your practice.

BARDO

Also Guruyoga is very important when you learn about the bardo. The bardo of dream, sleep and death are very similar. We can learn this also. What do we do if we are suddenly dying somehow? We are all practitioners, different people with different ideas, but we can all do something very concrete before we fall asleep on the bed. We do the practice of Guruyoga and sleep. In the same way, when you notice you are dying, you are in a state of Guruyoga. That means that you are in that state of instant presence and that means you have had that knowledge and experience and have trained with Guruyoga, and then you have no problem of bardo of moment of death. When we die in the ordinary way, we

suffer a lot. We suffer a lot because we have mind and all the concepts of mind, all the elements are dissolving and with each experience we feel very strong pain and fear, etc. In the Dzogchen way you learn the practices of Rushen and Semdzin. Through these practices, we distinguish mind and nature of mind. They are different. For example, with the example of a mirror, reflections are the level of mind and potentiality of mirror is nature of mirror. These two are very different. So if you are the nature of mirror, even if there is much confusion in the mirror and problems are manifesting, the nature of the mirror is not suffering, not upset, because it is in its real nature. That is the same as if you are in the state of Guruyoga. There is no problem. It is the same in the famous bardo of Dharmata, when we are in our naked primordial potentiality of sound, light and rays, and can recognize the Sambhogakaya manifestations, then we have total realization. For that reason the practice of Guruyoga and the practice of night are very important, and we should do all these practices to integrate the teachings into daily life.

*Vimala is available from Dr Phuntsog Wangmo (USA) at 413 369 4912

Transcribed & Edited by Naomi Zeitz