



# No Activity & Nonmeditation

THIS SPRING, the Vidyadhara's nephew, Karma Senge Rinpoche, returned to Canada for the fourth time to teach and translate with us. The focus this time was on a very important transmission: *The Sadhana of Nonmeditation: A Practice of No Activity*, Drawn from "The Heart Treasure of Samantabhadra"—an ati terma discovered by the Vidyadhara in Kyere, Tibet. From the start, we shifted into a higher gear all around. We had translated and compiled all the liturgies and commentarial texts we thought necessary before the visit began, working for nearly two months last winter with Khenpo Tsering Gyurme. However, soon after Rinpoche's arrival we discovered that there was much more to translate, and we completed new drafts of all the most essential pieces in a matter of days, completing two publications (sadhana and practice commentary) just in time for the program. (For more on our work with Karseng Rinpoche, please see page 3.)

We thought you might appreciate a different voice in reporting on this empowerment, and so we asked a good friend and writer, Denny Blouin, to put his mind and heart and hand to this.

## Deep Red Heart

The Avalokiteshvara Abhisheka, Halifax, May 2007

RECEIVING THIS ABHISHEKA and listening to the stories that Karma Senge Rinpoche told us of the Vidyadhara's youth in Tibet transformed for me what we have known about the history of the Vidyadhara's entire life and the significance—the urgency of his teachings. Speaking as a student of Trungpa Rinpoche, until Karma Senge came to North America in 2003, I was not accustomed to thinking of Chögyam Trungpa's "miraculous" aspects. Yes, there were the occasional stories like an over-the-speed-limit OM AH HUM under the radar of a Colorado state trooper, or dinner place settings for Vajrayogini at Mill Village, but in general Rinpoche never talked much about miraculous powers or wondrous events. In fact, he pooh-poohed them as relative siddhi; the point being to realize the supreme siddhi of wisdom in this lifetime, and he kept encouraging us, "You can do it, sweetheart."

Of course, there are hints of such power and action in places like *Ocean Waves of Devotion: A Supplication to the Surmang Trungpa Rinpoches*, where, even at age ten, he is likened to Kunga Lekpa, the Mad Yogin of Bhutan; in *Born in Tibet* where he divines escape routes through a wilderness of snow peaks and jungles; or in James George's story of Rinpoche in New Delhi in 1968 "looking intently into a small circular metal mirror of the Chinese type and describing Shambhala as if he were looking out of the window."

From the distance of print and secondhand story all of that is relatively comprehensible. But now it comes as a mind-bending surprise to hear—not just to read—of his activity as a tertön in Tibet, receiving and uncovering both



Avalokiteshvara thangka by Greg Smith, [www.thangka-painter-gregsmith.com](http://www.thangka-painter-gregsmith.com)

earth and mind termas on Kyere Shelkar mountain, at the place Padmasambhava named Luminosity Sky Palace, declared by him to have more blessings than other sacred pure lands.

Trained as the first generation of Trungpa Rinpoche's students, we were taught to cut through the "love and light" and "magic and mystery" attributed to Tibetan Buddhism, and to come down to earth and perceive *ordinary* magic. Because of that, his actions as a child tertön challenge our practiced skepticism. But what he did was actual, witnessed fact in the original meaning of that word: thing done.

Over the course of the abhisheka, Karma Senge Rinpoche told us well-kept stories of Trungpa Rinpoche as a young tertön. For six days, Surmang monks excavated solid rock to an arm's-length depth at a site Rinpoche had specified to uncover terma caskets. Another time, during an event that adds a whole new dimension to the request, "Please approach," accompanied by other lamas doing a feast in the Crystal Cave of Vajrasattva on Kyere Shelkar, Rinpoche recited the "Seven-Line Supplication" at dawn, then waved an arrow, and as the attached scarf touched the cave roof, treasure caskets "poured down."

At still another time when Rinpoche was at Kyere monastery, during a group ganachakra practice, again at dawn, he encountered Ekajati "face to face." She with her big spike topknot, single breast and fang, her heart-eating Mahakala face, wasp-waist and skull garland, she "with a terrifying roar of laughter, amidst swirling fire and wind, red and black, placed in his hand a treasure casket, which on the following day opened by itself." That treasure contained a practice of Ekajati; sadhanas of the guru, yidam, dakini, and dharma protector; prophecies about the future, and this very profound Avalokiteshvara sadhana, which includes a method of practicing effortless nonmeditation.

In *The Sadhana of Nonmeditation: A Practice of No Activity*, we have what Robin Kornman (who made a very special effort to attend) called, "a culminating piece of Trungpa Rinpoche: as if he built a pyramid and there was a square at the top that we have been missing and this is the crystal square at the top, an ati (dzokchen) practice of Avalokiteshvara." The power of this short, pith practice is that it binds emptiness to compassion and demonstrates it—in

fact, it is the experience of both arising together, spontaneously, effortlessly. That it appears now, twenty years after the Vidyadhara's parinirvana, is certainly not random coincidence, and I can imagine a sly smile now haunting the Vidyadhara's lips as he alone knew what he'd left behind. And what was coming:

*In the final difficult five hundred years,  
There will be no time to do a practice involving effort.  
Even practicing will be a great risk for one's life.  
Therefore, you should practice ati, effortlessly.*

By the time Trungpa Rinpoche received this terma in 1958, simply to be seen reciting mantras or using a mala, let alone practicing meditation, had become crimes in regions of Tibet the Chinese had conquered. Thus only the effortlessness of ati would be an undetectably safe practice, which may explain why his teacher Khenpo Gangshar broke the traditional mold for dzokchen transmission by giving it publicly to large gatherings.

At "great risk for one's life," the risk taken by disciples to preserve these texts, and the risk the Vidyadhara's nephew took to find and save them. Therefore, when Karma Senge Rinpoche enters a shrine room and sits on a throne, that risk-of-life generosity and his achievement are palpable. In the presence of this trim, middle-sized man with inquisitive eyes, soft-spoken authority, and accomplishment, we did become very "fortunate ones."

All 240 of us, packed quite tightly into the shrine room in what came to feel like a family gathering of the Vidyadhara's sangha, still sharp, soft, salty, vital, quick with questions and service. But coming just three months after Molly Nudell's Sukhavati, and with Robin sitting with many of us for the last time, sartorially ever-resplendent, but walking with a cane and nodding off due to medication—a life-risk decision to attend—the weekend cut two ways, with both a sense of loss and urgency. Loss in the sense that seats in the shrine room are now open, as the foundation generation of the sangha begins to lose its members more frequently. But at the same time, when Jessie Litven, 26, took her seat as an oral translator and began to learn on the job in front of us all, clearly a hot torch was being passed.

Having practiced this sadhana for only a few months, I am slowly coming to understand more exactly, more urgently than ever before how "Fulfilling the Aspirations" of the Vidyadhara is an act that comes from, as the Vidyadhara says, "compassion, known in Tibet as the noble heart, that is to say the magnetic or the moving quality of enlightenment.... This idea of compassion is in fact the warmth within enlightenment. Enlightenment must have warmth, this willingness-to-do-everything. And that willingness, that being-ready-to-move, is essentially what Avalokiteshvara represents.... Avalokiteshvara is not something outside yourself to which you pray—he is your compassion and part of you."

*In memory of Robin Kornman.*

—Denault Blouin

# Remembering Robin

ON JULY 31, Robin Kornman, one of the founding members of the Nalanda Translation Committee, passed away at age 60, from complications due to cancer following a lengthy illness. Robin became a student of Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche soon after the Vidyadhara's arrival in North America. He lived at Karma Chöling through the early '70s, where under Rinpoche's guidance he began his study of Tibetan—whatever he could squeeze in when he wasn't working in the kitchen, teaching, or heading up the education department. He served as Rinpoche's primary attendant at the 1974 Vajradhatu Seminary, continuing his Tibetan tutelage under the Vidyadhara, as much as his cooking and cleaning duties—not to speak of

*Robin (standing), Larry, and Jan Watson with the Vidyadhara in 1975.*  
Photo by Robert Del Tredici



logging many hours in rhapsody over the most recent Joni Mitchell album—permitted.

In 1976, Robin moved to Colorado, first to Shambhala Mountain Center and quickly thereafter to Boulder, helping to formally found the Nalanda Translation Committee. He lived in the first translation house and was a mainstay of the Translation Committee through the late '70s and '80s. Robin was a principal translator and editor of *The Rain of Wisdom* and a key contributor to the translations of the Vajrayogini, Chakrasamvara, Jambhala, and Werma Sadhanas as well as the Long Werma Lhasang and the Vidyadhara's Shambhala terma texts.

In the late '80s, Robin moved to Princeton, where he completed his graduate work in comparative literature, eventually becoming Dr. Kornman. Subsequently, he held teaching positions at St. John's in Annapolis and the University of Wisconsin in Milwaukee, as well as a research position with the Library of Congress. He gathered a group of translators around him in Milwaukee and spent the last decade of his life working on a translation of the initial volumes of the *Epic of Gesar*.

A natural in the role of Shariputra, Robin never

tired of asking questions of the Vidyadhara, to the edification of us all (as witnessed below in "Glimpses of Alaya"). An engaging and prodigious teacher, he traveled our mandala widely, lecturing particularly on the ways of Shambhala and the importance of Gesar, and was a pioneer in developing dharma education for children. Robin was a *bon vivant extraordinaire*, and the waistlines of many of us are fuller from our meals with Robin, and our minds fuller from the stories he regaled us with. A renaissance man, he was struck down by a respiratory arrest just after playing the piano, a pursuit he had taken up only two years before. A translator *par excellence*,

his words live on with us when we practice the Vajrayogini Sadhana, offer a lhasang to the drala, or make the invocation of our ancestor Gesar. Robin's ebullient laughter and the fine workings of his mind will be greatly missed by a large circle of friends, colleagues, and students.

*For a fuller account of Robin's life and work, see Robin's website, www.robinkornman.com, and the tributes at www.chronicleproject.com. The Translation Committee will be working with Jane Hawes, Robin's principal colleague in Milwaukee, to help bring Robin's work on Gesar to publication.*

## GLIMPSES OF ALAYA Choosing the Right Word

THE CHARACTER AND STYLE of translation meetings with the Vidyadhara were often fairly straightforward and businesslike. There was a job at hand, translating a dharma text, usually from Tibetan into English. So we all followed our teacher's lead and generally stayed on task, unless of course he leaned out into the wind a bit, which sometimes resulted in a gem of a conversation like the following. In the midst of digitizing and archiving our old tapes of translation meetings, Tingdzin rediscovered this jewel, and we are happy to present it to you here.

The following discussion took place during a translation meeting on *The Rain of Wisdom* at the 1979 Vajradhatu Seminary. Present at the meeting were the Vidyadhara (VCTR), Robin Kornman (RK), Jud Levinson (JL), Larry Mermelstein (LM), John Rockwell (JR), and Scott Wellenbach (SW). This edited transcript represents only a fraction of the entire discussion, which is posted on our website.

According to the Tibetan understanding of the yogachara view, there are eight consciousnesses. The eighth, called the alaya-vijnana, is the basis for the other seven. The ati tradition presents an ultimate alaya (San.; "abode, receptacle"; Tib. künshi; "ground of all"), which is the basis of both samsara and nirvana. The Vidyadhara described this ultimate alaya and the split from it in this way:

*This basic ground does not depend on relative situations at all. It is natural being which just is. Energies appear out of this basic ground and those energies are the source of the development of relative situations. Sparks of duality, intensity and sharpness, flashes of wisdom and knowledge—all sorts of things come out of the basic ground. So the basic ground is the source of confusion and also the source of liberation.... As for ego's type of ground, the eighth consciousness, this arises when the energy which flashes out of the basic ground brings about a sort of blinding effect, bewilderment. That bewilderment becomes the eighth consciousness, the basic ground for ego.*

[Garuda IV: The Foundations of Mindfulness, p. 58]

In addition to the alaya of the eighth consciousness and the alaya of the basic ground, the Vidyadhara here presents a third type of alaya, a knowing that is self-aware and self-luminous (Tib. shepa rang rik rang sel).

VCTR: Generally, there are different types of alaya: a lower level, or storehouse consciousness, and a higher level, which is basic brilliantness.

JL: It is pure tathagatagarbha.

VCTR: So to speak.

JL: If the higher level of alaya is brilliance, is there also a dharmakaya level of alaya? Is there a formless purity before it becomes luminous?

VCTR: Yes. According to vajrayana, there is the dharmata itself, which you return to at the moment of your death.

It is just dissolving. After the moment of death, there is the bardo of dharmata, which goes beyond the alaya, even beyond the brilliance. It is just a kind of blankness—dead.

JL: So the vajrayana seems to say that there are three types of alaya: complete purity or dharmata, luminosity, and the alaya that gives birth to grasping.

VCTR: Yes.

RK: I take it that the lower alaya, which is responsible for our ego, is not still.

VCTR: It is fickle.

RK: In shamatha practice, it seems that thoughts are being thrown out, and I am bubbling and throwing them out.

There is no sense of complete peace, but there is a sense of being behind the thoughts as they come out. Is that the lower alaya?

VCTR: It could be seeing the lower alaya, though connected with the luminous aspect a little bit. If you are in the state of fickleness, you cannot see it because you *are* it. You begin to see it because you are beginning to be a little more steady; therefore you have a reference point. The reason you see the fickleness might be because the luminous aspect allows you to step back a little.

JL: Is the point of coemergence, or split, in that luminous alaya?

VCTR: No, the split is at the level of dharmata. When you reach the bardo of dharmata, you have a chance of either splitting downward or not. That is where coemergent ignorance and coemergent wisdom arise.

RK: If you wake up from the bardo of dharmata and go in the direction of coemergent ignorance, are you then presented with the lights?

VCTR: Yes. But that point is slightly hopeless, because you are already in duality.

RK: But if you go in the direction of coemergent wisdom, are you enlightened?

VCTR: Well, you at least glimpse it.

LM: In the past, we have discussed two types of alaya: one that is a sense of very primordial egolike consciousness and the other that is much more kosher. What is the third one?

VCTR: Dharmata.

JL: At that point, there is not even luminosity.

VCTR: There are two kinds of luminosity: that of coemergent wisdom and that of the basic alaya.

JL: Does the luminosity of coemergent wisdom take place after the split?

VCTR: Yes.

JL: Are there two kinds of brilliance, coemergent-wisdom brilliance and a coemergent-ignorance light that continues down into the basic alaya?

VCTR: No. The separation takes place at the level of dharmata, which is dull.

RK: By "separation," do you mean coemergent wisdom?

VCTR: Or ignorance.

RK: Is the lower alaya at the post-split level on the side of samsara?

VCTR: Yes.

RK: Is the higher alaya also post-split?

VCTR: No, the higher alaya is neutral.

LM: Is that the alaya referred to in the slogan, "Rest in the nature of alaya"?

VCTR: Mm-hmm.

LM: What is the term for the higher alaya?

VCTR: It is the "ultimate alaya" (Tib. tön-gyi künshi) or "perfectly pure ultimate alaya" (yangdak pe tön-gyi künshi). Out of that ultimate alaya, you could have a split. Finally, ultimate alaya is the atmosphere where the split can occur.

RK: When you have coemergent wisdom, there is both a sacred side and a samsaric side.

VCTR: Yes.

RK: Where does the sense of enlightenment or sacredness come from? Is it sacred because it comes out of the ultimate alaya?

VCTR: You could say that. Ultimate alaya at least holds the potentialities of the whole thing. We could say that samsara came out of some kind of freedom. That is the basic logic of why anyone can attain enlightenment.

RK: In meditation, is our approach to identify with the ultimate alaya?

VCTR: New practitioners try to meditate with the self-aware, self-luminous aspect.

RK: When meditators practice coemergent wisdom, is the sense of the ground what makes it coemergent wisdom instead of coemergent ignorance?

VCTR: Yes. You try to tune yourself into the ultimate alaya, and from there you try to flash.

RK: You flash on phenomena evolving?

VCTR: Yes.

RK: You drop back to the point before thought arises, then you let the thought arise, but you flash on it as it arises.

VCTR: Not quite. You do not flash "on course." You just flash.

LM: It is like saturating yourself first, then you let go of that.

VCTR: Yes. When you create pressure, then you can pop the balloon.

JL: Are you popping the balloon of your thoughts?

VCTR: You are popping your alaya.

JR: Then quite anything could come out [laughter].

SW: Does it come out as sacred?

VCTR: Absolutely, yes. You have sacred outlook.

RK: It is like you have a balloon full of water and a swimming pool. You drop the balloon into the swimming pool and then pop it.

LM: Or you swell up your balloon with whatever, then pop it by going out.

VCTR: Yes.

LM: And what you pop into would be sacred, the ultimate alaya.

VCTR: Then you could go a little beyond the ultimate alaya.

JR: Does this relate to "First thought, best thought"?

VCTR: Yes, very much so.

RK: So it is like you hold it, pop it, and then drop into ultimate alaya, or a little bit before.

VCTR: You hold it in the ultimate alaya. You pass beyond the luminous mind, or lower level. You hold it in the ultimate alaya, and then you pop it there.

LM: Then that is what you are left with.

VCTR: That is the level where you can actually transcend karmic force. Once you slowly go downward toward the luminous mind, you are bound by karma. So you are helpless in some sense; you have been forced. That is where the seventh consciousness comes from.

JL: Once it is popped, you start coming back down again. You expand back in through phenomena.

VCTR: Sometimes you just pop and then come back, because you cannot sustain it. But if you pop it many times, you are able to sustain it more. The idea is to flash as much as you can so that you will finally be able to sustain it.

JL: Then you just dwell there.

VCTR: "Dwell" is not exactly the right word.

JL: How would you describe it?

VCTR: There is some level of awake and space, I suppose.

JL: No subject and no object.

VCTR: No. You come down from the dharmakaya level to the sambhogakaya level.

LM: So are we talking about the dharmakaya principle?

VCTR: We are talking about the "first buddha," which we usually refer to as Samantabhadra and which is higher than Vajradhara.

LM: So this is the dharmakaya of dharmakaya.

VCTR: Right, which is a very early stage, even beyond the ultimate alaya.

LM: Would the ultimate alaya have more sense of dharmakaya or sambhogakaya?

VCTR: There is not very much there. It is just the atmosphere where the split can occur, a sort of neutral ground. It is not related to the kayas at all.

SW: It is like dharmadhatu?

VCTR: Dharmadhatu is beyond that. Dharmadhatu is before the first buddha. That is why we describe it with such terms as "simplicity," "unchanging," and "fresh."

RK: When you hold yourself back in the ultimate alaya, is there a sense of holding discursive thoughts still?

VCTR: You have to retreat back to the origin. It is holding discursive thoughts and also going beyond the luminous aspect.

RK: You cannot possibly hold it, so you drop it.

VCTR: You pop it.

RK: And you do not entertain any doubts about this process.

VCTR: That is why it is called the "fourth moment beyond the three." It is so minute. It is subtle and vajra, like the middle of space.

JL: Therefore it is outside of time.

VCTR: Yes.

JL: Therefore there is no karma.

VCTR: Yes.

LM: Since coemergence occurs before the luminous alaya, could the result or footprint of coemergence tie into the experience of that alaya? It comes after you have coemerged, but you notice it somewhat after the fact. There is some dropping of fixation, but it is not complete, since there is still some samsaric mind.

VCTR: You poke your head up, but it goes back because you are still pulled back by your karma.

RK: So you keep on poking your head up.

VCTR: That is right.

RK: The more pokes, the better.

VCTR: Yes.

# WHAT WE'VE BEEN WORKING ON

LAST FALL (2006), we were very happy to welcome **Khenpo Tsering Gyurme from Surmang** back to Halifax. He arrived in late November to have a medical procedure done, which was successful, though it took much longer than anyone expected. Khenpo stayed with us for two months and, while waiting for numerous medical tests and decisions to be made, we worked a great deal on translating new material from the **Vidyadhara's collected writings** from Tibet.



*Khenpo Tsering Gyurme and NTC at work. Photo by Marvin Moore.*

In preparation for the summer, we worked on finishing the texts needed for the abhisheka of the Vidyadhara's **Avalokiteshvara terma**. We began work on another cycle of the Vidyadhara's terma known as the *Profound Heart-Essence*, which includes a root sadhana, various related liturgies and songs, and a guru yoga for Nyak Jnanakumara (one of Padmasambhava's close disciples, who the Vidyadhara-as-tertön was previously. We also worked on a Krodhikali (black Vajrayogini) sadhana, as well as a volume of supplications, spontaneous songs, and oral instructions. As always, Khenpo's energy and humor made our work together a delightful feast of dharma and language.



*Karma Senge Rinpoche with Jessie Litvin. Photo by Marvin Moore.*

In early May, **Karma Senge Rinpoche** settled into comfortable quarters at the home of Steve Brooks, who very generously allowed his house to become action-central for our work with Rinpoche. Jessie Litvin moved in as resident translator and Tibetan secretary to Rinpoche; Malone Sinclair was the overall coordinator, supervising a fabulous crew of cooks and other volunteers over a two-month period.



*Karma Senge Rinpoche bestows the Avalokiteshvara abhisheka. Photo by Marvin Moore.*

Rinpoche quickly dove into the work at hand, preparing for the **Avalokiteshvara abhisheka**, which was certainly the highlight of his visit for the many participants, and for us too. But something else happened that was quite remarkable. We found ourselves in the midst of a translation and publishing factory, meeting together almost every day to review our translations and assist Karseng Rinpoche in his compiling and publishing

in Tibetan some of the many liturgies composed or discovered by the Vidyadhara, properly assembling them for use both by us and by monastics and retreatants under his guidance in Tibet. Rinpoche was clearly excited to employ our computer technology, and he worked continuously (both in and out of translation meetings) to edit, assemble, and proofread these Tibetan compilations, with Jessie by his side to execute his instructions. As on his previous visits, he brought several "new" (to us) texts by the Vidyadhara and many older editions of works he had already given us.

**A plan for future transmissions of the Vidyadhara's termas** also emerged, including instructions for a special ngöndro to prepare students who wish to focus on this cycle of teachings. We hope that Rinpoche will be able to travel extensively in the U.S. on his visit to the West next year, conferring the ati practice of Avalokiteshvara there, unfortunately not possible this year due to visa problems.

We are working now on the next major transmissions, the first of which will hopefully occur in Halifax next year: a **Krodbikali (Tröma Nagmo) Sadhana** of black Vajrayogini that incorporates a lengthy chö and short phowa practice; and the **Profound Heart-Essence cycle** for a later visit. Rinpoche was able to compile both of these in Tibetan during his time with us, as well as several other texts. He also conferred the Avalokiteshvara abhisheka on the Sakyong and gave him the transmission for a magnetizing practice of Chakrasamvara written by the Vidyadhara.

We were again very fortunate to be joined in our work by **Lama Ngodup Dorji** from Bhutan, who was very helpful with both oral and textual translation. Lama Ngodup was unable to remain for the whole visit, which gave Jessie, our budding oral interpreter, some serious practice time—as sole translator for his last three weeks in the province. Karseng Rinpoche spent a week at Gampo Abbey, his first visit there (enjoyed enormously by all), as well as conducting weekend abhisheka programs in Toronto and Vancouver, hastily assembled by many hard-working volunteers to great success. We are very thankful to all the many people who helped with this two-month visit.



*Lama Ngodup Dorji. Photo by Marvin Moore.*

In July, during **Yongey Mingyur Rinpoche's** teaching visit to Halifax, we were able to meet with him one morning, and he was extremely helpful in clarifying a number of subtle points of translation and dharma.



*Yongey Mingyur Rinpoche meets with the Committee. Photo by John Gorman.*

In August, we published our initial translation of the **Vidyadhara's Gesar Offering**, *The Ocean of the Play of Enlightened Activity: A Daily Offering to Warrior Gesar, Great Being Töndrup, King of Werma, Tamer of Enemies*, in time for the Kalapa Festival here in Halifax. So soon after the passing of Robin Kornman, we feel honored to be able to complete the work of this translation begun by him and dedicated to his memory. Just after the festival, we were able to meet with **His Eminence Namkha Drimed Rinpoche** to finish our translation of this practice that he had



*His Eminence Namkha Drimed Rinpoche with NTC members and Peter Roberts.*



*Sakyong Mipham, Namkha Drimed Rinpoche, Khandro Tseyang perform the lhasang at the Kalapa Festival. Photo by Peter Roberts.*

requested the Vidyadhara to write some fifty years ago in Tibet. Based on our meetings with him, we will compile and publish a practice commentary in the near future.

During this meeting, with the assistance of his daughters Semo Pede and Semo Palmo, and our good friend Dr. Peter Roberts, the Committee also completed a translation of a **"Supplication for the Longevity of Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche"** written at the request of Khandro Tseyang by His Eminence while he was leading a large group retreat at the Maratika Cave in Nepal with the Sakyong and Khandro Tseyang.

Other projects included completing a compilation of "Nyingma Lineage Supplications" and a "Supplication to Mipham Rinpoche" used at the Sakyong's summer Dzogchen Retreat programs.



*Damchö Tenphel Rinpoche and Larry in Kyere, Tibet.*

## TEACHING ACTIVITIES

**Larry and Tingdzin** taught the daily and feast practices of Avalokiteshvara to a large assembly of eager tantrikas during Karseng Rinpoche's weekend programs: together in Halifax, Larry in Toronto, and Tingdzin in Vancouver. Larry also taught a winter program for tantrikas in Toronto, led a Chakrasamvara retreat at Sky Lake Lodge, and journeyed for the first time to Kham, East Tibet, with a small group sponsored by Shambhala Mountain Center, visiting Surmang and many of the home monasteries with which we have connections. Larry has been asked to assist with the first translation workshop conducted in Bhutan this fall at the Institute of Language and Cultural Studies. Tingdzin will teach inner Vajrayogini practice to three-year retreatants (Group F) at Söpa Chöling this fall.



*Photo by Marvin Moore.*

**Scott** taught on *Mind and Its World*, the views of the hinayana schools, and the *Uttarantra* at Nitartha Institute this summer. He continues to lead a weekly class on contemplative practice for sadhakas with Andy Karr and teach an intermediate Tibetan class. In December he will lead a two-week mahamudra retreat on Vancouver Island.

**Mark** taught the Vidyadhara's "Daily Offering to Warrior Gesar" to a large gathering of practitioners at the Kalapa Festival. He continues to lead fire-offering programs at Dorje Denma Ling, as well as teaching Vajrayogini courses.

**Patricia** will co-teach *The Moon of Wisdom* (chapter six of Chandrakirti's *Entering the Middle Way*) with Tom Bell this fall.

**Jessie** is returning to Asia this fall and winter for more study, training, and translation work. Enroute to Asia via Boulder, Jessie is continuing her work on translating the autobiography of the Sakyong's mother, Lady Könchok Paldrön. She will journey to Surmang, Tibet, to visit and work with Karma Senge Rinpoche and Khenpo Tsering. Later, in India, Jessie will be teaching introductory Tibetan classes at Mingyur Rinpoche's new Tergar Institute in Bodhgaya, as she has been doing in Halifax.

#### PULLAHARI AND A VISIT WITH LAMA YÖNTEN

This last winter, Patricia and Jessie attended the third year of the ten-week Rigpa Dorje Institute at Pullahari Monastery in Kathmandu, Nepal, where they studied the sixth chapter of Chandrakirti's *Entering the Middle Way*. While in Nepal, they visited Lama Yönten Gyatso, a former attendant of Trungpa Rinpoche. Lama Yönten served as the Vidyadhara's attendant from an early age and accompanied him on his escape from Tibet, as recounted in *Born in Tibet*. He now lives at Dabsang Rinpoche's monastery near the Boudhanath stupa.



Patricia, Lama Yönten, and Jessie in Boudhanath. Photo by Jim Scott.

Patricia and Jessie knew they had found the right room when they saw a door-hanging that displayed the four Shambhala dignities. Although Lama Yönten is 78 years old and in declining health, his mind is quite clear and he was friendly, relaxed, and very talkative. Though his room was very humble, he couldn't stop offering more cookies and tea, and seemed very pleased to meet some people from the Shambhala sangha. He reminisced fondly about the time he spent with a young Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche, Gesar Mukpo, and other tülkus. Lama Yönten had not seen the Sakyong for a number of years and wished to see him again. Auspiciously, we were able to arrange this as the Sakyong was coming through Kathmandu a few days later on his way to Pharping. We hope to be able to meet with Lama Yönten again and ask him in more detail about the Vidyadhara's early life and writings.

#### APPRECIATING A DHARMA ARTIST



Photo by Marvin Moore.

This February, our good friend Molly Nudell, dharma sister, dharma artist, and dharma designer of this newsletter for five years, passed away. She had been diagnosed with lung cancer some nine months before and so had the opportunity to bravely face her death and share that with family, friends, and practitioners. Working with Molly on the newsletter was kind of like hugging a beautiful cactus in full bloom. First, from a distance, you just saw this provocative, gorgeous, hot pink flower set against a solid pillar of green. As you approached, the razor sharp needles came into focus. But getting *too* close was something not to be taken lightly. And we had the great good fortune to work with Molly closely, her delicate scent and penetrating needles. She brought all of herself to her life, her practice, and her work, and challenged you to do the same, so that in the end a nourishing, delicious fruit always came forth. We are so thankful for her generous contribution to our work and to have known her, practiced with her, and worked with her. We miss her greatly.



Photo by Marvin Moore.

For your Translation Committee's work to continue and flourish, we need your support. Please consider sharing the merit and financial responsibility of bringing the dharma into new places and cultures for this and future generations.

## Your Generosity Will Result in More Translations

*Please dedicate and donate whatever merit, financial or otherwise, you can today. All donations are tax deductible. Also, please send us your ideas and requests for more Buddhist and Shambhala dharma to made available—we invite your positive feedback and critical advice. Please send us your contributions, suggestions, and inquiries using the enclosed envelope and contribution card. And keep the translation for inspiration!*

To accomplish our core tasks, which derive primarily from fulfilling the needs of the Shambhala community, the Committee currently employs Larry Mermelstein, Mark Nowakowski, Tingdzin Ötro, Scott Wellenbach, and Patricia Kirigin (formerly Yerburgh) full time, and Jessie Litven part-time. Other members are supported on a project basis, as feasible. Members regularly engage in essential and related activities, often on a volunteer basis.

Last year, through your generosity, we received CAN\$85,000 from the many sangha members who make an annual translation contribution ("tantra dues"). You form a core group that allows our work to continue. Your support is essential. We hope you continue to appreciate the value of our work and support it generously.

For those in a position to do so, please also consider making a contribution to our endowment fund. This past year our endowment grew appreciably, thanks to the generous gift of \$50,000 from a sangha member. As the ranks of the committee grow, it is the annual distribution from our endowment and the ongoing support of the sangha that allow us to continue with the current level of our work—and expand it.

#### PROJECTED BUDGET FOR 2007-2008

Income from:		Expense from:	
DONATIONS	\$115,000	SALARIES	\$268,000
PUBLICATIONS	125,000	ADMINISTRATION	18,000
ENDOWMENT	25,000		<b>\$286,000</b>
RENT	21,000		
	<b>\$286,000</b>		

#### WHO WE ARE

The Nalanda Translation Committee—founded in 1975 by the Vidyadhara Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche—supports the practice and study of the buddhadharma and Shambhala teachings by:

- creating fresh and authentic translations of Tibetan practice texts and commentaries in English and other Western languages
- translating from a variety of other genres of Tibetan Buddhist literature, including biographies, songs of realization, philosophy, and culture
- publishing those texts to ensure quality and consistency
- teaching and transmitting practices, to increase students' understanding of their significance and cultural background
- helping with the presentation of Buddhist and Shambhala ceremonies and practices

When we translate works for the public of the Buddhist and Shambhala teachings, we use the name Nalanda Translation Committee. For translations restricted to certain levels of vajrayana or Shambhala practice, we use the name Vajravairochana Translation Committee.

OUR TRANSLATIONS ARE AVAILABLE from us directly and through our main distributors, including by mail order, from:

**Samadhi:** www.samadhicushions.com,  
e-mail: info@samadhicushions.com

**Ziji** in Boulder: www.ziji.com, e-mail: info@ziji.com

**Alaya** in Marburg, Germany: e-mail: alaya@gmx.de

**Drala** in Halifax: www.drala.ca, e-mail: info@drala.ca

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS: We would like to thank Liza Matthews for elegantly designing this year's newsletter. Many thanks to Marvin Moore, Robert Del Tredici, and Peter Roberts for providing their excellent photographs, and to Barry Boyce for his invaluable editorial advice.

#### LEGACY FOR THE FUTURE

The Translation Committee is at a critical juncture in its history. Almost all of the current translators are in their 50's. Since it takes the better part of a decade to train a translator, it is imperative that we accelerate the process of replacing ourselves and educating a new generation of translators.

This work has indeed begun with both Patricia Kirigin and Jessie Litven making significant contributions. But two apprentices cannot replace the entire committee. We are eager to work with more aspiring Tibetan-language students so that we can pass on what we have understood from the Vidyadhara Trungpa Rinpoche's instructions in the art and craft of translation. Our endowment fund is already beginning to make this happen; it is crucial for providing for our financial well-being in the present and laying the groundwork for future growth.

The passing of this baton takes time. It takes vision, and it takes funding. As many of us near middle age and beyond, our thoughts turn to wills and providing for ourselves and our families. Keeping the propagation of dharma in mind and providing for its well-being is also important. It can be a significant part of our legacy and an expression of what has been important to us during our life. Gifts can be general or for specific projects and purposes. Members of the committee would be happy to discuss with you the use of your gift or bequest if you would like translation of the dharma to be an expression of your continuing generosity.

#### NALANDA TRANSLATION COMMITTEE

Vidyadhara Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche, Founder  
Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche  
Lama Ugyen Shenpen  
Larry Mermelstein, Executive Director

Cathryn Abato	Jessie Litven
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David Cox	Tingdzin Ötro
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Derek Kolleeny	Clarke Warren
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