

Tape 176: My Eight Main Teachers by Sangharakshita

[Note b = Bhikkhu]

I think most of you are already aware that all my life I've been a great reader. And quite a few years ago, I think I must have been in my teens, I read a work by Hegel called The Philosophy of History. And in the course of The Philosophy of History, Hegel says that history moves from east to west. I may not exactly embody history, but I think I can say that in recent years, in recent decades, I have moved from east to west. 40 years ago today I was very much in India, as you've been reminded I was receiving my bhikku ordination. And 20 years ago I was back in England, moving from east to west. Manjuvajra's reminiscences by the way start from some of my own, because I do remember that retreat 20 years ago at, I think Keffolds in Sussex actually. I remember it very well, I remember it I'm afraid, I'm sorry to say, not because I met Manjuvajra, in fact I can't remember meeting him (laughter) - honesty is the best policy - I can't remember meeting him, for me that easter retreat for which I came back specially from the States, was rather overshadowed by the fact that I was very ill, and in fact I'm told I nearly died on that occasion. I recovered and went back to the States to do whatever I was doing there, and yes that was 20 years ago.

And now 20 years further on, I've moved again from east to west, and I'm back again in the United States and giving I'm glad to say, my very first talk in the United States under the auspices of our very own FWBO, which I'm very glad and happy to see flourishing in this particular place, and beginning to flourish in several other centres across this vast continent as well.

Now in the course of the last week, you've had a talk on the meaning of kalyana mitrata, spiritual friendship, which as you all know is absolutely central in Buddhism as envisaged by the FWBO. You also had a talk on the Buddha, a talk on some of the great Buddhist teachers, and there's even been a talk on me. And tonight I'm going to talk about my own teachers, and I'm going to talk about them mainly by way of personal reminiscences, I'm not trying to give short, potted systematic biographies. Mainly just my own personal reminiscences. And of course in the course of my life I think I can say I have had very many teachers indeed. Not only Buddhist teachers, but in the earlier phase of my career in India, Hindu teachers, and before that of course there were secular teachers. And according to Buddhist tradition, your very first teachers are of course your parents - they're called the ??acaryas the old or original teachers, and they are also to be included in the list of one's teachers. In fact one can even go so far as to say one learns from every single person whom one meets in the course of one's life. One learns something or other. But obviously limits have to be imposed. I certainly can't want to talk about all my teachers, tonight I'm just going to reminisce about my eight most important Buddhist teachers, and obviously I'm not going to be able to say very much about any of them, but I hope that in the course of the next hour-and-a-half I shall be able to give you a glimpse of what they were like. Give you a glimpse of what they meant to me, and perhaps what they might come to mean to some of you.

I'm going to start off at the beginning, chronologically speaking, I'm going to start off with Bhikshu Jagadish Kasyapa. I don't know how many of you have heard his name before, so I'll just repeat it Bhikshu Jagadish Kasyapa. Kasyapgi as he was usually called, gi being an honorific suffix, was Indian, he was in fact a Bihari; Bihar being that province or that state in India in which Buddhagaya, where the Buddha was enlightened, is situated. He used to talk to me a bit about his earlier life, his ancestry. He came of respectable, peasant or small landholding stock and seems to have been a rather religious-minded youth, of course he was born as a Hindu, he was born into what's known as the kayasnam ?? caste in Bihar. And while he was still in his teens, he joined a hindu organization, a sort of hindu reform organization, called the Aryasamaj founded by Swami

Dayananda Sarasvati in the last century, this particular samaj, this organization was opposed to image worship, not very much in favour of the caste system, and strongly emphasized vedic as opposed to paranic hinduism. Kasyapa joined the aryasamaj, became a hindu samyasin ?? and embarked upon the study of the Vedas, the most sacred scriptures of the hindus, the ??????????. He embarked on their study because these were the texts which the aryasamaj so strongly emphasized and all hindus believed that the vedas were the foundation of their faith, of their practice, contained all possible mysteries, and often hindus believe that the formula for the manufacture of the atom bomb is to be found in the vedas, so Kasyapa was very excited and very thrilled to be able to embark on the study of the vedas, and of course he had to learn sanskrit, including vedic sanskrit which is rather different to ???, classical sanskrit. But he was very disillusioned. He didn't find any wisdom, he told me, he didn't find any philosophy, he found hymns to this god, that god, especially hymns to Indra, a sort of thunder god, rather quarrelsome, rather fond of fighting, rather fond of ???, often getting drunk, a rather edifying sort of god, he found all sorts of rituals described, all sorts of chants, he found all sorts of magic spells, especially in the ???veda, to destroy your enemies and attract love and he felt well where is the sublime philosophy that I was promised? He used to say to me subsequently that the best way of weaning a hindu away from hinduism is to get them to study the vedas, because normally they're not studied, you very very rarely find even a brahmin who possesses a copy of the vedas, they're very rare indeed. You used to find the vedas in the libraries of the scholars in the west, you don't find them in India.

Anyway, to cut a rather long story short, he did become very disillusioned with the vedas, with the aryasamaj, with hinduism, so he started exploring other faiths. Sikhism, Chinese ???, and Buddhism. And when he came upon Buddhism, which don't forget had been actually dead in India for 100s upon 100s of years, he decided that this was the faith, this was the religion for him, he went to Sri Lanka, he became a bhikkhu there, he studied pali at the ??? which was the institute of higher learning for Buddhist monks, and became in fact a tipitika-acarya, that is to say he studied the whole of the pali canon in the original pali language - in the royal thai edition this is some 45 volumes. Kasyapa had studied them all, and was therefore eventually granted this title. But though he had studied the tipitika in pali in Sri Lanka, though he'd become a bhikkhu there, he did not in fact have a very high opinion of the Sri Lankan bhikkhu sangha. He used to tell me some rather amusing stories which rather illustrated their approach to the Dharma, even their formalism... I remember him telling me once that, well I should explain that in Sri Lanka among the bhikkhus there are various sects. There are 3 main sects, there's the ??????, so how do you tell them apart? They dress a little differently. The ramaniyanikaya? and the ??nikaya bhikkhus, when they go out, out of the monastery, they cover both shoulders with their robes. The shamannikaya people do not: they leave the right shoulder bare. And there's a difference of umbrellas I might add while I'm on the subject. Shaman?? bhikkhus carry a black umbrella, rama?? bhikkhus carry a Burmese-style, parasole-type umbrella because they originate from Burma, the ??nikaya bhikkhus are very strict, they make do with a big plantain leaf. In this way you can tell them apart. So it's very important, apparently in Sri Lanka to know which nikaya a b belongs to, and bhikkhus I suppose like to know which nikaya, or sect of the sangha, another b who they happen to meet belongs to. Kasyapa was always being asked this question when he travelled around in Sri Lanka - 'which nikaya do you belong to?' So Kasyapa, who had after all come into Buddhism from the outside, was not a Sri Lankan, used to say 'Nikaya? I belong to Buddhnikaya'. So that didn't satisfy them at all, so they used to probe a little, and they used to ask him, he told me, 'well when you go out, when you leave the monastery, do you cover one shoulder, or do you cover two?' Kasyapa used to say 'well, when it's hot I cover two shoulders, when it's very hot, I cover only one, when it's very very hot I don't cover either'. So he could not be caught, and he used to tell me other stories too. He told me that one day he was giving a lecture, and he was invited to give a lecture on the anatta doctrine, the doctrine of no-self as it's usually translated, and he started off by saying that he couldn't understand

what was meant by anatta, or non-self or no-self, unless you first of all understood what was meant by atta, or self. So at that moment, as soon as he'd said that, various Sri Lankan bhikkhus got to their feet and shouted 'we don't want any of that hindu philosophy here'. Kasyapa tried to explain he wasn't preaching hindu philosophy, he was only trying to clarify the concept of anatta, but they would not accept it, they actually shouted him down, they forced him to resume his seat. So he used to tell me stories like this, and at the end as I believe I've related in 1000-Petalled Lotus, he said to me, because as you know the pali tipitika, the pali scriptures, were admittedly preserved in Sri Lanka by the Sri Lankan bhikkhus, but he said 'Sangharakshita' - this is how he used to talk - 'Sangharakshita, those Sinhalese bhikkhus, they are a set of monkeys, sitting on a treasure, the value of which they do not understand.' This is what he said. He also told me one or two little stories about the laity to illustrate their attitude, and he said one day that he was going for alms, he was begging you know with his begging bowl, and he was quite a new monk, a new b, and couldn't keep his robe up, it kept slipping down. And if you've worn the robe for about 5 or 6 years, it always keeps slipping down, but in some sort of miraculous way when you've been in the robes for 5 or 6 years, the robe just stays up. And believe it or not, this is my own experience, if you are a monk of some experience, of some standing, you can actually do a prostration and your robe won't fall off. Well, if I had my robes with me here in America I could demonstrate. But anyway, Kasyapa found his robes slipping down. So what did he do? He had his begging bowl in his hand, so he just put it to one side on the ground while he adjusted his robe. An old woman saw him doing this, and at once started screaming 'what sort of a b is this here, who doesn't even know how to respect his bowl, he's ignorant of the vinaya' - because there is an obscure vinaya rule which says bhikkhus mustn't put their begging bowl on the ground. So the old woman knew that somehow, and she was screaming at him and abusing him for being a bad b. Something about a bad b earlier on. Anyway, this was Kasyapa's experience, or some of his experience, of Sri Lanka. Anyway he left Sri Lanka and for a while he was in Penang, with Chinese b, staying in a Chinese Buddhist temple and he was of course a Theravadin, he was deeply versed in the pali scriptures and a con??? Theravadin, not a narrow-minded one, quite a liberal-minded one, but nonetheless at this time - which was about 15 years before I met him - he wasn't quite so liberal-minded, this is ??? as he afterwards became. And what happened with this? and this is a story he related to me personally. He used to visit Chinese Buddhist temples, that is to say, Mahayana Buddhist temples with his Chinese friends, and they used to bow down to the Buddha image, bow down to Kuan Yin that is to say Avalokitesvara, bow down to all the other bodhisattvas, Kasyapa however being a good Theravadin he only bowed down to the Buddha, and not the bodhisattvas. So his friend, who accompanied him to the temples, didn't say anything. But that day, when they got back to the house, and lunch was served, Kasyapa found he'd only been given rice. So he didn't really like to say anything, but nonetheless he looked to his friend and after a while he said 'where is the curry?' so the friend said 'well, the rice is the main course.' He said it's just like that with the buddhas and bodhisattvas. Admittedly, yes the Buddha is the main thing, but the bodhisattvas are also necessary. So, yes rice is the main thing, curries are also necessary. So Kasyapa said he learnt his lesson because he was someone who could take a point, whenever he went to the Mahayana temples thereafter he bowed down to the bodhisattvas too.

Thereafter he came back to India and when I came to know him which was in 1949, he was professor of pali and buddhist philosophy at the Benares Hindu University, I've written about this in The 1000-petalled Lotus. He'd been professor of pali & buddhist philosophy for 12 years, but he was feeling very frustrated because he had very few students, I think only 4 or 5. And why was this? Benares Hindu University had been founded mainly by orthodox hindus, and they were very keen on sanskrit, they weren't very keen on pali. The only reason why they had the department of pali was that one of their very great benefactors, whom they didn't wish to offend, had insisted on there being a department of pali and had offered to pay all the expenses of that department. He

happened to be a patron of Kasyapa's, the ??? of Western India. But what they did was this - I don't know how many of you are familiar with the academic goings on... I'm sorry Alan Sponberg isn't here to hear about them today- but they made, the university made a rule that yes, you could study pali if you wanted to, but you couldn't take pali unless you also took sanskrit. So very few people were so eager to learn pali that they were willing to learn sanskrit, which is much more difficult, at the same time. So in this way, Kasyapa came to have very few students, and when I met him, and started staying with him and studying with him, he was always very frustrated for that reason. I personally found him to be an excellent teacher, again I've written about this in The 1000-petalled Lotus. He was not only extremely well-versed in the subjects that I studied with him, that is to say logic, both buddhist and western, abhidhamma, and pali. He often knew the texts by heart. And I stayed with him probably nearly a year. After that he wanted a bit of change, he took me on pilgrimimage in Bihar to places like Nalanda and Rajgir and he took me up to Kalimpong which I'd never heard of before, and to cut a long story short he left me there with the parting injunction 'stay here and work for the good of Buddhism', which I tried to do. I was then 24. Subsequently Kasyapa left the Benares Hindu University, and he founded the Nalanda Pali Institute in the vicinity of the ancient Nalanda mahavihara or monastic university. And the NPI I believe has been raised to university status by the government of Bihar. He also edited in devanagari characters the entire tipitika, writing prefaces in English to every volume and summaries of all the suttas.

I remember that while I was with him in Benares at the university, he told me he'd gone through the entire tipitika so many times in pali that he felt that he had it right here in the palm of his hands. And it was then his intention to write a tipitaka ???, that is a book in pali because he spoke as well as wrote pali and sanskrit - I heard him give sanskrit lectures - a work in pali of the tipitaka sara??, or essence of the tipitika, which would just give you the essence of the Buddha teaching as recorded in the pali scriptures. I'm afraid he never actually got around to it, but that was his original intention. XXX Thereafter I did see him from time to time. The last time I saw him was in 1966 at Nalanda, at the Nalanda Pali Institute which was then flourishing and I took some pictures of him - I had a picture of him feeding his peacocks; he was very fond of these peacocks. He used to come out of his residence every morning with some grain, and these peacocks would come flying through the air and he'd feed. So that's my last memory of Kasyapa. He died some years ago. But his work I'm delighted to say, his work for the pali language and literature is being continued by his nephew ???, who is also a scholar in pali and buddhism, specializing in new ??mismatics??. And I was very interested to learn that Alan Sponberg had been one of his students. ??? is now retired, living in India in Sarnath, he was formerly teaching in the States and has founded an institute of pali & buddhist studies in memory of his uncle Jagdish Kasyap, and has invited the cooperation of the FWBO, which obviously we will be very glad to give. Perhaps I should just give a few personal details: Kasyapa was of medium height, very dark in complexion, and very very fat. He told me shortly after I'd met him that had I come a year earlier he would have been unable to go out with me, go for a walk, because he was unable to walk he was so fat, he used to go everywhere by cycle rickshaw, he used to give the rickshaw wallah double the fare. He was very humble, very unassuming, despite his vast learning he never arrogated anything to himself. He was in some ways quite a childlike sort of person, very simple, very simple in his way of life with regards to dress, to accommodation. I also remember that he was a terrific worker, he could work day and night without food, without sleep. But if he had no work, he'd simply lie on his bed, well you can't really call it a bed, it's what we call in India a charquoy??, and he used to lie there and sleep, hour after hour. If there was no ??????. If there's no work to do, why not just sleep? I used to be studying in the next room and if I had a problem, if I'd come to some knotty point of grammar or logic or abhidhamma, I'd just go into his - the door was always open - he'd just open one eye so, when I put ??? my question, he'd (sound of yawning) answer. And he knew exactly where that verse or that passage came in a text, he wouldn't need to look, and he could explain it without opening more

than one eye. So clear, so much to the point. 'Thank you Bhante', close his eye... so that was what he was like. So that was Jagdish Kasyap, and obviously I have very fond memories indeed. Perhaps I should also add that I very much regarded him as my teacher, well he was, he always used to say that I was his friend. And he learnt a lot from me, which I very much appreciated even though I didn't really agree with him.

So from bhikkhu Jagdish Kasyap to Dhardo Rimpoche whose name may possibly be familiar to at least some of you. He was called Dhardo Rimpoche because he was born in ?????, he's a Rimpoche incarnate lama of Dalsen Dor ???. Dalsen Dor is a town on the border between eastern Tibet, I think it must be Kham I'm not quite sure, and China. It's right on the border. And R actually was only half Tibetan. His father was Chinese, his mother was Tibetan. I knew his mother by the way, she lived with him in Kalimpong, and died at quite a ??? age. I'm afraid she gave R quite a lot of trouble, she was a very hot-tempered old lady. But anyway that's another story.

He was born in 1918 and as I said he was a tulku, or incarnate lama. Once I asked him if he remembered any of his previous lives, and what he said was very interesting. He said remembered remembering, he could no longer remember. He just remembered remembering. He said up to the age of 7 he did have some recollection of his previous life, and he further told me this was quite common, that quite a number of the incarnate lamas or tulkus did have recollection of previous lives up to the age of 7, but then they faded away. And he further told me that there was one particular incident that he could remember now, not just remember, but remember. He said when he was about 4 or 5, and had been recognized as the incarnation, to use that term, of his predecessor, an elderly woman came to the monastery and invited him to take a meal at her house. And he said no. So she was quite upset. 'Oh Rimpoche, why won't you come to my house?' and so on and so forth. So he said, and he remembered this, he said to her: 'why should you be here so upset, after all I've come to your house many times before', which he had in his previous life. And he remembered that and that's why he spoke to her in that way. That she shouldn't think that he wasn't, that he was refusing her, he had in fact eaten at her house many times before, and she recognized the fact. Anyway when he was still quite young, he left Darsen Dor and began, he started at one of the great monastic universities in Lhasa, and in one of the great Gelugpa or yellow cap establishments. I should perhaps mention that his line, the line that the Darsen Dor Rimpoche's was actually Nyingma, not Gelugpa, but I gather that the 13th Dalai Lama had insisted on his predecessor being educated as a Gelugpa lama. The 13th Dalai Lama seemed rather apt to do that sort of thing. He sent Nyingmapa reincarnations to Gelugpa colleges for study. So he also was sent to one of the great Gelugpa monastic colleges, pursued his ???, he became a Rimpoche, and he also went to a Tantric college, one of the 2 Tantric colleges, but he told me he was unable to study there, to practise there for more than a year because his health was very frail. The life there was very very rigorous. But there have been people in the West who thought of Tantric Buddhism as self-indulgent, not to say transcendental hedonism. But by R's account the life there was very very strict indeed. They were only allowed to use one blanket at night even though it was very very cold, and things like that. And his health was ??? (sound of loud coughing from the audience) and so he left. But he was in line for the headship of the gelugpa Order, he was in line for the position of TiRimpoche as it's called.

In about 1946 - I don't have reference with me, I think it was about 1946 - the Dalai Lama sent him to India to be the abbot of the Tibetan gompa in Bodhgaya, and also be the Dalai Lama's cultural and religious representative in India. And it was in Bodhgaya that he saw me, I say saw me because I didn't see him. I only learned this many years later. In fact he didn't tell me the story, he told it to one of our order members who visited Kalimpong just a few years ago. Apparently - this is what Rimpoche told him - he was standing on the flat roof of the Tibetan gompa in Bodhgaya and

looking out, looking down, onto the nearby Mahabodhi Society, and he saw in the Mahabodhi Society a yellow-clad figure. And he noticed that this yellow-clad figure was European, and he thought to himself 'oh, that's wonderful, even Europeans are now following the Dharma' and he was quite struck by this fact. And when we did eventually meet in Kalimpong, he recognized me as the person whom he'd seen on that occasion, without my knowing. As I said this story transpired only some years later.

And it was in Kalimpong that I met him in 1953. I just met him, we didn't become very closely acquainted, at least not in the ordinary sense. I think I can say at that time I became very closely acquainted with his mind and with his understanding of Buddhism. Because this is what happened: there was a young Tibetan in Kalimpong called Lobsang Lalumpa, not Lobsang Rungpa, Lobsang Punseg?? Lalumpa who has recently translated a new translation of the Life of Milarepa, and he had been asked by the editor of a book on Buddhism, subsequently published as *The Way of the Buddha* - it was Kenneth Morgan who edited it - to write the chapter on Tibetan Buddhism. So Lobsang Lalumpa didn't feel that he was personally qualified, so he consulted Dhardo Rimpoche. Dhardo Rimpoche expounded various aspects of the Dharma, Lobsang Lalumpa wrote them down, and then he brought them to me. So I went through them with him, and I rewrote all that material in what I hoped was decent English because Lobsang Lalumpa's English at that time was rather weak to say the least. But the Dharma that was communicated came from Dhardo Rimpoche and sometimes Lobsang Lalumpa's writing was not clear, that is to say his exposition was not clear. So I'd say 'this is not clear, please go back to R and discuss it with him and write it out again in the light of R's further explanations'. And that is what he did. So it was back & forth, back & forth in this way, for 3 whole months. This by the way was the time when I was writing my Survey. So a little bit of that information passed into *The Survey* at that time, though not very much as I didn't have much to say about Tibetan Buddhism as you may know, in *The Survey*. But anyway, in that way, in that manner, I came into contact with Dhardo Rimpoche's mind and his very deep understanding of the Dharma, his very deep understanding of Buddhism. Subsequently I was associated with him in the founding of his school of Buddhist refugee children. A school where half the day was to go to modern study, and half to traditional Tibetan study especially through the Dharma itself. It wasn't until 1956 that I really got to know Dhardo Rimpoche at all well. He was not the sort of person who projected himself, or went out of his way to meet people or make friends, he was quite reserved. But in 1956 we happened to be, as it were, thrown together. You may remember that that was the year 2500 anniversary of Buddhism. The government of India were sponsoring the celebrations on quite a grand scale. And as part of the celebration they invited 57 eminent Buddhists from border areas together. Dhardo Rimpoche was one of those 57 eminent Buddhists from border areas, I was another. And the government of India very kindly gave us a special train, and the train took us round the holy spaces, also of course factories and dams and things of that sort which the government of India wanted us to see, but Dhardo Rimpoche and I were both together and somehow we always stuck together. We seemed to really like each other's company. There was Theravadan bhikkhus from Assam, there were lamas and nuns from Bhutan, or lamas from Sikkhim, there were also others from Ladakh, and so many Buddhists of border areas - all of us were eminent guests of the government of India for that trip. So R & I always shared the same carriage, we sat beside each other on the coaches, we got to know each other really quite well in the course of our little tour. There's all sorts of stories that I could tell, I'll only tell one story which illustrates R's mindfulness, in fact I may say almost his supernatural mindfulness.

What used to happen was this: this train, this government train, would take us from one holy place to another and we had an official guide. And usually what happened was that we saw a holy place in the morning and a dam or factory in the afternoon. The guide used to say 'well, this morning we're going to this holy place, and this afternoon we're going to the factory'. So if we were going to

the holy place, we'd always take incense and candles and so on & so forth to perform a little puja. So one day, I think it was Kusinara, the guide said 'we're not going to the holy place this morning, we'll go this afternoon, this morning is something else'. So we didn't bother about candles or incense or anything of that lot, so off we trooped. And it so happened that actually, I don't know as the result of what sort of muddle, but we found ourselves in a Buddhist temple in one of the holy places and we hadn't got any candles, or any incense, and for traditionally-minded Buddhists that's a big thing to turn up at the holy place with nothing to offer. So all 57 people really quite upset, except Dhardo Rimpoche. Tibetan monks have got these very voluminous red robes. So while everybody was expressing their regret and being a bit annoyed with the guide, R sort of unfolded his robes and pulled out candles & incense, and distributed them to everybody, he had quite enough for 57 of us - big smiles. So he wasn't only mindful, he seemed to... you never seemed to catch him napping. I noticed subsequently, you could never catch him - and lots of people tried, and there were lots of situations where he might have been caught, but he never never was just like on that particular occasion. He always seemed prepared, he always seemed to anticipate what was going to happen, to be ready for that, ready to meet it. So I never forgot this incident because it illustrated his quite commonest characteristic of his.

He had some more human traits. I noticed that he was very fond of photography and I recently heard that there were some 200 negatives of photos which he took on this tour, including many of myself and with him taken with his camera perhaps with another person, some 200 negatives which he's left behind and which are being made available to the FWBO to make prints from. So thereafter having really got to know each other we collaborated regularly, we met quite often, and well we faced all sorts of problems together. I won't go into all the details, I'll just tell you one little incident. You may remember, well maybe you won't because you're relatively young most of you, but in 1962 China invaded India. And we were in Kalimpong, and a lot of people were convinced that the Chinese were going to take Kalimpong, going to ??, going to go down to Calcutta - those were the rumours that the Chinese wouldn't stop ????. But anyway there was a great turmoil in Darjeeling and in Kalimpong expecting an invasion and two Buddhist friends of mine, a local businessman and his European wife had a jeep ready and waiting day and night stocked with provisions and I was to have a seat on that jeep and we were going to make a quick getaway if Chinese did turn up. Well that's just to let you know what it was like. The local people, the Nepalese, on the whole weren't very displeased that the Chinese were coming, because they didn't particularly like the Indians, and the Chinese had worked on then through their proganda and agents, and the local people were quite ready, almost welcomed, the Chinese if they should come. So what we heard was that the officials in Darjeeling, Kalimpong being part of the Darjeeling district, weren't very happy about this and the local police in Kalimpong especially the frontier officer who was a friend of mine, were told that there had to be a spontaneous anti-Chinese demonstration in Kalimpong. So this frontier inspector came along to myself and to Dhardo Rimpoche, as the two most prominent and active local Buddhists - after all we were eminent Buddhists ??? earlier - and said that the DC, the deputy commissioner, was very displeased, there hasn't been a spontaneous demonstration, anti-Chinese demonstration in Kalimpong yet, and we've got to have one and you've got to speak out and you've got to denounce the Chinese and you've got to say very clearly that they committed aggression against India. That was an order. So Dhardo Rimpoche and I said, yes sure whatever you like. So this public meeting was organized and I must explain that before that we weren't permitted to say a word of criticism about China or the Chinese government. China had invaded Tibet in 1956. We weren't allowed to criticisize China publically. And I certainly wasn't because I was a foreigner. But anyway, now ????. So Dhardo Rimpoche and I had a little discussion between ourselves what we were going to say. He would say it in Tibetan, I would say it in English. So this big public meeting was called, and we sort of dealt with the situation in our own way. And I can't remember exactly what I said, well we said more or less the

same thing, we said how regrettable it was that China had invaded ???? yes, it wasn't surprising ??? invaded Tibet. We hadn't been allowed to say that before, it had committed aggression against Tibet. We were very happy that at last we were able to say so publically. So the point was well taken I think by the local authorities, we made it clear that formally we had been gagged but we weren't going to be gagged any longer. If they wanted us to condemn the Chinese invasion of India, fine, but we were going to condemn the Chinese invasion of Tibet at the same time. Well this was an example of the way Dhardo Rimpoche and I worked together.

Also, another point that I must make is that we were virtually ordered by the authorities not to leave Kalimpong because we were the two best-known Buddhists there and they said 'if you two leave Kalimpong then there's going to be a bit of a panic'. The Indian officials of course were leaving. We had to stop and reassure the public, at least the Buddhist public. But perhaps I'm digressing somewhat.

From Dhardo Rimpoche I eventually received the White Tara initiation and also the Bodhisattva ordination, we translated a few Tibetan texts together. And the last time I saw him personally was in 1967. We kept in touch, and quite a number of order members and mitras had visited him over the years, and our charity Aid for India has given a substantial part to R's school. As I think most of you know, R unfortunately died earlier this year, and Sujvra is engaged in writing a biography.

(SIDE 2): Perhaps I should also mention that though Dhardo Rimpoche was deeply versed in both the theory and practice of Tibetan Buddhism, he was very critical of certain aspects of Tibetan Buddhism - I won't go into that in detail now. He was also I must say very unpopular with Tibetan officials about the big exodus of refugees of Tibetans to India. Tibetan officials had the idea that all the Tibetan refugees should remain under their own feudal control and that the government of India should operate with regard to the Tibetan refugees only through them. They wanted almost to create a state within a state which the Tibetans themselves were not at all happy with, as many Tibetans were very dissatisfied with the type of government which had existed in Tibet before the Chinese invasion - not that they had any sympathy with the Chinese at all, but they were very critical with regard to their own government and administration. They had the greatest devotion with the Dalai Lama, but they very much resented the high-handed and autocratic behaviour of the officials, and aristocrats, and administrators. And Dhardo Rimpoche was one of those who quite openly criticized the officials and they were so upset and so annoyed about this, that they tried to denounce him as a Chinese spy, mainly because his father was Chinese. With his customary dexterity he evaded all those difficulties and actually became an Indian citizen. I'll just include a little story about Dhardo Rimpoche which illustrates perhaps his sense of humour. He had a great sense of humour which many Tibetans don't have, they have a sense of fun but not exactly a sense of humour. Dhardo Rimpoche told me this story himself. He was often consulted or approached by Western scholars. He helped some of them, a very great deal, ????? who was also a friend of mine, he helped him in that massive compilation *Demons and Oracles* ?? of Tibet which has recently been reprinted. Anyway, these scholars used to visit him, seeking information. So one day one of them went along to see him, with another friend of ours as interpreter - Prince Peter of Greece, who spoke Tibetan very fluently - so sooner or later the person, the visiting scholar, started asking R questions about the Tantra, especially about the Anutrayoga Tantra, the highest Tantra, the secret Tantra, the Tantra of sex. So R told me that he told a little Tibetan story which was the parallel of the gospel of not throwing pearls before swine. The visiting scholar was not very pleased, Prince Peter was not very pleased, so apparently the scholar said 'ah well, I don't suppose he knows anything about the Tantra anyway'. But R told this story and laughed at this bit, 'ah well I don't suppose he knows anything about the Tantra anyway', he burst out laughing and thought it was the greatest joke. In fact I think he told me this story more than once.

Alright let's leave Dharpo Rimpoche, and come on to Chetrul Samye Dorje - maybe you've heard of him, maybe not. I met him in 1956 when he was spending a few days in Kalimpong. A Sikkhamese friend of mine who was a staunch follower of Nyingmapa Buddhism urged me to go and meet him. He was a very famous lama indeed. He wasn't very old, he was only about 35 at the time, and he was not a tulku, he was not an incarnate lama and he had quite a reputation for eccentric behaviour and eccentric utterances. He was a follower of the Nyingmapa tradition but he wasn't a monk, though he lived like a monk at least at that time. Well, I asked this friend of mine whether he was a monk, the friend said: 'well he may be a sramanera', that's a novice monk. He didn't wear monastic robes, he wore a sort of old red cloak lined with sheepskin and not much else. He had a very unprepossessing appearance. I must say he was the ugliest of my teachers. A very unattractive appearance. No charisma. If you passed him in the bazaar, you'd think he was some sort of mulateer or small shopkeeper or even a cut-throat of some kind. He didn't look at all attractive. Anyway for some time I'd been thinking, I should get, I should ask for tantric initiation - my reasons for doing that is a long story, which I'm not going to go into now. And well, I couldn't perhaps find a better person than him. There were very few incarnate lamas around in Kalimpong at that time. So I asked him for an initiation and he said 'come back the following day'. And I came back the following day, and after a little discussion, he said 'I'm going to give you the Green Tara initiation', he said 'many great pundits in Tibet have been given this practice'. Though what he meant by that I wasn't quite sure. Anyway he gave me this Green Tara practice, explained it and that's one of the practices I've done ever since. And thereafter I met him quite a number of times. It wasn't easy to meet him, he was always wandering around, he wouldn't tell anyone what his movements were going to be, he just upped and off, never took anything with him. And well, he was altogether quite a strange, mysterious character.

I remember once I was with him in Darjeeling and he'd just been to Nepal, and he'd been visiting the ancient stupas and he told me that when he came to one of these stupas, he put his hand inside and he pulled out a handful of riddles/ribus? which are sort of relics in the form of very tiny pearls, pulled a handful out ??? so there were the riddles. I looked at them and he said 'yes, that's what I found'. He was talking about these ribus? in a strange way, that I couldn't understand at all, ??? to communicate some thing. It was also he who named the Triyana ?? Vihara, which I acquired shortly afterwards. He actually named it before I got it, before I knew I was going to get it. He told me 'you're going to have a vihara, and I shall give it a name'. At that stage I didn't know I wasn't going to have a vihara, certainly didn't have the money for a vihara, but he said 'you're going to have a vihara, and this is what you should call it, Triyana ?? Vihara'. And he composed a little verse for me, in the course of which he gave the vihara its name, the Triyana ?? Vihara, in Tibetan. He is by the way still alive, though it's very difficult to keep track of him. One or two of our friends have sighted him, but he's very elusive, he's always wandering. He's no longer a monk if he ever was one, he's married. In fact he has 2 wives, all three living together apparently and moving around together. One of the people whom he met or who met him some years ago, was Thomas Merton - you might have heard of Thomas Merton - and Thomas Merton has written that of all the lamas he met in India, and he met quite a few including the Dalai Lama, Chetrul Samye Dorje impressed him most. And he certainly was, despite his ???, a very remarkable man. In fact there were depths in him that were very difficult to fathom. So he also was one of my teachers. Well, still is.

To come to a much more famous figure, certainly more famous perhaps in the West at least by reputation and that's Jamyang Khyentse Rimpoche (JJamyang Khyentse Rimpoche). I met him in 56 or 57 I think, and I met him in Kalimpong when he was on a visit. He was the greatest of all the Nyingmapa incarnate lamas of this century. He was a very learned man indeed, and at the same time he was deeply versed in meditation. He was the head of the Sakyapa monastery, but belonged mainly to the Nyingmapa tradition. And he also belongs to that newer tradition which is known as

Rime, which started in the last century in eastern Tibet. Rime means no boundaries. A number of lamas, including Jamyang Khyentse, who belonged to different traditions, met together and exchanged different initiations. They initiated one another into all the different practices that they had, so as to create a sort of unified tradition. I've always ??? it was quite significant that I had this strong personal connection with Jamyang Khyentse representative of what one might call an eccumenical Tibetan Buddhism, because the FWBO tried to be eccumenical with regard to the whole Buddhist tradition. I met Jamyang Khyentse quite a number of times, there's quite a lot I could say about him. There are 3 incidents which stand out. I'm just going to talk about those 3 incidents.

The first one I think occurred either the first time I met him or the second time. We greeted each other and he looked up from his book, he was only about 55 or 56, a very grave, dignified figure, a very regal figure, a very kind figure, and he said to me: 'Do you know anything about dancing?' So I had to say 'well, no, sorry I didn't', so he said 'pity', he said 'I've been reading about dancing in the Tanjur' - that's the supplement of the Tibetan cannon containing all the writings of all the great Mahayana philosophers - he said 'in the Tanjur there's 14 works on the dance, I've been studying them recently.' And of course those Indian works on dance, on martishastra??, are the basis, that is the choreographic basis, of the Tibetan so-called Lama Dance, that's why he was interested in them, why he was studying them. But this just illustrated the extent of his study and his researches. He was reading all sorts of texts, I think it was 14, it may have been 12, but anyway he was reading these texts on dance, and he wanted to gather further information on dance if he could even perhaps from Western sources. So he was a little bit disappointed that I couldn't tell him anything about dance.

Some time later I received tantric initiation from him. I'm going to say something about that. I went over Darjeeling and made my request and I asked him for the Manjugosha practice, I was very keen to do that in addition to the Green Tara practice. So he said 'alright, yes, I'll give you...' in fact he said 'I'll give you ???' I should mention that he regarded himself as an emanation of a tulku of Manjugosha. He said 'I'll give you four initiations, but I don't have the texts with me, I have to get those from Gangtok, ?? in a few weeks time, I'll send for you when I'm ready.' So I went back to Kalimpong. About 2 weeks later, I received a message saying Come tomorrow, I shall give you the initiations. I was ill in bed, I had a fever and had a raging toothache. The side of my jaw was all swollen. I was in very great pain. So I thought 'well, no choice, if he says come tomorrow, I shall have to go tomorrow.' So I got up and despite the fever and despite the pain, I got to Darjeeling in about 2 hours down 4000 feet from Kalimpong to Chistra?? Ridge, up 8000 feet to Darjeeling - all in 2 hours or less, not very good for the stomach. Anyway I arrived, I won't say more dead than alive, but feeling a bit groggy, and I went along for this initiation. I can't remember very much about it, it was all in Tibetan anyway, but I remember, yes I do remember certain things. I remember while he was giving the initiation, chanting and invoking Manjugosha, he was sort of looking up with what one could only describe as a quite heavenly smile. And it was just as though he could see Manjugosha floating up there and sending down his blessing. It was just like that, I remember this very vividly. He gave me the initiations of Manjugosha, Avalokitesvara, Vajrapani and Green Tara. I went back to Kalimpong and went back to bed. And ??? I got better. So that my experience of my initiation ???.

Some months later I went up to Gangtok and he was staying there in the Palace monastery, and I went to see him, and his attendant monk - he was by the way himself a monk - his attendant monk asked me just to wait a few minutes and after a while I was called in. And Jamyang Khyentse said 'sorry to keep you waiting, but I was performing a ceremony for a lama who died recently', so I asked him what ceremony he'd been performing, and he said that he was chanting, he was reciting

the Vajrasattva mantra. So that's the first half of the story. Several years later I happened to be in Kalimpong on my sort of farewell journey, when I'd been in the West for 2 years and I'd decided to stay on in the West, went back to India, to Kalimpong to say goodbye to my friends. So I was staying at my vihara and some years previously I'd had a western disciple who was blind??, a rather awful person. Anyway he'd been dead several years, and what happened was this: in the middle of the night I woke up, it was pitch dark, but I could see, I could see quite clearly. And by the side of my bed there was a deep pit, well literally a pit as if someone had dug it. So I looked down and there was this old disciple of mine, he was standing in this pit with his head just level with the edge. And he was standing there like that, very sad and very sorrowful. So it had occurred to me that he must be in a not very happy state, and I wasn't surprised knowing what he'd been like and how wilful he'd been. So I wondered what could I do, I should help him or try to help him in some way. Then I remembered Jamyang Khyentse and I remembered that he had recited the Vajrasattva mantra for this dead lama. So I started reciting the Vajrasattva mantra, and as saw the letters of the mantra come out of my mouth. And the letters of the mantra, and there are 100 of these letters - it's called the 100 syllable mantra - went down into the pit like a sort of chain, like a garland or like a mala, and were sort of circling like this... and this disciple seized hold of me, like you see on a rope, and hauled himself up out of the pit. I saw this just as clearly as I see you all sitting here, and when he hauled himself out of the pit, everything vanished and it was pitch dark. And I heard the sound of a rams horn in the distance, and a rams horn was being blown by the joti??. Now what was the jotis? The jotis are a caste in Nepal who are sent out at certain times of the year by the king, the king sends them a special instruction, they go around the whole Himalayan area gathering the souls of the dead and people are very afraid of them. And the dogs are very afraid, even the fiercest dog won't go near the jotis. And just as darkness fell again, pitch darkness, I heard the sound of the joti. I looked at my clock, it was 2 o'clock in the morning. The following morning of course a joti came round with ??? and rice?? and ??? They are not poor, they don't do it for money, it's just the custom. And they're very very strange people. People don't like to talk to them, but I used to talk with the jotis and ask them about their work and all that sort of thing, I was quite interested. But anyway - I'm not going into all that - my servant, and disciples were very very afraid, they wouldn't go near the joti, they'd run away. I'd say 'come out, bring out some rice and money for the joti', they'd bring it and put it down and run away. I used to ask a joti to sit down and I'd start talking with him, because I could speak Nepali. We used to have a bit of a chat. The jotis looked very strange, almost haunting not surprisingly. They had a little bag over their shoulder, some people believed that the souls of the dead were in that little bag. They came on the night of the new moon when it was very dark. But anyway, that's just by the way, that's just to illustrate my contact with Jamyang Khyentse, the use - the efficacy even - of the Vajrasattva mantra. And this is one of the reasons why in the FWBO we always receive the Vajrasattva mantra in connection with after-death ceremonies.

So, that was, or that is, Jamyang Khyentse Rinpoche. As I said he was a very kindly, in a sense a very regal, sort of person. When I met him for the first time he struck me as being very like an old Burmese mahathera, or senior monk, he was quite monastic but at the same time he had this regal air. I believe he came from a princely family in eastern Tibet. He died in 1959, after I'd known him and had contact with him for about 2 years.

Alright then onto Kachu Rinpoche - I don't think you've heard of him - Kachu Rinpoche. Actually I met Khyentse Rinpoche before I met Khyentse Rinpoche and at that time, when Khyentse Rinpoche was in the area - Kalimpong, Darjeeling and Sikkhim - he was Khyentse Rinpoche's chief disciple. In fact it was he who suggested I should ask Khyentse Rinpoche for tantric initiation, he said 'you'll never get another chance like this, he is the greatest of all the living Nyingmapa lamas.' Kachu Rinpoche himself was an incarnate lama, or tulku, and he was of Tibetan origin, I think

southern Tibetan origin and at that time he was the abbot of the Pemayangtse gompa in Sikkhim. In Sikkhim they follow the Kargyupa form of Tibetan Buddhism, also the Nyingmapa form of Tibetan Buddhism. And Pemayangtse gompa is the chief monastery of the Nyingmapas in Sikkhim. It is also the royal monastery which performs all Buddhist functions, or did perform, all Buddhist functions for the Maharaja. And Kachu Rimpoche was then the abbot, the Khenpo, the head lama. And it was in that connection that I first heard about him. I heard about him from a rather eccentric French woman - not Madam David-Neel - who became a Buddhist nun. We used to call her Anila. Anila means something like 'reverend auntie'. This is the polite form of address for nuns in Tibet, they're aunties. So anyway, Anila told me how she'd met this lama, this new lama, in Sikkhim. She'd had, I should explain, been ordained by Dhardo Rimpoche but had become quite dissatisfied with him, because according to her he wasn't teaching her fast enough. I used to say 'look, he knows what he's doing. Be patient,' but patience was one of the last things she was willing to practise. In fact she used to come to me for advice. She was about 45, I was only about 27 or 28, and there she was coming to me for advice in her very voluble, excitable, active, French woman. So one day she said 'oh Bhante, what should I do?' She was very upset, she was always getting upset, quarreling with people, and getting dissatisfied, and ??? turning her hair, but of course she didn't have any hair. Very red in the face, very irate... 'what shall I do?' So I said 'Anila, you're doing very well. There's just one thing you've got to learn'. 'Oh yes what is it? I'll go and do it straight away.' 'There's just one thing. You've got to learn to do nothing.' Oh she exploded. 'I've got so much to do, so many books to study, and all these animals to look after, got to care about 15 or 20 ???, a cage to keep clean. I've got ??? She ??? her ??? Do nothing?'... oh she hit the roof. Anyway that's by the way. It was from her I heard about Kachu Rimpoche and she had met him, she'd bumped into him in Sikkhim. What happened was this. She was just wandering, well in the jungle in Sikkhim. She was in quite a distraught state, and even had thoughts of suicide, or she often did, but that's another story. Anyway, she came to a clearing, and sitting in that clearing there was a monk, a lama. Of course she was dissatisfied with Dhardo Rimpoche so thought 'oh, a new guru. How wonderful.' So she went up to him and got into conversation with him, because she could speak Tibetan, and he explained that he was the new abbot of Pemayangtse gompa, he'd just come down from Tibet to take charge of the monastery. According to Tibet custom, he had to enter the monastery on a certain auspicious day. That day hadn't quite come so he was just waiting in this little clearing. He had a little tent and he was waiting for the day when he could make his official entry. So she thought 'oh this is wonderful, this is providential.' Then he started asking her about herself, and this was the custom: who are you, who ordained you, et cetera. She said 'oh, I'm a French woman, ordained by Dhardo Rimpoche', and then he asked 'well, what practice are you doing? What meditation practice?' she said 'oh, I'm doing such and such', and he said 'no you're not, you haven't done that practice for 6 months.' And it was true, she said she hadn't, told me she hadn't done that practice that she had been given by Dhardo Rimpoche ???. Of course she was deeply impressed by him and became his disciple, in due course became dissatisfied with him. But anyway that's another story. So having heard about him I was quite keen on meeting him and he did come to Kalimpong and we did meet. And I sometimes used to function as his interpreter, not in Tibetan which I didn't know, but in Nepali, he knew some Nepali and I sometimes functioned as interpreter when he was visited by European ???. And I remember there was an American couple who wanted to meet him, so I invited him and I invited them for lunch. It wasn't, it was before I got the vihara, it was another place I had, and they asked all sorts of questions, you know what Americans do - they ask all sorts of questions. And he was replying to these questions and some of these questions were quite tricky, they were about Nirvana. But then I suddenly realized he was replying these questions without waiting for me to translate and he didn't know a word of English. I could only conclude that there was some sort of telepathy going on. I didn't have to translate. They asked their question and he without knowing a word of English, reply. Especially I remember there were questions about Nirvana. So that quite impressed me and as I said it was he who urged me to ask

Khyentse Rinpoche for tantric initiation. He often used to come and stay with me, both before and after I received those initiations. I must say he was quite a meditator. I think out of all the - apart perhaps from one I'll mention later on - he was the one most committed to meditation. He was a great meditator. And he relied very much on the inspirations he got from his meditation, he'd act on any inspiration which came to him in the course of his morning meditation. I remember one particular incident, he was staying with me and this was when I had the Tri?? Vihara, he was staying with me and one morning at breakfast he said to me 'Sangharakshita, in my meditation this morning, I saw on the roof of your vihara a banner of victory. You've got to put a banner of victory there' - you know one of these big Tibetan banners of victory. He'd seen it in his meditation and it had to be acted on. So he went off to the bazaar, saw the carpenter, got a wooden frame made, went to the cloth merchant and got the different coloured silks, then went to the tailor and had it all stitched together, then put it up himself on the roof of the vihara with all the necessary little ceremonies and offerings, and there it was, there it remained until I left Kalimpong. And that was very typical of him: he'd see things in his meditation and he'd act upon it. After I'd been given these initiations by Khyentse Rinpoche, I was as it was handed over to Kachu Rinpoche and he so to speak took charge of me. He gave me the 4 foundation yogas, he started me on them, he also gave me the Padmasambhava initiation, and various other initiations. I must say that though he gave me these initiations, he remained very much a friend. He was a very cheerful, very lively, very unassuming person. He was very warm-hearted, but he was a bit rough if you know what I mean. He wasn't very polished like most of my other teachers, not very elegant, a bit rough and ready. But very good-hearted, very warm-hearted, very generous, very communicative. And with a rather earthy sense of humour. And deeply, very deeply devoted to Khyentse Rinpoche and the Nyingmapa tradition. I remained in touch with him until I left Kalimpong. Some of you may have seen his picture in the Life magazine because I've mentioned the Maharaj of Sikkhim - I knew 2 Maharajes of Sikkhim - the last one who was succeeded to his father you may know married an American lady, ??? Cook - any of you remember this? And there was a big controversy about it, somebody wasn't very happy, but anyway after the father's death the crown-prince became the new Maharaja and his wife became the Maharani, there was a big religious ceremony, a sort of coronation and he as the head lama of the royal monastery performed the ceremonies which were featured in Life magazine, possibly just for ??? Americans, and he, Kachu Rinpoche, appeared in his big pundit cap. Well if ?????, I don't know whether it's true ??? you could find it. But anyway I remained in touch with him and he died some years ago in Sikkhim. So that Kachu Rinpoche.

So from him we come to another Khyentse Rinpoche. I should explain that there were 5 Khyentse Rinpoches, ostensibly reincarnations according to Tibetan Buddhism, of the body, speech, mind, guna and karma of the previous Khyentse Rinpoche who is known as the Great Khyentse Rinpoche. And Jamyang K was the chief of the 5, and Dilgo K (DK) was the sort of brother tulku of ??? you see what I mean. I met him in the late '50s when he was living in the Bhutanese gumpa in Kalimpong together with his wife and his 2 daughters. I must mention that all of them, the whole family, were very very tall. They were at least 6-and-a-half feet high. DK himself, his wife and his 2 daughters - they were absolute giants. He was at the same time a very gentle, very kindly person and a very great scholar. He was always reading. Whenever I went to see him he always had a book in his hands which he put aside as I entered. I received many initiations from him. He was a very humble, unassuming person, didn't make much of a splash, didn't look for disciples. And he's still living, and he has visited the United States more than once. Where he is, I'm not sure, he may well be in Nepal, sometimes messages or greetings pass between us. So that's Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche.

And then, last but not one, Dudjom Rinpoche, also an incarnate lama, a tulku. And perhaps the leading authority on the whole Nyingmapa tradition. Unlike Dilgo Khyentse he was very short, very short indeed, with rather feminine features. He'd been married quite a number of times, and he was rather fond of whisky. He lived in rather regal style: a large house with his wife, current wife and family, and was not very easily approachable. Some people said that the current wife kept people away, I

don't know about that. Anyway, I managed to approach him and I received quite a number of initiations from him. So you'll notice that I'd received by this initiations from several different lamas and three of these lamas were in particularly close connection with one another and formed a sort of group, that is Jamyang Khyentse Rinpoche, Chetul Samye Dorje and Dudjom Rinpoche - they had quite a lot of disciples in common, that is to say disciples who had received on or other initiation from all of them, different initiations from all three of them. So I was told, I think it was by Kachu Rinpoche, that one day a discussion arose among the disciples of all three of them as to which of the three was the greatest, the most enlightened, the spiritually most developed. So someone was deputed to go and ask Jamyang Khyentse who was the greatest of the three, or whether there was any one of them who was more spiritually developed and enlightened than the other two. So Jamyang Khyentse heard the question, he nodded 'yes, yes' ??? 'there is out of the three just one is definitely more enlightened than the other two. But,' he said 'you people will never know which one it is.' There's quite a lot in that if you think about it.

Dudjom Rinpoche died not so very long ago and he was still working on his great work The History and Teachings of the Nyingmapa school, which has been brought out in 2 fat volumes by Wisdom Publications - we hope to see it soon, it's been on the stocks now for a couple of years and many of us have paid our subscriptions in advance but we're still hoping to see it. When it does come out it will be a work of paramount value and worth, covering all aspects of the Nyingmapa school and tradition, everything.

Alright I'm rather hurrying because there's still quite a lot of ground to cover, we come lastly to Yogi Chen, C.N. Chen. He was born in China, and had spent quite a few years in eastern Tibet and when he was in eastern Tibet he was a disciple of Jamyang Khyentse Rinpoche, when Jamyang Khyentse was a comparatively young man. And Yogi Chen had practised both Vajrayana and Ch'an - I must say he didn't have much time for Zen, he was firmly convinced that in Japan Ch'an and been thoroughly corrupted and Zen wasn't worth bothering with, one had to concentrate on Ch'an. Ch'an was the real thing, the original Chinese thing, so to speak. Anyway, that's by the way. He was told me that when he was in China, he read the entire Chinese pitika twice. That's a bigger feat than you might think. I believe, there's 1656 I think it is separate works in the Chinese tripitika, and he'd read them all, indeed he'd read the whole collection through twice. Quite a feat in itself. I came in contact with him in the late '50s when he was living in Kalimpong. He hadn't been in Kalimpong all that long. He was living in a small bungalow on the outskirts of the bazaar area and he lived as a hermit, he never went out, he stayed confined to these 2 or 3 rooms, during the whole time that I was in Kalimpong he didn't go out even once. And generally he did not receive visitors. He spent - this is what he told me himself - the greater part of the day meditating, engaged in different forms of meditation. And he also told me that he devoted half-an-hour a day for writing. He produced quite a number of books in Chinese and in English. After getting to know him I was permitted to visit him once a week, I used to spend an evening with him every week and this went on for the whole year. He was very communicative, I learned quite a lot from him, mainly about the Vajrayana and about Ch'an and ??? and Chinese Buddhism in general. I must add that he absolutely refused to consider himself as a teacher, did not allow anybody to refer to him as their teacher and their guru - he absolutely did not accept this. He wouldn't accept disciples in the formal sense, certainly would not give initiations, if anyone would approach him for initiation he would send them along to the appropriate incarnate lama. This did not, however, prevent him from criticizing the incarnate lamas very vigorously, and he was very critical of them indeed.

He knew English quite well, he could read almost any English book, but his spoken English was abominable. He had a very strong Chinese accent, very strange ideas about English grammar. If you hadn't known him for quite a while, you couldn't make out what he was saying, even when he

spoke English he'd need an interpreter into English. He was also very eccentric in various ways. For instance with regards to dress. Sometimes I'd go to see him and I'd find him wearing a sort of, well, cowboy costume. I don't know where he'd get these strange costumes from. He used to get these big parcels from Hong Kong, from Chinese Buddhists, so maybe they came from Hong Kong. But sometimes not a cowboy costume, but a very formal Chinese scholar's dress, sometimes a little black cap, long ???, things of that sort. Big smile. I must say he was very very exciteable. I was surprised at first, well he was meditating all day, but so exciteable, so explosive, so emotional. In the end I came to the conclusion well perhaps lots of energy was generated in his meditation and it sort of spilled over. That was the only explanation I could think of. He became so excited when he spoke that he sometimes shed tears, and I remember once I gave him a book on Zen by Christmas Humpreys, he read it and after reading it he shed tears... 'to think that people in the West are being given this sort of stuff, is a real thing' oh he was genuinely upset, he actually shed tears to think of these poor people in the West being fed this sort of material. Anyway, I just tried to explain something to the effect, well little by little it's alright.

He also had all sorts of very strange visions and psychic and occult experiences which he'd usually tell me about ??? I must say though that what perhaps impressed me the most about him???? (sound of microphone being moved). A rather ??? combination: a very good understanding of Buddhist doctrine, I think I was mainly interested in, I used to ask him all sorts of questions, and he gave me I think the clearest replies that I got from any of my teachers. In the midst of all this eccentricity, there was absolute clarity of understanding and he explained things as nobody else ???, to clarify things which noone else had been able to clarify. And you may be interested to know that he eventually left his hermitage when I was in England, he left it after so many years, and he came to the United States and he settled believe it or not in California. In California he died. We remained in contact. He used to send me photographs of himself performing various activities. He was in a way very camera-conscious. I'm sure it was very altruistic. But the photographs that I ??? packing up boxes, performing ??? ceremonies and ???, so all sorts of things. He used to drive in a little van, I think a sort of semi-hippy ??? not his disciples I'm sure but ???. People were just devoted to him ??? he used to spend his time, who helped him in his work.

So that was Yogi Chen of whom I also have very fond memories. And those were, those are, the 8, my principal Buddhist teachers. I hope I've been able to give you some glimpse of them. I hope I've been able to make them seem a bit real to you, they're still very real to me indeed. And of course a couple of them are still alive. But even those who are dead, who have passed on, and in some cases apparently reincarnated, they're very alive to me indeed and they form a ??? part of my life. You may be interested to know that some of our friends in England, have assembled photographs of all of these 8 teachers and mounted them together to as it were illustrate the sort of traditional lineage that in a very broad, general way lies behind the FWBO, especially behind the Western Buddhist Order. I'm very glad that ?????

???? under the auspices of the FWBO, been able to share with you some of my experiences with the 8 main teachers and I hope that at least some of you will be inspired to carry on under the auspices of the FWBO.

???? (sound is very faint and muffled).