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## Patron King Series

### PART VII: A Letter from Rinpoche to Our Own Patrons

In place of the Patron King series, this month we would like to share an excerpt from a letter to our own patrons issued by Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche. Beginning at Losar 2005, Rinpoche spent six months enjoying a much-appreciated retreat in the natural beauty and tranquility of Sea to Sky Retreat Centre in British Columbia. Several times during the retreat, Rinpoche mentioned how thankful he was to the patrons of Khyentse Foundation for making it possible for him to take this time off. He wrote the following letter as a gesture of his appreciation and gratitude for the sangha’s contributions and hard work to support the Foundation.

Dear Friends,

From Khyentse Foundation’s conception until now, everyone has been so generous, giving all that they are able. A number of individual financial contributions became the cornerstone of our Foundation. Others have donated their time, energy, and expertise. Some of you may think that your participation is minor, but the contributions of everyone combined, large and small, financial and effort, have become something very big and very influential. Like the ocean, your contribution will not be exhausted or spent; it will only continue to grow and last well into the future. With the Investment Committee’s help, the Endowment for Monastic Education is now generating enough funds to support more than 700 student monks at the various Dzongsar higher education institutions.

On a personal level I am most thankful because the Endowment has taken a great burden from me and freed me to do the things that I feel will benefit the dharma. Without the Endowment I would be running around trying to make ends meet. Instead, I can write books, teach, and go on retreat.

Even though over US $3 million has yet to be raised to fund the remaining four Khyentse Foundation projects, we can say for sure that these projects are already making a difference.

Please understand that in this degenerate time, you have become a very big part of supporting the platform or throne upon which the dharma rests. All of us together form the pillars that support the Buddha’s teachings. Even though some of you may find it impossible to put yourself into long-term study and practice situations such as three-year retreat, remember that the connection between the patron and the practitioner goes in both directions. As a patron, you are not only helping the dharma and sentient beings; you are also planting the seed of attaining enlightenment yourself.

So please may I remind you to have this grand motivation and to dedicate the merit for the benefit of sentient beings. I shall also do the same on your behalf.

May all your activities benefit sentient beings and support Shakyamuni’s teachings.

Dzongsar Jamyang Khyentse

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Sea to Sky Retreat Centre is open to the sangha and other groups for retreats of varying lengths throughout the year. Rinpoche has showered the place with his blessings, from the treetops of Black Tusk Mountain to glittering Daisy Lake. The sangha is encouraged to make use of the comfortable retreat facilities. For more information about Sea to Sky, visit siddharthasintent.org, email ssrcc@siddharthasintent.org
Khyentse Foundation Holds Its Third Annual Board Meeting

The third annual meeting of the Khyentse Foundation Board of Directors convened in San Francisco on August 17, 2005, just before the start of Rinpoche’s Madhyamakavatara teachings. Rinpoche and the board were joined by a number of committee members, friends, and advisors to the Foundation, including Gene Smith, Richard Dixey, Steven Goodman, Kris Yao, and John Chan. Because of the global nature of the organization, we rely almost entirely on electronic communications throughout the year. The meeting offered a rare and welcome opportunity for committees to meet in person, many for the first time, and for thought-provoking discussions, brainstorming, and a number of inspiring progress reports on the Foundation’s five projects. These presentations are summarized in the Five Project Update starting on page 4.

Committee Reports
The Investment Committee report, presented by Chair Bel Pedrosa, was especially exciting. Thanks to the committee’s diligence and professional expertise, the return from investment in 2004-2005 was 10.8%, providing interest income at twice the rate we had anticipated.

There was discussion about expanding the scope of the Foundation to include funding of special projects that lie outside the original five. At the discretion of the board and contingent on the availability of funds, the Foundation will now make grants to a small number of worthwhile projects that fall within its core purpose. Projects under consideration range from translation of Buddhist texts to sponsorship of Buddhist conferences.

Rinpoche’s Vision
Rinpoche opened the meeting with an inspiring talk that reminded us all of how far we’ve come in just four years and how much impact this joint effort can have. He introduced the concept that the Foundation supports both the mother and the child of Buddhism:

“From a spiritual point of view, Buddhism is one of the most important and profound paths. It is one of the oldest cultural systems and it has so much to offer to the world, not just intellectually but practically. In Buddhist countries even today the peacefulness and friendliness reflects this. In one sense Buddhism involves devotion and an individual’s spiritual quest, so one might say that materialism doesn’t have any place here. But in this relative world, without material support, spiritual achievement is almost impossible. This was also true in the past. The Buddha himself walked the streets of Magadha with the begging bowl, appearing to rely on patrons, merchants, kings, even courtesans.

“When we say we are patrons of Buddhism, I think we are basically talking about supporting two things: study and practice. The dissemination of Buddhism in India, China, Tibet, and many of the Southeast Asian countries was possible very much because of teachers and masters, but patrons have also played a very important role. Some of the most important events in Buddhist history, such as the three assemblies, would not have happened without patrons. Likewise, the degeneration of Buddhism in parts of the world such as Indonesia, Afghanistan, and Kashmir has got a lot to do with the degeneration of their systems, their governments, and the lack of patronage. When these fall, Buddhism also falls.

“I see two things that Khyentse Foundation can do. We should work for the preservation of the existing, almost mother-like Buddhist world, such as Tibet, Cambodia, and Thailand. And then we should also support the emerging, almost child-like Buddhist world.

“Tibetan culture and Buddhism are two different things. Khyentse Foundation’s main aim is serving Shakyamuni and propagating his vision, the dharma. With this aim in mind, Khyentse Foundation does not need to spend its resources preserving only Tibetan culture. Buddhism’s universal concepts, such as knowing suffering and abandoning the causes of suffering, are not limited to one society or one culture. Buddhism is growing rapidly in non-Tibetan areas such as China, America,
and Europe, but it has not yet matured there. It will, I think. And it should. There are so many young people searching for something. Unfortunately, many of them will end up taking refuge in a wrong view that ultimately will not sustain them. At this time we should have some kind of a facility so that people can have access to at least some correct information. So thinking in the long term, Khyentse Foundation has a very important task at this crucial time: nurturing and helping this child, this new interest in Buddhism, while helping and preserving the existing Tibetan and Cambodian Buddhist institutions."

Rinpoche then recited the Prayer of Excellent Conduct:

Until the sky exhausts, sentient beings will not exhaust. And until the sentient beings are exhausted, my prayers will not exhaust.

“Similarly, I feel that until sentient beings are exhausted we should have the aspiration that Khyentse Foundation will not exhaust. So, it looks like it is just the beginning. I must thank the patrons of Khyentse Foundation. They have taken a tremendous burden off of me. I could take the six-month retreat that I have just recently completed and the one I will do soon simply because I don’t have to run up and down to make ends meet. I can just relax and think about some other things—hopefully, beneficial things.”

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**2006 CALENDAR**

Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche’s Teaching Schedule

**Avalokiteshvara Initiation and Teachings**
Hong Kong, April 21-23

**Ushnisha Vijaya Puja and Uttaratantra Teachings (Tentative)**
Taiwan, April 25-May 21

**KF Informational Presentations (Tentative)**
Taiwan, April-May

**Tsasum Drildrub Initiation and Teachings, Vipassana**
Byron Bay, Australia, May 23-24

**Madhyamakavatara II**
Sydney, May 26-June 4

**Public Teaching (Subject TBA)**
London, June 23-25

**Avalokiteshvara Initiation and Teachings**
Berlin, Germany, June 28-July 2

**Public Teaching (Subject TBA)**
Greece, July 15

**Public Teaching (Subject TBA)**
New York City, July 21-23

**Avalokiteshvara Initiation and Teachings**
Vancouver, July 28-30

**Public Teaching with Chinese Translation (Subject TBA)**
Los Angeles, August 4-6

**KF Board of Directors Meeting**
San Francisco, August 8

**Madhyamakavatara IV**
San Francisco, August 9-13

(Restricted to students who have attended past years.)

**KF Informational Presentations**
San Francisco, August 12

**Public Teaching (Subject TBA)**
San Francisco, August 11

**Manjushri Initiation and Teaching**
Leggett, California (Ranjung Yeshe Gomde), August 15-19
The core purpose of Khyentse Foundation is to establish a system of patronage that supports individuals and institutions engaged in the study and practice of the Buddha’s Vision of wisdom and compassion. Khyentse Rinpoche has identified and prioritized five projects as the means to achieve this goal. The funds raised by Khyentse Foundation are used to support these five projects.

**Endowment for Monastic Education**

Dzongsar Khamje Shedra (in Tibet) in the past had its glorious day, it is still good. Now we would like to extend this.

~ Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche

Envisioning the New Nalanda

During his trip to Tibet in 2004, Rinpoche spent three days traveling in a jeep with the headmaster of Dzongsar Institute in Derge. They discussed the Institute’s curriculum and its relationship with the Chinese government. Rinpoche offered to train the khenpos in how to teach Buddhism to the Chinese in a practical, secular manner. He said that students at Dzongsar Institute in Tibet should continue to study Chinese. Likewise, students at Chökyi Lodrö College of Dialectics (CLCD) in India will begin studying Hindi and English in 2006. Upper-level classes will also receive training in computers, health and hygiene, bookkeeping, and other skills—and will attend month-long seminars led by professionals from a wide variety of disciplines, from economics to world history. There are 20 million Buddhists living in India with no teachers, so it’s very important for students at CLCD to prepare themselves to spread the dharma in India. Rinpoche’s vision is that the khenpos who graduate from these institutions will become not only great practitioners but also great teachers, with the necessary skills to function in the modern world while spreading the wisdom of the Buddha.

**Other Institute News**

- **Amelia Chow** is working with an international team of professionals to create a curriculum for CLCD students that will include the study of English, computers, and other subjects.

- **Rob McLaughlan** visited CLCD and created a master plan for a medical clinic. Space has already been allotted, and Rob is working to equip and staff the clinic by next year.

- Plans are underway to establish a shedra for lay students that will occupy the old Dzongsar Institute at Bir, India.

**Publications**

When I was studying Madhyamika, we had 18 students and we only had two root texts and four commentaries, so we all had to share. After about a year, this man, Gene Smith, miraculously managed to convince the Library of Congress to start a Tibetan text collection. Now Buddhist books are available very cheaply, and this has helped so much. But we are talking about Tibetan texts. Students who cannot read Tibetan have to buy texts. Most of the books are expensive. These are all things that Khyentse Foundation can work on for the future.

~ Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche

The Story of a Monk and a Missing Text

Earlier this year, a monk at Chökyi Lodrö College of Dialectics in Chauntra, India was searching for the ten-volume Collected Works of Rongton Sheja Kunrig (1367-1449), the founder of Nalendra Monastery in Tibet. The monk logged on to the web site of the Tibetan Buddhist Resource Center (TBRC) and located the volumes in their online catalog. Like all the texts listed in the catalog, these volumes had been collected by Gene Smith and the TBRC staff. The original woodblocks were scanned and saved as high resolution PDF files. The monk then contacted David Lunsford of Palri Parkhang (Glorious Mountain Printing House) to see if he could get a printer-ready version of the texts.
Located in Austin, Texas, Palri Park-hang is a small formatting and print-on-demand center that converts TBRC’s massive PDF files into documents that are printer ready. This Austin test facility is a model for a future facility in Bhutan and possibly other parts of Asia. Setting up a print center in Bhutan would not only serve the worldwide Buddhist community, it would also create jobs and provide skills training for a number of Bhutanese.

Upon receiving the monk’s request, David Lunsford burned CDs of the texts and sent them to him in a format that can be printed on standard-sized paper in India. This monk was lucky that his texts were available. Currently only a quarter of the 12,000 volumes in TBRC’s library have been scanned, and so far fewer than 250 volumes are printer friendly. For this reason, Khyentse Foundation is supporting the continuation of TBRC’s scanning project and is seeking funding to establish formatting and print-on-demand facilities in Bhutan, India, and Sikkim. Our efforts are currently directed toward securing funding from major foundations.

To learn more about the extra-ordinary efforts of the Tibetan Buddhist Resource Center, visit http://www.tbrc.org. If you have grant writing experience to offer, or if you have contacts at institutions or foundations that may wish to participate in the publications project, please contact info@khyentsefoundation.org.

4 Endowment for Chair of Buddhist Studies

Universities are very important in this modern world. We are thinking of putting influence in some of these universities.

— Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche

Anonymous Pledges Bring Us Closer to Creating a Post at UC Berkeley

After almost two years spent in identifying the most appropriate institution to establish the KF Endowed Chair of Buddhist Studies, Khyentse Foundation last year selected the University of California at Berkeley. The purpose of endowing a chair of Buddhist studies is to promote the academic study of Buddhism and to develop the right view in Buddhist studies in the West. In order to fully introduce Buddhism as a mainstream philosophy and religion, it is necessary to ensure that it is included at the highest level of academic study.

In the East, this degree of academic excellence historically existed in monasteries and dharma centers. In the West today, rigorous academic scholarship exists primarily at major universities. A chair in Buddhist studies will teach and promote the serious study of the Buddhadharma, and it will also produce future generations of Buddhist scholars.

The Foundation’s stated goal has always been to raise US$1 million for this position. Most universities require donations of up to $4 million to establish a tenured position. However, this professorship is an already planned position that has not been filled because of funding constraints at UC Berkeley. With an outside sponsorship of $1 million in place, UC Berkeley and the State of California will approve the rest of the necessary funding. The establishment of this chair will significantly enhance and complete the university’s Buddhist studies program. With the chair funded, UC Berkeley is committed to support a Tibetan language instructor, related research and program costs, and financial aid for graduate students, which will cost the university an additional $4 million to endow. The university is also interested in cross-collaboration with the Dzongsar Institutes.

The present faculty strongly supports this position, and there is some urgency to fund the project soon. The $1 million seed money will make the difference between having a chair in Tibetan Buddhist studies and not having one at UC Berkeley. A few anonymous donors have brought us to an exciting point in our efforts to endow the chair. Over half of the amount needed has now been pledged toward this project. We still need the remaining sum to make this exciting project happen.

To receive a detailed information packet, write to info@khyentsefoundation.org.
**Become a Matching Funds Donor**

Our matching funds sponsors have agreed to continue their matching contributions until the US$1 million Endowment for Scholarships is achieved. We now have 150 recurrent donors from twelve countries. Together they have committed over $12,000 in monthly donations to Khyentse Foundation, which when matched provide the financial base for the Foundation to carry out its funding commitments on an on-going basis.

This program is becoming the most important part of our fund-raising effort, enabling the Foundation to commit to long-term funding of projects, to plan our cash flow, and to improve the performance of our investments.

Please sign up today to be a regular donor and make an on-going connection with the Foundation. Every drop counts, and no amount is too small. Thanks to the matching funds program, your $10 monthly commitment quickly turns into $240 per year, enough to support one monk or nun for an entire year.

A contribution of $50 per month, when matched by our sponsors, becomes an annual $1,200 contribution to the Foundation.

To sign up to become a regular donor, please fill out the enclosed form and mail it to:

**Khyentse Foundation**
P.O. Box 156648, San Francisco, CA 94115

Or go to:

http://www.khyentsefoundation.org/sharingthemerit.html

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**Zeitgeist Films Releases DVD of Travellers & Magicians in the U.S.**

On October 25, 2005, *Travellers & Magicians* became available on DVD. The DVD has a number of special features, including luminous 16:9 transfer, enhanced for wide-screen television; “Story from Bhutan: The Making of Travellers & Magicians”; behind-the-scenes Himalayan location footage; and the theatrical trailer. The film is in Dzongkha, the language of Bhutan, with English subtitles.

To order your copy at a special rate of only $22.49 (25% off the listed retail price of $29.99), visit the KF Benefits Gallery at www.khyentsefoundation.org/bg.

In celebration of the release, Khyentse Foundation has lowered the price of the *Travellers & Magicians* coffee table book from $50 to $35. A package deal of DVD and book is offered at a special rate of $49.99 (an $80 value). All proceeds benefit Khyentse Foundation.

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**Professor Skilling Is Visiting Professor at UC Berkeley**

Peter Skilling, founder of the Fragile Palm Leaves Foundation, is Visiting Numata Professor of Buddhist Studies at the University of California at Berkeley for the fall semester, 2005. Professor Skilling is teaching a course titled “Perspectives on the Buddhism of Greater Jambudvipa,” focusing mainly on the literature and culture of premodern Thailand. He also gives a Pali reading class, using liturgical texts to introduce students to the texts that are part of the everyday life of Thai Buddhists.

Khyentse Foundation supports the Fragile Palm Leaves project, which preserves and studies ancient Buddhist texts in several Southeast Asian languages, including Pali. The project has collected palm-leaf manuscripts to prevent them from being dispersed to private collections around the world. The manuscripts are being cataloged, and a scanning project has been initiated in conjunction with the Lumbini International Research Institute (Lumbini, Nepal).

Fragile Palm Leaves Foundation is nonsectarian and non-national. One of its aims is to broaden the horizons of Buddhist Studies in Southeast Asia by publishing books on other Buddhist traditions. The first volume with this aim will be a history and survey of the Tibetan Buddhist canons (the Kanjur and Tanjur), written in Thai. It is hoped that the volume will appear next year.

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**KF Sponsors Historic “Heritage of Nalanda” Conference in India**

“The Heritage of Nalanda,” an international conference celebrating the cultural contributions of Nalanda University, will be held at the site of the original institution in Bihar State, India, from February 12 through 14, 2006. Khyentse Foundation is one of the lead sponsors of the event, which will highlight the important role that the university, one of the oldest in world history, played in the development of Buddhism.
Executive Director Cangioli Che will attend, along with 300 other invited foreign delegates, masters, and eminent scholars from across Asia and even parts of the Middle East. HH Dalai Lama will inaugurate the conference.

Nalanda, which means “place that confers the lotus,” is about 90 kilometers southeast of Patna, the capital of Bihar. Tradition dates it back to the 5th century BCE, and Buddha Shakyamuni is believed to have visited it and given sermons in a nearby mango grove. At its peak, Nalanda is thought to have accommodated up to 10,000 students, and it was a meeting place for some of the greatest scholars, saints, and scientists of the time. The curriculum included logic, grammar, astronomy, and Ayurvedic Buddhist medicine. Among the famous Buddhist teachers and scholars at Nalanda over the centuries were Guru Rinpoche Padmasambhava, Nagarjuna, Chandrakirti, Naropa, and many others. King Ashoka was a patron of Nalanda. The Chinese pilgrims Xuanzang (Huan-tsang) and Yijing provide vivid accounts of Nalanda in the late 7th century. In the 12th century, the entire complex was destroyed by Turkish Muslim invaders. This event is seen as the final milestone in the decline and near extinction of Buddhism in India.

The origins of several major lineages of Buddhism can be traced to the acharyas of this ancient university. A vast amount of the Buddhist teachings still available today has been credited to Nalanda teachers and traditions. These teachings spread from the university to Vietnam, China, Korea, Japan, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Thailand, Cambodia, and beyond. The “Heritage of Nalanda” conference will draw attention to Nalanda’s impact on the culture of Asia.

Reorganization and New Appointments

A number of changes have been made to the organization of Khyentse Foundation’s volunteer corps. For complete details, go to http://khyentsefoundation.org/whoweare.html

- Kris Yao and Isabel Pedrosa were appointed KF Board members.
- Pema Tshering and Rinzin Lhamu of Bhutan were invited to be KF country representatives.
- Suyin Lee was appointed Beneficiary Coordinator in the Executive Office.
- Alysia Lee, Ngodup Dorje, Gene Chan, Gregory Forgues, Kelly Yang, and Donavan Van Leeuwen were appointed advisors to the Investment Committee.
- Ngodrup Dorje will join the Grants Review Committee as the coordinator.
- The Fundraising Committee was dissolved. Its activities will be carried out by the KF country teams.
- Kris Yao, Steven Goodman, and Cangioli Che will concentrate their efforts on the Endowed Chair of Buddhist Studies.
- Nancy Lee, Yinwah Ma, and Sharon Roe were invited to work on special projects.

Holiday Shopping at the KF Benefits Gallery

The online Benefits Gallery is becoming an art gallery, with a new organization that includes photographs taken by Khyentse Rinpoche himself (for your viewing pleasure, not for sale). It also includes fine art photographs by Rinpoche’s commissioned photographer, But-Sou Lai. But-Sou’s photos of the inauguration of the Chökji Lodrö College of Dialectics and of Rinpoche teaching Madhyamika in San Francisco are now available for viewing and purchase. We have also added links to iTunes, Amazon Canada, and Amazon U.S. When you buy online from these sites, we receive a percentage of all of your purchases. New items are coming in to the Benefits Gallery all the time—fresh Bhutanese incense, practice materials, and jewelry, and soon we will have props from Travellers & Magicians.

In celebration of the release of the DVD (see story on page 6), Khyentse Foundation has lowered the price of the Travellers & Magicians coffee table book from $50 to $35. A package deal of DVD and book is offered at a special rate of $49.99 (an $80 value). All proceeds benefit Khyentse Foundation.

One of the most popular items at the gallery is the new electronic mala. A happy customer writes, “It does so many things! One day I was taking a walk while on retreat and using it to count mantras when suddenly it got dark and I had to find my way back to the cabin. Much to my relief, I realized that the mala counter is also a flashlight and a clock.”

All of the items in our online store are donated or sponsored by friends of the Foundation, so 100% of your purchase goes to the Foundation. As the holiday season approaches, take a look at the site—one of the easiest ways to support Khyentse Foundation is by doing your gift shopping at the Benefits Gallery. Visit the newly updated site at http://www.khyentsefoundation.org/bg and click the Benefits Gallery link.
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Schools for Children

Many of you have become Buddhists and many of you have children. As parents you want your children to have good influences, if not Buddhist influences then at least some kind of good influence. Right now you have few options except to send your children to public school or private schools promoting beliefs other than Buddhism.

– Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche

Australia Takes It to the Next Level

Building on the success of their monthly children’s days, Siddhartha’s School in Australia has formed a steering committee of nine enthusiastic proponents of Buddhist schooling. After much research, information gathering, and linking with other like-minded groups—and a little help from a divination (mo)—the group has decided to establish a school in Lismore, one of the larger towns near Rinpoche’s retreat center, Vajradhara Gonpa. Lismore has a university and a growing population. Project spearheads Ari Summa and Eva Thomas will soon be seeking volunteer input, creating a board of directors, and establishing a fundraising committee. Khyentse Foundation is committed to support this effort, contingent upon funding availability. Although KF policy does not allow the funding of construction, the Foundation will fund the operation of the school, including text books, teacher salaries, program costs, and so on. To find out more, contact sschool@khyentsefoundation.org.

Update from Brazil

In other news, Chagdud Gonpa in Brazil is initiating an effort to design a training program for public school teachers so that Buddhism can be taught in primary and secondary schools.