



2005 Fall — NEPAL

My husband and I, while visiting relatives in Minnesota, had met with Molly and taken pictures of the training center. On this trip I took a letter of invitation from Molly, the pictures, and course literature. I met with the head of the scholarship division to explain about AMI training, and he explained the long process of obtaining a scholarship.



2005 Summer — AUSTRALIA

Jetsun Pema, the head of TCV, was invited to speak at the International Montessori Congress in Sydney. Even though Jetsun Pema could not come because her daughter had just died, TCV was well represented by the TCV Montessori graduate and musician Tenzin Choegyol, now living in Australia.



On the same trip I visited the school in Nepal. Not able to keep the AMI 3-6 teacher she had hired, or take AMI 3-6 training herself, Diptee had created an authentic IC, but was learning by means of a correspondence course to meet the needs of the older children. She has many questions.



She has also had a Norwegian AMI teacher teach the class for a few months, and a Russian AMI teacher-in-training come to visit. Some of these pictures (of the children) were taken by Yuliya Naumkina, who was a student of Silvia Dubovoy in San Diego at the time of her visit.



As a result Molly O'Shaughnessy and Silvia Dubovoy both offered scholarships for teachers who would help the children of Tibet. Judi Orion was already in the process of arranging one.

Photos: Tenzin Choegyol; a giclée print donated for the raffle. It is made from one of my oil paintings, and shows a young child imitating the adults, practicing the bows, or *prostrations*, during a service led by the Dalai Lama at his temple in Dharamsala.



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2005 fall — INDIA

**TCV (Tibetan Children's Villages)
45th Anniversary**



Along with a Swiss friend who has been helping TCV for many years, I attended the TCV anniversary. TCV graduates returned from all over the world to hear Jetsun Pema and the Dalai Lama speak, and to celebrate with food, singing, and dances representing all of the areas of Tibet.



Photos: 45th TCV Anniversary celebration; Montessori Training Center of Minnesota; Dolma Tsering (Kolkata AMI 1984) taking this 3-6 course; Lhamo Pemba (London AMI 1979) taking the Denver 0-3 course.



Photos: Diptee at the school gate; school photo. 0-3 class "The Stair"

Photos: 3-6 class "The Bells"; boys in traditional Nepalese hats called "topis"



2005 Fall — THAILAND



Because the first session of the first AMI course had been cancelled, I offered to help keep the morale up, stopping in Thailand on the way home from India and Nepal. I spent 10 days in Thailand visiting schools, talking to teachers, government officials, and school administrators, every night writing my next days talks based on

what I had seen in schools, or on the questions I had been asked, in order to help people understand the core of Montessori from birth through high school.



Photos: a child using the traditional coconut balance toy; Thai fruit models in a basket in a Montessori

class-in-progress; some of the Thai teachers in the future AMI course, and Thai children.

2006 Spring — THAILAND
The First AMI 3-6 Course Begins



76 students from both private and poor country schools in Thailand, one from Singapore and one from Bhutan attended the first session. There is more information at www.michaelolaf.net/thailandmontessori.html



the 1st AMI 3-6 Course in Thailand



Photos: Course students practicing; school child with the Thai movable alphabet; trainer Rita Zener visiting school.

(Below) A painting “Buddha Swimming” that I did from photos of the Asoka Buddhist community where one of the students took us for a visit. We thought that the practical life of the whole community is very much like a Montessori community might be; close to nature, reverent, organic, everyone sharing in the practical life activities and helping each other, research and learning.



2006 Fall — NEPAL

Third trip. I was put in touch with the Shree Mangal Dvip (SMD) boarding school for poor Himalayan children by Riza Weinstein of the AMI Alumnae Association of Canada. Riza has worked for several years to help build the school, which is in Bouda, a suburb of Kathmandu, nearest the Boudha stupa, the largest outside of Tibet.

The directors of the school are very interested in using Montessori ideas at all levels. They want to create a more child-centered educational system for their 400 children, to help them develop critical thinking skills instead of the traditional “chalk and talk” system now in use.



Nepal is the poorest country in Asia and has been wracked by war for the last 10 years, making life even more terrible for the poor than ever. The children come from villages that take “1 day by bus and 4-8 days walking” to get to. This school is their only chance for an education, and in many cases medical care and nutrition.



I spent a week, including meals and classes with the children to see how I could help.

The children are already very, responsible and independent outside of class as a necessity, very much more so than children in Western cultures so this was a strong foundation on which to build.



They do their own laundry, the older children teaching the younger and making sure their clothing and their

bodies are kept clean.

While I was there children from 10-15 years of age were in charge of running the annual dental clinic.

