

ISSN 1608-411X

# Journal of Bhutan Studies

Volume 34, Summer 2016

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## JOURNAL OF BHUTAN STUDIES

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*Journal of Bhutan Studies* is a bi-annual publication of the Centre for Bhutan Studies. It presents scholarly and researched articles on social, cultural, political, and economic aspects of Bhutan. Opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the Centre.

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## **Introduction**

Guru Padmasambhava was born in fire monkey year, which occurs only once in 60-year cycle of the lunar calendar. For the first time, a conference was organized to commemorate the birth anniversary of Guru Padmasambhava. The Centre for Bhutan Studies and GNH Research in cooperation with the Centre for Escalation of Peace, Delhi jointly organized this conference from 14 to 15 June, 2016, in Paro. It is envisaged to be held on a regional basis in South Asia.

As a unifying figure in South Asia, Guru Padmasambhava left artistic, cultural and spiritual legacies in the region. What are the common heritages and philosophy in South Asia associated with Guru? What are the significances of Guru's holy places? What can be deduced from the archaeological remains and ritual instruments related to Guru? This special issue discusses these kinds of questions and issues.

The scholarly presentations of the conference were allied with ritual and artistic events. 110 foot silk-scroll thangka of the Guru Padmasambhava was unveiled in the courtyard of Paro Rabdey followed by masked and folk dances.

This issue contains selected papers presented in the conference. The Centre for Bhutan Studies would like to thank the Centre for Escalation of Peace (CEP), Delhi for funding the conference. The Centre would also like to thank influential media from India, Nepal and Bhutan for disseminating the event's importance.



**Welcome Note by Dasho Karma Ura at the South  
Asian Conference and Celebration on the Birth  
Anniversary of Guru Rinpoche, 14-15 June, 2016 in  
Paro**

Rinpoches and Swamijis, Lamas and Lyonpos, Padma Shri Geshe Samten, Padmashri Dr Dinesh Singh, Professors, Dashos and Aums, Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen.

With the privilege I have of speaking a word of welcome, I would like to begin by pointing out that the Centre for Escalation of Peace (CEP), Delhi is the main sponsor of the conference. CEP is represented by the presence of Dr Dinesh Singh, an esteemed intellectual who was the Vice-Chancellor of Delhi University. The main figure from CEP who has been, so to speak, spinning the fast-wheel of this two-day conference has been Dr Arun Kapoor, an inspired and inspiring educationist who is heading the Royal Academy at Pangbesa in Paro. Since we incepted the conference exactly one month ago in Delhi, Arun committed his organization to it. Both CEP and CBS feel deeply fortunate in complementing Guru's birth anniversary celebration with a major conference.

The Centre for Bhutan Studies's simple role has been that of a local guide and facilitator, with myself as the humble chief local guide among the many able local guides of the Centre. On behalf of Arun and the local guides, who are actually researchers, I would like to welcome all of you, from near and far, to the conference. From those who have come from abroad, as local guides we would be very happy to receive any complaints, requests and queries that can make your stay better within our humble means. I mean it very sincerely. All local guides secretly wish for complaints and queries to make them feel more relevant.

This two-days meeting is primarily to meet Guru Rinpoche during his brilliant birth anniversary, when he is said to manifest in our liminal mind. Arun and all the local guides are thoroughly pleased that within the last two weeks after we

first intimated you could decide to be here in Paro. When Guru Rinpoche set foot in the 8th century into Paro valley, it must have been far more placid and serene with waving golden rice fields in the floor of the valley and swaying wheat fields on the slopes of the mountains. Since the 1990s, tourist hotels, cars and aviation have begun to surge in the valley. Travelling and mobility is indeed the biggest maker of change.

But even in this era of global tourism, we may not be able to comprehend fully the audacious extent of Guru Rinpoche's journeys in the 8th century. Guru's terma hagiography in pulsating poetry by Ugyen Lingpa, which I happened to read thoroughly in 2002 during a long stay in hospital bed in Bangkok, traces his journeys in Kashmir, Pakistan, Xinjiang, Tajikistan, Zhangzhung, Nepal, Bhutan and Tibet and many parts of India. The hagiography mentions Guru's journey further afield into China, Mongolia and Lanka and Cannibal Lands, though I was unable to make out whether it was physical or metaphysical. True to the scope of the Guru's magnificent footprints, literally and figuratively, all over the region, there are distinguished participants from Swat in Pakistan; Dolkar in central Tibet; Tawang, Odhisha, and Sikkim in India, and Dolpo and Kathmandu in Nepal, and from all parts of Bhutan. It is a landmark gathering in Paro not only for its representational extent, but for the coming together of participants with enormous achievements in their respective life. The chairs of the sessions will later provide a glimpse of the extraordinary and versatile contribution each speaker has made in their respective field. They are had huge gravity in their own fields, and have earned reputations of gurus in their own rights, which means in Sanskrit 'heaviness' that attracts bodies around them.

I would hazard my assessment that Guru Rinpoche was the biggest cultural export and explorer from the classical Indian civilization, with him going across borders of languages, ethnicities, races, politics, geography and climates. A skeptic might ask what was the purpose of Guru's ceaseless and incredible journeys. What invisible things did he take with

him from the White Multitude, the Land of the Exalted Ones, which is how India is addressed out of respect in classical literature? It was called Land of the Exalted Ones, a far serious title than Incredible India or Shining India. The Buddhists coined the title because ancient Indian culture fostered Buddha and Bodhisattvas, philosophers of mind and ethics, physicians and pharmacists, sculptors and architects, poets and playwrights, cosmologists and astrologists. The 7th and 8th century period, the era of Guru, was exceptionally creative, tolerant and exuberant in India. We need only recall the reign of Harsha who gave patronage to many geniuses in various fields from maths to plays in the first half of the 7th century, besides adding 4000 seats to Nalanda.

Although ancient India in Guru's era was reaching a kind of epoch, Guru travelled outwards not to disseminate arts or architecture, maths or medicine from India. Yet Guru's beneficial activities in the early transmission of sutras and tantras by Guru reflected no doubt Indic worldview. Ugyen Lingpa's hagiography is particular in listing about 250 texts of sutra and tantras translated in Samye by Guru, with help of 108 or so translators he sent for language training in Kashmir, probably under Karkota dynasty then. The wild and high trails between Samye and Kashmir valley must have crackled for a long time with the toing and froing of 108 selected language trainees including a Uighur. Perhaps these great translators and scholars understood both Sanskrit-Prakrit cultures, and choskad culture to be wonderfully interlocutory between the two. Through these and other textual revolutions in the 8th century, which were continued in burst in later transmission period, Guru provided a broad cultural and spiritual orientation in the region that has had lasting influence.

That then was the main effect of Guru's travels throughout the multi-racial, multi-cultural and multi-linguistic worlds he crisscrossed? But what could have been the main purpose? Let me leave aside the experience of deeper phenomenology of Buddha nature, timeless and primordial awareness that lies at the heart of his teachings, which Yeshey Tshogyal and other

disciples perpetuated and disseminated. Let me just interpret, with an eye to the jargons of international relations and an eye to the human, social and psychological dysfunction that afflict us as it did during Buddha's times of mega-urbanization in India, that Guru Rinpoche's journeys were concerned with fostering external and internal peace. The introduction of Buddhism into Tibet brought major peace not only to Tibet but to the neighbouring states including India, China, Nepal and Bhutan. Even in Bhutan's case, Guru first came, before he went to Tibet, as a peace-maker between the King of Bumthang and a neighbouring King of India. This peace deal was concluded by installation of the 'Immortal Stone Pillar of Peace' which stands intact in the tranquil temple of Nabji, where the two warring kings took an oath of peace and friendship between the two nations. How moving that this blessed stone pillar touched and consecrated by Guru Rinpoche and the two kings still stood testimony to peace in this country for the last 1200 year plus.

But all external peace rest on the internal peace within the population. The cultivation of inner peace begins with methods of assailing humdrum stress and awakening our consciousness towards something extraordinary to be grasped but yet possible. It is a modest aim of this conference and celebration to recollect the immeasurable impact on our region. May the conference lead to fostering deepening peace and happiness.

On a personal note, I would like to say that today – Guru-birthday, the double 10th of May in Lunar calendar - happens to be 3rd anniversary of the dissolution of Arun's mother into primordial consciousness. May the merit of our supplication to Guru Rinpoche be dedicated to his late mother.

Thank you for your kind and long attention, to my long welcome note.

**Address by HE Prime Minister of Bhutan at  
conference and celebration on the Birth Anniversary  
of Guru Rinpoche in Paro Rinpung Dzong**

As all of you are aware, the birth anniversary of Guru Padsambhava is being celebrated in dzongs, monasteries, hermitages and village temples throughout the country. People from all walks of life in our country observe this holy day. His Revered Majesty has been gracious enough to travel far to the east, and commemorate this extraordinary occasion with the people of eastern Bhutan, by being in Takila. His Holiness the Je Khenpo is likewise leading prayer ceremonies, with the Sangha of Central Monastic Body, in Thimphu, the capital city.

For the people in the Himalayas, who revere and worship Guru Rinpoche, it is believed that Guru Rinpoche will manifest for the sake of peace and happiness of all sentient beings and his presence will be felt in our hearts on this day. On this most holy day, food, fruits and flowers along with heartfelt prayers are offered in all the holy sites of Guru in Bhutan as well as all over the South Asian region associated with Guru. In Bhutan, festivals and dances are held in numerous places in his honour.

Here in Paro Dzong, the public of Paro Barkor Tshodruk and many distinguished guests from South Asian region have gathered to pay homage to Guru collectively. I am particularly pleased that the Rabdey and Dzongkhag Administration of Paro have created an excellent opportunity to celebrate it by unveiling the giant 110 feet silk-scroll of Guru, or Guru Thongdroel, with the gracious permission of His Revered Majesty.

Close to the middle of the eighth century, Bhutan was blessed to receive repeated visits and stays of Guru Rinpoche. It was an independent nation called Monyul even at that time. From Singye Dzong, Gomphu Kora, and Omkar Drag in the East; Nabji in Tongsa and Kurjey in Bumthang in the centre; Paro Takstsang in the West, Bhutan has been blessed by him with numerous holy sites where he meditated, and gave teachings to guide the people of that time as well as the future

generations thereafter towards higher values and principles of enlightenment. Since he set foot 1,270 years ago in our country and blessed it, people in this Hidden Land or the Medicinal Land have largely enjoyed happiness and peace, and lived in harmony with nature. Ever since Guru's visits, environmental preservation was carried out in and around the sacred places associated with Guru Rinpoche. The values of environmental conservation for the long-term welfare of all sentient beings have resulted from the Buddhist teachings that Guru Rinpoche brought to this part of the region.

Owing to Guru Padmasambhava's powerful blessings and prophecy, Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyel founded our nation. The unification by Zhabdrung was in accordance with the prophecy of Guru. Later, the emergence of Gongsu Ugyen Wangchuck as the first king of Bhutan was also in accordance with prophecy of Guru, to fulfil the need of time.

Guru Rinpoche is a celebrated and revered figure in many part of South Asia, including Bhutan. In fact, Guru Rinpoche's presence and impact stretches from the Hindu Kush to Eastern Himalayan region. He is one of the earliest figures who had traversed widely, Swat in Pakistan, Himachal, Nepal, Sikkim, Tawang, Bengal, Assam, Bangladesh, Odisha, Bhutan and Tibet carrying the light of Buddhist teachings, especially Vajrayana teachings. The legacy of shared spirituality of Buddhism in the region owes to Guru and those who followed his footsteps. Guru Rinpoche is revered as the Second Buddha in accordance with the prophecy of Lord Buddha. The teachings of Guru Rinpoche on international peace and harmony among people of different countries, and the cultivation of inner peace, and mind-body balance, have become extraordinarily relevant not only in the region but throughout the world.

I am very happy to note that in this special anniversary of Guru's birthday, coinciding with the birth of HRH the Gyalsey Jigme Namgyel Wangchuck, and 400th Anniversary year of the arrival of Zhabdrung to start unification of Bhutan into a larger State, South Asian conference on Guru Rinpoche is

being convened in Paro.

Guru Rinpoche's birth anniversary is another opportunity for the region to come together by recognising and enhancing the shared cultural processes centred on Guru. It is certainly befitting that for the first time, scholars, spiritual leaders and media from the South Asian region have gathered in Paro to underscore the Precious Guru's regional heritage. Cultural forms and expressions have developed over the millennia due to the manifold impact of Guru Rinpoche. The common and ancient spiritual heritage stemming from Guru Rinpoche is a vibrant strand of the unity in the region. Scholars, media, and spiritual leaders from South Asia need to strengthen scholastic understanding on the importance of Guru Rinpoche through greater research and archaeology.

I am particularly pleased to welcome the participants of the conference from all parts of South Asia to Paro. Paro Taktshang (Tiger Nest) is one of the most prominent places in the world associated directly with Guru Rinpoche and his consorts, Yogini Yeshey Tshogyal and Guru's Bhutanese consort, Yogini Monmo Tashi Chidren. I would like to express my appreciation to the Centre for Escalation of peace (CEP), Delhi and the Centre for Bhutan Studies for organising this innovative conference.

In conclusion, I take great pleasure in being able to join all of you to offer my deepest prayers to Guru Rinpoche for peace and harmony in the region. May the blessings of Guru Rinpoche and Bodhisattvas continue to be showered throughout the world, benefiting all sentient beings. May the merits of honouring his birth anniversary be dedicated to alleviation of sufferings of all sentient beings.

Tashi Deleg.



## **Guru Padmasambhava and Jurisprudence in Bhutan: Golden Yoke and Silken Knot**

*Justice Sonam Tobgye\**

### **Contributions to Bhutan by Guru Padmasambhava**

His Eminence Jamyang Khenste Rinpoche said that the greatest contribution of India to the World is Buddhism. Dr. Hira Paul Gangnegi<sup>1</sup> said:

The multifaceted personality who had transformed the primitive population of the largest area of Himalayas into a compassionate Buddhist community was known as the precious Guru Padmasambhava (750-800? ... The legend holds that the Buddha Shakyamuni himself had prophesied his birth as Padmasambhava. This master of Sri Nalanda Mahavihara was miraculously born on the 10th day of the 5th month in the year of Monkey in a lotus pond in Oddiyana, the land of Dakinis with major physical marks of the universal being... The seventh manifestation was the re-embodiment of the bodhisattava Vajrapani (*phyagnar dorje*) who has transmitted the esoteric teaching to the Guru. He was named Dorje Dolod (rdorje grolod). In the past he appeared in the human and non-human realm in the land of India, Nepal, Bhutan, Sri Lanka<sup>2</sup>, Indonesia, Burma, Central Asia, Afghanistan, part of

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<sup>1</sup> Guru Padmasambhava and his contributions to the Himalayan Regions by Dr. Hira Paul Gangnegi, Department of Buddhist Studies, University of Delhi, Delhi-11007.

<sup>2</sup> He travelled to the land of 'Khachhaiyul' and resided in Sinhali. There, he studied and contemplated intensely, disciplining all the beings, and treated all the beings with great love akin to parents. Thus, prostrate and praise to Loden Chogsey!

China, Africa, the new unknown island of Damadu and the uncharted realm of Shambala. It is said he now manifests in the land of the Copper Mountain<sup>3</sup>.

Guru Padmasambhava had propagated Buddhism in Bhutan. He had bestowed in Bhutan the political, spiritual, social, cultural, intellectual and legal legacies:

a. Political: The fact that King Sindha<sup>3</sup> had invited Guru Padmasambhava to visit Bhutan is of immense historical value.

b. Spiritual: Padmasambhava is said to have visited Bhutan three times in person. Guru Rinpoche visited Bhutan before his visits to Tibet. The first visit was from Nepal at the invitation of King Sindha of Bumthang, the second visit he came from Tibet to Bumthang, accompanied by Denma Tsemang, and the third visit –the last visit - also from Tibet, when he came together with Khikha Rathod, who was banished from Tibet to Khenpajong and when he visited Singye Dzong in Kurtoed, accompanied by Khandro Yeshe Tshogyal. The exact years of his visits to Bhutan are not known yet; and thus intensive research is needed to be carried out.

c. Social and health: The consumption of tobacco, nuisance and health hazard<sup>4</sup> was seen as against the religion and therefore harmful to the state. Therefore, Zhabdrung Rinpoche said:

... this evil sustenance called *tha-ma-kha* (tobacco)

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<sup>3</sup> This is the story of the life of King Sindhu (*Sin-dha*) Raja! Deeply we bow in front of Pamajungna (Pad-ma-hbyung-gnas)!

<sup>4</sup> Historically, Sir Walter Raleigh is credited with taking the first “Virginia” tobacco to Europe, referring to it as tobah as early as 1578. Stuart King James denounced tobacco use as “[a] custome lothsome to the eye, hatefull to the Nose, harmefull to the braine, dangerous to the Lungs, and in the blacke stinking fume thereof, nearest resembling the horrible Stigian smoke of the pit that bottomless.”

which is a cunning trick prepared by demons, is now being used continuously by all the people and the peasants, including the bodyguards and menials; not only does this pollute the body, speech and mind-supports but also it causes the gods above to decline, it disturbs the spirits of intermediate space and injures the nagas of the underworld. From this cause there continuously arises in the world the fate of diseases, wars and famines and so it conforms with many prophecies given by the great teacher Padma [sambhava]. If people in any of the districts should be found to be indulging in the trading and smoking of tobacco, this ruinous sustenance, and if this practice is not forcibly eliminated by the *rdzong-* [dpon], *mgron-* [gnyer], government representatives and officials, the village counsellors and messengers, then things will definitely fall on their own heads. The officials on the Indian frontier must prohibit [the import of tobacco] at the duars themselves. Control through these measures is important.

d. Calligraphy: Guru Rinpoche brought Denma Tsemang, who was one of his twenty-five chief disciples as a part of entourage to Bhutan. Denma Tsemang (Dan-ma rTse-mangs) wrote that:

When I was five years old, I was in the retinue of Urgyan. When I was nine years old, I had the knowledge of about three hundred scripts. With ten years, I came to the Land of Mon..' In the Land of Incense (*mKhan-pa-Lung*, an ancient name of Bumthang)... Thus, I have written down everything, which Urgyan Rimpoche has said. Hail to all the Protective Deities and Patrons!<sup>5</sup>

He composed the Bhutanese cursive writing called *Jogyig* (mgyogsyig) and he wrote the *Gyalpoi Thangyig* (rgyalpo' Ithangyig) and the second part of the *Kathang De-ngag* (bka'

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<sup>5</sup> The Sindhu Raja book called "The Clear Mirror of Mysticism". Translated with Geshe Th. Wangyal.

thangsde Inga), where he is mentioned as Tsemang Dag (rtsemangbdag) from Denma (ldhan ma), a district in Kham (Eastern Tibet). The writing introduced by Denma Tsemang is also called as *Lho-yig* or southern calligraphy. It is evident from the title of a page of *Prajna Paramita* Sutra text written as *Lho-yig* found in the 12th century among the antique documents of *Tun-Hong* in the British Museum in London.

e. Architect and engineering: The Kingdom of Sindhu with its centre in Bumthang was built by King Sindhu. The residence of Sindhu Raja was the recorded as 'Iron Castle', *Cak-Khar* (Icags-mkhar), situated in the plain of Bumthang, West? (may be North East?) of the present *Bjakar Dzong* (*Bya-dkar Dzong*); it was erected on a ridge on the South bank of the Bumthang river. It was carefully described by Claude White:

The site of the Sindhu Raja's house, now in ruins, is situated on the edge of a high cliff overhanging the river. It appears to have been a square of sixty to seventy feet, and the wall apartments could not have been very wide, as there seems to have been an open space in the centre, unless this again was covered by a floor above, in which case the building would have been an exact counterpart of the central towers we now find in every Dzong. Surrounding the sides, on a level, was a well-defined ditch, with a continuation on the outside leading to the river, and also a well-defined path. Tradition states there was also a gate at the opposite corner to the south ... On a low hill across the plain the spot was pointed out where the Raja's son was killed fighting against the Naoche Raja, who lived in the Duars, below Wangdiphodang (dBang-sdus-pho-brangr Dzong), and also seems to have reigned in or near the plain ...

Further, Padmasambhava also gained a great reputation in Bumthang by rebuilding the *Jampa Lhakhang* (Byams-pa Lha-khang). It affirms that the Buddhism existed before the

visit of Guru Rinpoche.

f. Spiritual values and public morality: Spiritual values and philosophies are well known as Guru Rinpoche had proclaimed during his visit to Bhutan:

Thou must not, with pleasure, indulge in sinful doings  
but thou must follow the true religion!  
Thou shalt not be greedy,  
but thou shalt give nourishment and  
wealth as alms!  
Thou shalt not fight (and make war),  
but thou shalt let the beings live happily!

g. Doctrine of legitimacy: The arrival of Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyal and his rule in Bhutan was mentioned in prophecies that are being attributed to Padmasambhava. The following prophecy is evident of the destiny of Zhabdrung to this country:

Seek out repose in the Southern Valleys,  
On the border, through the Southern Door;  
If you do thus  
you will gain almost as much success  
in seven days of meditations  
in seven years in the land of Tibet<sup>6</sup>

Similarly, Guru Padmasambhava prophesied the emergence for the Monarchy of Bhutan:

On a cliff, in the land of Mon,  
lies my body in print,  
There, in Bumthang,  
where the Wheel has turned,  
Shall arrive a Dhama King,  
my incarnation!

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<sup>6</sup> LNDRR Nga:8.b. *Lho rong lho sgo bas mthar bsti gnas tshol // de ltar byas na bod yul mi lo bdun // bsgom bsgrub byas las gnas der zhag bdun sgrub thag nye //* (citing a *gter-ma* text called *Gsang ba nor bu'i thig le'i rgyud.*)

## **Law**

Buddhism is not only a religion and philosophy but it also includes enlightened laws. It is progressive and modern. It is not restrained by ages, nor constrained by geography nor restricted by races (racial feelings - *jati-vitakka*, national feelings - *janapada-vitakka* and egotism or personal and national pride - *avannatti*). The first word of Buddha was:

Law is for correcting those who have gone wrong-  
(*Durmangana pudgala nigrahaya*)<sup>7</sup>

Rational for law: Buddha gave Ten Reasons for promulgating laws responding to different situations. He said:

I am enacting rules of training (*sikkhapada*, precepts) for the monks:

- i) for the wellbeing of the Community,
- ii) for the convenience of the Community,
- iii) in order to curb miscreants,
- iv) for the ease of well-behaved monks,
- v) in order to restrain misbehaviour in the present,
- vi) in order to check future misbehavior,
- vii) in order that those who have no faith (in this religion) may acquire faith,
- viii) in order that those who have faith may be further strengthened in their faith,
- ix) in order that the good Doctrine (*Dhamma*) may last long, and
- x) for the promotion of discipline.

## **Guru Rinpoche's Law**

The negotiation of peace between King Sindha and *Naoche* by Guru Rinpoche can be considered as the part of mediation. Guru Rinpoche arranged friendship between the two enemy kings. They all met at the Nabikorphu Lhakhang (*mNah-sbis-dkor-phug Lhakhang*). Guru Rinpoche indeed united the two kings in friendship and they erected a stone pillar (*rDo-ring*) at

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<sup>7</sup> *bka'-gyursutra, rapa*, p. 57 (back page).

the place of their famous meeting.

King Thrisong Detsen, the 38th King of the Yarlung dynasty and the first Emperor of Tibet (742–797), requested Guru Rinpoche to promulgate laws. Responding to the King's request, Guru Rinpoche promulgated laws of **four** elements<sup>8</sup> of Fire, Wind, Water and Iron together with the laws of wood, earth and space making **seven laws** in total.

### ***The spiritual and temporal law***

The constitutional doctrine of the spiritual and temporal laws has been established by Guru Rinpoche. He expounded:

The spiritual law resembles a silken knot that fastens tight; and The secular law resembles Golden Yoke that is firm and heavy

The spiritual laws was said to resemble a Silken Knot (*dargye duephue*) that is easy and light at first but gradually tightens, while temporal laws were compared to a Golden Yoke (*sergyi nyashing*) that grows heavier and heavier with the degree of the crimes.

### ***Classification of law***

Laws may broadly be divided into natural law (*jus naturale*) and positive laws (*jus positivum*), criminal and civil laws, substantive and procedural laws, public and private international laws, etc. However, Buddha promulgated physical laws (*utu-niyama*), biological laws (*bijaniyama*), psychological laws (*citta-nyama*), moral (*kamma-niyama*) and spiritual (*dhamma-niyama*)

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<sup>8</sup> Empedocles established the theory of the four elements, Heraclites ("All is fire", all is chaotic and transitory). He was born in 492 BCE and he advocated a plurality of substances — i. e. the four elements, earth, water, air, and fire. Of these the world is built up, by the agency of two ideal principles as motive forces — namely, love as the cause of union, strife as the cause of separation. Thales of Miletus, who was active around 585 BCE and left us the opaque dictum, "All is water." His most noted students were Anaximenes of Miletus and Anaximander said, "All is air".

laws. These laws were similar to the Stoic conception of the *koinos nomos* or “universal law”. Accordingly, Guru Rinpoche counselled to:

Codify and enact mother laws, statutes and by-laws;  
and  
A law can be categorized into secular, spiritual and  
Thangthrim.

### **Rule of Law**

Buddha asked his followers to treat the Dhamma (doctrine of righteousness) and Vinaya<sup>9</sup> (the Constitution and the code of laws) as their teacher when Buddha would not be living. In a Buddhist democracy, the rule of law requires not only consistency in the expression of the law but also in its application. Good law conforms to moral righteousness.

In Dicey’s treatise, “Law of the Constitution”, he had identified three principles which together establish the rule of law:<sup>10</sup>

- (a) The absolute supremacy or predominance of regular law as opposed to the influence of arbitrary power;
- (b) Equality before the law or the equal subjection of all classes to the ordinary law of the land administered by the ordinary courts; and
- (c) The law of the constitution as a consequence of the rights of individuals as defined and enforced by the courts.

Guru Rinpoche encapsulated the Rule of Law, when he said

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<sup>9</sup> *The Vinaya Laws* - Of all the monastic laws, the Vinaya laws are most extensive as well as intricate and reveal the legal aptitude as also the common sense on the part of the Buddhists. They are obviously vivid and run into minutest details, so that even a partial knowledge of them gives us a fair idea of the monastic life of the early Buddhists. They are systematically and scientifically arranged, though their classification may fall short of the modern methods. The principle underlying the classification is the motive and magnitude of the offence.

<sup>10</sup> A.V Dicey, *Introduction to the Study of the Law of Constitution*, Tenth Edition, (2003), pp. 202-203.

that “The powerful must know the limit of their power.”<sup>11</sup> He further elaborated:

Choesid (theocratic) and Ngagsid (vajrapanik), lyonsid (bureaucratic) has to be protected.  
Be compassionate to those who are disabled and powerless;  
The helpless must be aided through unity;  
The bad deeds have to be repeatedly put to an end;  
and  
If this can be done, the robbery and the evils in the village will disappear.  
If you avoid 10 non-virtuous acts, the 10 virtuous acts will prevail by itself.

### ***Relief of laws***

Commutative justice or corrective or rectificatory justice as advocated by Aristotle not only includes payment for a service but also compensation for damage incurred and punishment for a crime. Guru Rinpoche propagated:

Afford sufficient debts to have-nots;  
The have-nots must repay the debts with utmost gratitude;  
And allow to pay half the debt by those who have no means to pay.

### **Compensation**

And provide entitlements to the spouse whom one does not love.

### ***Criminal Jurisprudence***

Criminal justice is the system of practices and institutions to maintain social control, deter and mitigate crime either through religious belief, imposing penalties on perpetrators of crime, or through rehabilitation efforts. Generally, criminal justice has prominent role in all societies in the world. In Buddhism,

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<sup>11</sup> *Pad ma bka'thang*, p. 150 verso.

there are ten virtuous act precepts, *Lhachos dge-ba bcu*, which include:

- Refraining from taking life – *pranatighatad virati*.
- Refraining from taking that which is not given – *adattadanad virati*.
- Refraining from engaging in sexual misconduct – *kamamithyacarad virati*.
- Refraining from lying – *mrsavadat prativirati*.
- Refraining from speaking harshly – *parusat prativirati*.
- Refraining from slandering – *paishunayatc prativirati*.
- Refraining from engaging in worthless chatter – *sambhinnapralapat prativirati*.
- Refraining from being covetous – *abhidhyayah prativirati*.
- Refraining from being malicious – *vyapadat prativirati*.
- Refraining from holding wrong views – *mithyadrsti prativirati*.

These ten virtuous acts can broadly be divided into three categories of non-virtuous actions to be avoided and they are:

- The three non-virtuous actions of body – *truni kayaduscaritani*.
- The four non-virtuous actions of speech – *catva vagduscaritani*.
- The three non-virtuous actions of mind – *trini manoduscaritani*.

Similarly, Guru Rinpoche in Pema Kathang promulgated:

Do not indulge in the acts that deride modesty and bring shame and guilt;  
Refrain from stealing, robbing, battering and killing;  
Never resort to drinking alcoholic liquors and

consuming meat items and other adulterated foods.

### **Conclusion**

Padmasambhava is the leading light in the spread of Tantric Buddhism in Bhutan. Bhutan was named as the Mon (Bumthang was then known as Mon) under Lhomon Khazhi.” Thus, Guru Rinpoche recorded political identity, national sovereignty, historical antiquity and bestowed national calligraphy. Concerning writing and education, Guru Rinpoche advised:

Educate every child writing and reading skills.

Guru Padmasambhava blessed Bhutan and taught Buddhism and bequeathed many historical evidences. He had introduced the Bhutanese scripts. Many of the spaces are important sites of pilgrimage associated with Padmasambhava. The most famous one is Paro Taktsang (Tiger’s Nest) housing the sacred statue of Guru Dorje Drolu.<sup>12</sup>

The social, cultural, architectural and scholastic legacies moulded the past and present Bhutan. His laws of **four elements** together with the laws of **wood**<sup>13</sup>, **earth**, and **space** making **seven laws** are profound and modern; and the hidden treasure of laws must be discovered to salvage the sinking moral values and eclipsing ethical values. Despite his services, he is not known to many, but this august convergence of the galaxy, is vindication of his right, and redeeming of his glory during this holy month and the hallowed year. Guru Padmasambhava travelled long distances and traversed high mountains to disseminate Buddhist laws as Buddha said:

The Law is that which leads to welfare and salvation.  
It forms conduct and character distinguished by the  
sense of equality among all beings.

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<sup>12</sup> (Wylie: *guru rDo-rje gro-lod*, Skrt: *Guru Vajra* ?) the fierce manifestation of Vajrakilaya (wrathful Vajrasattva) known as “Diamond Guts”, the comforter of all, imprinting the elements with Wisdom-Treasure

<sup>13</sup> Grow plant and offer water up to this point.

# **Guru Padmasambhava in Context: Archaeological and Historical Evidence from Swat/Uddiyana (c. 8th century CE)**

*Luca Maria Olivieri\**

## **Introduction**

In this contribution, which is based on a collection of data that were earlier presented in different fora<sup>1</sup>, I would like to first briefly touch upon the fact that last year the Italian Archaeological Mission in Swat<sup>2</sup>, founded by Giuseppe Tucci in 1955, just celebrated its 60th anniversary. The Mission, which I have the honor to lead<sup>3</sup>, is still in full activity despite the many

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<sup>1</sup> The present contribution is based on the transcript of the lecture delivered at Paro, June 14, 2016, with integrations. The lecture was largely drawn from Olivieri 2010 and Filigenzi 2015. The latter have been integrated with data from Tucci 1940, Tucci 1958, Tucci 1977, Olivieri and Vidale 2006, Filigenzi 2006, Olivieri 2014, Filigenzi 2010, Filigenzi 2015 and Olivieri 2015. In the present contribution, diacritics are omitted, with the exception of quoted excerpts.

<sup>2</sup> I thought it was not necessary to attach a map to this paper. Anyhow, Swat is a long mountain river valley, named from its river, Swat, (Sanskrit: *Suvastu*, Greek: *Soastos*; see Olivieri 1996, p.60). The valley is located at the western corner of the Himalayas (at the opposite of Bhutan). Situated at the piedmont of the Hindukush-Karakorum (average altitude 3,000 ft above the sea level), Swat is surrounded by mountains ranging from 9,000 to 18,000 ft high. Administratively, Swat, which was an autonomous Princely State (ruled by the House of the Mianguls) until 1969, is currently a district of the Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa Province of Pakistan (former North-West Frontier Province, N.W.F.P.). The capital of the district (Saidu Sharif) is located at a distance of less than 200 miles from China, and 100 miles from Afghanistan (as the crow flies).

<sup>3</sup> The Mission has been directed by Domenico Faccenna (1956-1997), Maurizio Taddei (1997-2000†), Piefrancesco Callieri (2000-2008), co-directed by Piefrancesco Callieri and Luca M. Olivieri until 2011, and it is currently directed by the Author.

dramatic events that hit the beautiful Swat valley between 2007 and 2010<sup>4</sup>. I also intend to pay tribute to Giuseppe Tucci's seminal essay, *On Swat* (Tucci 1977), which holds a wealth of suggestions and historical hypotheses that are still stimulating research<sup>5</sup>.

Amongst those historical hypotheses, there are some aspects of mutual importance connecting Swat and Bhutan, i.e. the early diffusion of Vajrayana in Swat, the relationship between Swat and the trans-Himalayan regions, and the role of Guru Padmasambhava.

### **Initial decadence of Buddhism in Swat and Gandhara**

In *On Swat*, at the beginning of his chapter "Historical Problems" Tucci wrote<sup>6</sup>:

It is not easy to explain the decrease of monasteries after Fa-hsien (399-414 AD) (1400 monasteries) and the fact that at the time of Hsüan-tsang (he travels from 629 to 645) many of them were in ruins, and monks were no longer interested in study and meditation but specially inclined to Tantric practices. Sung Yün (he travels from 518 to 523) speaks in high terms of the Buddhist community and does not anticipate the statement of Hsüan-tsang. 1400 monasteries [Fa-hsien] imply not only a widespread devotion, but also great wealth for their maintenance [...]

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<sup>4</sup> The anniversary was celebrated with various events, including the publication of a comprehensive volume on the activities of the Italian Mission with reference to the archaeology of Buddhism (Callieri, Filigenzi and Olivieri 2015).

<sup>5</sup> Being basically a field archaeologist, I would like to deeply thank my colleague Anna Filigenzi of the Oriental University of Naples, whose expertise helped me preparing this contribution by adding some punctual insights to my historical reconstruction.

<sup>6</sup> Tucci 1977, p. 68.



Figure 1. The late Buddhist site of Amluk-dara (2nd-9th century CE). Courtesy: Italian Archaeological Mission in Pakistan.

A plausible answer to this question can be found in the archaeological data from the excavation of the ancient city of Bazira or Vajirasthana, which lies near the present village of Barikot. This is a large fortified city founded in the 2nd century BCE by the Indo-Greeks.

This city lost its military and strategic importance during the 2nd Century CE, when Swat, perhaps for the first time in its history, ceased to be a peripheral territory, and became part of the 'metropolitan' territory, or the *nomos* of the Kushan empire (Olivieri 1996). The excavation data suggests that, in association with the evidence of demilitarization, the city boomed. It developed into a large, lively settlement whose economy was in large part based on agriculture and long-distance trade. Workshops and storage-rooms were crowded around large well-built mansions, side by side with Buddhist urban sanctuaries (Olivieri 2014). This new city pattern therefore suggested that the city was under the political control of local Kushan vassal

chiefs, who were also the patrons of the Buddhist monasteries in the countryside.



Figure 2. The south-western quarters of the ancient Bazira at Barikot site (2nd BCE-4th CE; view from the north). In the background the majestic skyline of Mount Ilam. Courtesy: Italian Archaeological Mission in Pakistan.

The monasteries were probably the true stimulating factor in the economy of the area. Recent data from archaeological surface research demonstrated that the Buddhist monasteries regulated agriculture through their control over water supplies and irrigation management. Control over the water element was then central in the Buddhist narrative in Swat, both as

a practical issue, as well as spiritual one: control over water reflecting exactly one of the most popular Buddhist stories localized in Swat, the conversion of the *naga* Apalala, whose hectic rule over the wild waters had brought floods and droughts, and led the population into starvation until the intervention of the Buddha.



Figure 3. A Buddhist Gandharan relief with a converted *naga* (detail). From Barikot (3rd century CE). Courtesy: Edoardo Loliva/ACT-Field School Project (after Olivieri 2014, figure 116).

The role of the monastic communities seems decisive with regard not only to agriculture, but also to the management of communication routes, mountain passes, forestry and pastures. However, the economic equilibrium point destabilized in two moments: first after the collapse of the Kushan empire, and again in the period following the end of the Kushano-Sasanian rulership.

The first destabilization moment (which occurred at around mid-3rd century CE) reflected mostly in the collapse of the urban system, while the Buddhist foundations, in overall, managed to overcome the crisis (Olivieri 2014). The second moment (that may have occurred not earlier than the 7th century CE) hit particularly the Buddhist foundations in the countryside. According to the archaeological data, most of the Buddhist monasteries - built in the first two centuries of the Current Era - were abandoned or in deep decline after the 7th century CE. As a consequence, pit-weels, channels, dams and aqueducts - until then run and maintained by the Buddhist community - began to be neglected, a fact that certainly had a decisive effect on agricultural production (Olivieri and Vidale 2006).

Further elements accompany these data, say the diffusion of the Late Historic Buddhist rock sculptures after the 7th century CE (Filigenzi 2015). Their presence can be regarded as the most indicative marker for the development of Vajrayana schools in Swat and the surrounding areas even from the 7th Century CE (see Figure 5-8). If this interpretation is correct, only a small percentage of the hundreds of Buddhist foundations developed into similar schools. In fact, the highest concentration of Late Historic Buddhist rock sculptures was found along the left bank of the river Swat, especially in the left tributary valleys, between Manglawar and Mingora. In the immediate vicinity of Barikot, only 3 (out of 75) Buddhist foundations display the presence of these rock sculptures. In two cases, i.e. Amluk-dara (see Figure 1) and Barikot (a Buddhist centre built on top of the hill, not the city which was already a field of ruins), their chronology is confirmed by Late Historic ceramic data

and by excavation evidence<sup>7</sup>. While in the area surrounding the present city of Mingora late Buddhist communities maintained a wide control of their territory, in the Barikot area control was limited to the bottom of the valley and main roads.

As a consequence, high altitude pastures, springs and passes, as well as the control over forestry resources, changed hands, and were again controlled by local tribes. In time, the tribes, which had probably never been converted to Buddhism, had regained control over their ancestral territory. The reappropriation of the mountain territory by these pastoral communities may have led to gradual deforestation and to soil erosion as collateral effects. This fact might have contributed to the lowering of the water table, which could be considered as another of the side factors of the crisis, which affected Swat in Late Historic times.

#### **Diffusion of Vajrayana and the revival of Brahmanism and local beliefs**

At the time that Tucci wrote his article there was little evidence of the diffusion of Brahmanism in Swat<sup>8</sup>:

Down to the later general decay of Buddhism, except for the unique image of a goddess and even an image of Siva, there are not many traces of a great diffusion of Hinduism in Swāt, a fact confirmed by the Chinese travelers; Hsüan-tsang speaks of ten *deva* (Hindu) temples, but a very important Saiva school [...] was

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<sup>7</sup> In both cases the archaeological data lead us to conclude that the rock sculptures of these two sites were executed at the very beginning of the 7th century, if not earlier. Particularly important are the evidence from Barikot. The Late Historic Buddhist rock sculptures located at the foot of the Barikot hill (Filigenzi 2015, pp. 224-225), were certainly associated – as everywhere else in Swat – to a Buddhist complex, most probably to be searched on the top of the hill, as hinted at by discovery of several Gandharan fragments (Filigenzi 2015, p. 224, fn. 27). The Buddhist complex was destroyed and a late Brahmanical temple was built probably at its place. The radiocarbon evidence (605-685 CE) related to the construction of the latter is of the utmost importance in that regard (Callieri 2005, p. 423).

<sup>8</sup> Tucci 1977, p. 68.

originated or had some of its most famous authors in Swāt.

The famous Sarada inscription now in the Lahore Museum (Tucci 1958, p. 296, fn. 28) referring to a temple foundation at Vajirasthana-Barikot still in existence at the time of king Jayapaladeva (at the end of the 10th century CE) became significant only after the discovery of a Brahmanic temple on the Barikot hilltop in 1998 (Callieri with others 2000). In the last few years new research has been carried out which renders the religious panorama of Late Historic Swat clearer.

As mentioned above, archaeology in 1998 managed to provide a sound chronological *terminus ante quem* to the spread of the Late Buddhist schools, at least in Barikot. The Brahmanic temple, which was built there in the second half of the 7th century CE, probably obliterated a pre-existent Vajrayanic Buddhist complex (whose existence is confirmed by two rock sculptures, see note 7), thus representing a clear chronological benchmark. In 2006, a second Brahmanic temple was discovered southwest of Barikot (Olivieri and Vidale 2006 pp.119-120). Close to Barikot in 2004 a second rock sculpture with Surya and Ganesa was discovered (a first one was documented inside the nearby cave of Hindu-ghar) (Filigenzi 2006). Again in 2006 new rock paintings that definitely reflect Brahmanic religious symbology were discovered south of Barikot, at Takht-i Gat and at Palangai (Olivieri 2010; Olivieri 2015). Another group of paintings concentrated in the southern watershed of the valleys clearly speaks another language, even though the style is not much different. The paintings depict caprids, horses and highly modified hieratic characters (Figure 4).



Figure 4. Rock painting of Lal-kamar. Representation of a shaman, or individual in state of trance or “near-death”. Courtesy: Italian Archaeological Mission in Pakistan (after Olivieri 2015: pl. LXI).

These late pictorial documents emphasize the possession of cattle and the consequent management of grazing land and control of the passes. The typical style of the caprids - schematic and linear, with their body rendered through the use of a single curving line, is the same as in the paintings of the Kalash peoples of Chitral (see Olivieri and Vidale 2006, pp. 138-146).

As previously mentioned, the lower city of Barikot was definitively

abandoned in the 4th century CE. This phase saw the beginning of a process of mountain fortification, which is typical of Late Historic Swat, i.e. 7th-8th century CE. This typology of tower-house development is frequent in the valleys South West of Barikot. In general, it seems that this new settlement process was concentrated in the lower part of the Swat valley, and did not extend upstream to Barikot. Tower-house complexes are widely documented – until modern times – in the Kafir-Dardic cultural areas, in Chitral, Gilgit and Hunza.

During our survey campaigns in the Barikot valleys another interesting new element emerged. Dozens of tanks of various typologies, all carved onto granite and gneiss boulders, were documented. Their study has unequivocally shown that for the most part such devices were used for pressing grapes. Comparison with the wine-presses used in the Kafir and Upper Indus regions is convincing. The number of these devices found also suggests that they might not have been merely used for occasional production, but instead were an ample part of the agricultural or cropping economy of some areas of the Swat valley. This fact is also supported by a relevant witness, Xuanzang, who speaks of abundant grape production in Swat.

When comparing this architectural and archaeological evidence with the data provided by some Late Historic rock-paintings, it appears clear that the area southwest of Barikot in particular, shows a coherent horizon, which shares many features with the Dardic, if not Kafir, cultural milieu. Vice versa, to the north of that cultural border, Late Buddhist schools (Vajrayana) appear to be dominant (see again Olivieri and Vidale 2006, pp. 138-146).

We do not know whether or not this apparent, but convincing, division of the territory after the 7th century CE, was the result of a political division. Tucci (1977)<sup>9</sup> underlined that both Tibetan and Chinese sources of the 8th century CE describe Swat as split into two political entities: a northern one ruled -

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<sup>9</sup> See also Kuwayama 2002, especially, but not only, Chapter XV.

per *antonomasia* - by the Buddhist king Indrabhuti (to whom, according to the legend, the Tantric teachings were first given), and a southernmost one, which was politically dependent on the Laghman-Kabul-Gardez area. The latter evidence appears to be soundly demonstrated by the ruling presence of Turki-Shahi, or Shahi of Kabul, as possible donors of the Brahmanic temple of Barikot. It is also interesting that, in connection with the Eastern Afghanistan political and cultural predominancy, we have noted the diffusion of Kafi-ro-Dardic elements. Both in Swat and Laghman, this cultural horizon survived the early Islamization (11th-13th centuries CE), and possibly lasted through the 17th Century CE, according to the information provided both by Tibetan and Islamic accounts (Olivieri 2010).

### **Padmasambhava in Swat**

The trans-Himalayan connection is so deeply part of the Swat history that no one would be surprised by the long threads of trans-Himalayan pilgrims who planned to visit Swat, believed to be the true Uddiyana. Recently I learned that the very last traditional pilgrmage to Swat was probaly the one performed by Khyung Sprul. According to his biography (see Kværne 1998), he should have visited Swat before 1935, which is the year when he met Tucci in Tibet (Alay 2011, p. 206). Did the two talk about Swat and Uddiyana? We don't know. Anyhow, no one would be surprised to find trans-Himalayan characters, monks and pilgrims portrayed in the Swat Pashto folklore and toponyms<sup>10</sup>. Maybe it would be a bit more surprising to find - as hinted at by Tucci - a possible allusion to Guru Padmasambhava, in one story telling of a *yogin* who went to Tibet to get a magic stone in possession of a Tibetan princess (Tucci 1971, p. 551).

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<sup>10</sup> The major mountain of the Barikot area, the mount Ilam (c. 3,000 ft asl; see Figure 2), known as the *Ram-thakht* or the "Throne of Rama" of the Hindu tradition, still preserves the Tibetan toponym *Hilo* (see Olivieri 1996, p. 69, fn. 33). Interestingly, the mountain is known in Pashto also as *Jogiano-sar*, or "Yogin's peak". That name is linked to the very interesting folk tale of a Buddhist master and his pupil, and the teaching of the art of flying. The pupil, tried to prematurely imitate his master. He secretly drank the blood of a serpent and died, like Icarus, after trying to fly from the top of Ilam.

As already discussed, according to the available data from the field, Swat had undergone a remarkable decay in the post-Kushan period, that is, after the 3rd century CE. Probably following serious natural and political disasters, cities were abandoned by the 4th century, and the Buddhist monasteries, certainly after 5th-6th centuries, with only a few exceptions, started being abandoned or only modestly repaired. However, if we credit Tibetan sources, Swat must have continued to develop doctrines and practices, which eventually earned it a reputation as a famous cradle of Vajrayana. An unexpected glimpse into this nebulous phase of Swat history is provided by the rock sculptures that flourished in Swat in the 7th to 8th centuries, when Buddha and bodhisattva figures started populating the region. Several years of surveys led my colleague Anna Filigenzi and me to recorded more than 200 carvings and stelae in the mountains of Swat. Some of them are no longer extant and only retrieved from old photographic documentation<sup>11</sup>.



Figure 5. Rock sculpture from Jare, Swat. Courtesy: Italian Archaeological Mission in Pakistan.

<sup>11</sup> These historical considerations are thoroughly elaborated in Chapter 6 of Filigenzi 2015.



Figure 6. Rock sculpture from Arabkhan-china, Swat. Courtesy: Italian Archaeological Mission in Pakistan. (after Filigenzi 2015, figure 29 a).



Figure 7. The stela of the siddha (Swat Museum). Courtesy: Italian Archaeological Mission in Pakistan (after Filigenzi 2015, figure 140).

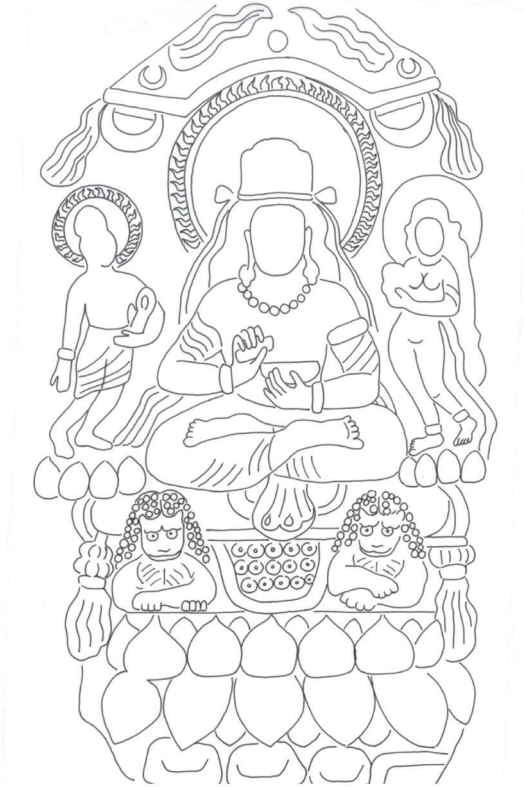


Figure 8. The stele of the siddha (Swat Museum). Courtesy: Bernardo Velletri (after Filigenzi 2015, figure on p. 162).

Due to their unusual features, poor preservation state and blurred cultural context these sculptures have long remained almost ignored or underestimated. At first glance, rock sculptures may appear as a product of popular art. However, under close scrutiny, the sculptures appear as parts of a visual strategy aimed at achieving a calculated effect. Forms, dimensions, positions, and even lines of stratification of the rocks, suggest a constant compositive rule, which consists of the adaptation of the sculpture to the physical characteristics of the natural rock.

According to my colleague Anna Filigenzi, the reason behind such a concern was the illusory evocation of the images being self-existent. In short, the images do not look as something artificially created, but rather as forms spontaneously emerging from the rock, as if the artistry lay simply in unveiling or giving comprehensible form to that which was already in existence. The entanglement of the sculptures with the natural landscape appears even more significant when considered together with their topographical distribution.

They are spread along the paths leading to Buddhist sacred areas that, at the time of this artistic flowering, in the 7th-8th century CE, were still in use. The attention the artists put in fitting their works into the appropriate natural theatre is revelatory of a precise inspirational motive: these images were meant to convey the geomantic idea that the sacred place was entirely a work of nature, an immanent manifestation of the divine which stays immutable despite the ravages of time.

We can only imagine the monastic communities being behind such an ambitious and wide-ranging project. Specialized monks may well have directed the process, from the general conception to the specific selection of sites and subjects, and perhaps even undertaken the actual execution of the reliefs.

Forms, subjects and physical setting of the sculptures are thus indissolubly linked with pilgrimage routes and their metaphorical re-enactment of the spiritual journey. This explains, for instance, the ubiquitous presence of Avalokitesvara/Padmapani, whom the Swat rock sculptures present as a true “God of the Path”, the Great Helper who frees the way of obstacles, both along the physical and the spiritual journey, and offers guidance to a higher goal. Thus, in the rock sculptures of Swat we can detect not only close affinity with the Indian concept of *svayambhu* (*svayambhū*) or self-existent images, but also, in their acting like a visionary revelation which punctuates the pilgrim’s pathway, an anticipation of the *rang byung*, so deeply embedded in Tibetan mysticism.

Notwithstanding the bad state of preservation of most of the sculptures, it has been possible to recognize almost all the iconographic subjects and calculate their percentage frequency of occurrence:

- a) Avalokitesvara/Padmapani,
- b) different forms of Maitreya, with two or four arms,
- c) Vajrapani/Vajrasattva,
- d) possibly Manjusri, and a series of unique or rare presences.

Among these, particularly worthy is the earliest representation of a *siddha*, that is, a key figure of Vajrayana and pre-eminent model of perfect accomplishment (Figure 7 and 8). The relief shows a central figure enthroned accompanied by two standing ancillary figures of appreciably smaller dimensions. The central figure is seated in *vajraparyankasana* on a lion throne of a quite complex type. The figure is dressed as one of the many bodhisattvas appearing in rock sculpture: a crown tied at the sides of the head with ribbons hanging down, a shawl draped over the arms, *paridhana* and jewels. The right hand shows an unusually elongated silhouette, which suggests the presence of a small *vajra*, while the left holds a rather flattish object, which can be identified as a *kapala*.

The two figures at the sides, a man and a woman, are also characterised by a nimbus and are borne on lotus flowers. The hieratic character of these two minor characters conveys the impression that these are not simply donors but rather a symbolic couple. They also bear attributes that are hard to identify but whose forms appear compatible with two objects well known to us from Tibetan iconography and liturgy, namely *vajra* and *ghanta*. The complementary *vajra/ghanta* union, expressed here in the physical presence of the couple, is conserved in Tibetan iconography stripped of any accessory form, where the lotuses do not support the humanized hypostases of the symbols but rather the symbols in all their essential nature.

We cannot give a name to the anonymous *siddha* depicted in the stela. What is really important, however, is the embedded information about the existence, in the Swat of the 7th-8th century CE, of a spiritual model of accomplishment that is already perfectly delineated from the conceptual viewpoint and on the way to attaining a fixed iconographic formula. This offers another first concrete link between Swat, Uddiyana and Padmasambhava, the great *siddha* who, according to tradition, was born in this region and from this region, introduced Buddhism into Tibet. Of the “eight aspects of Guru Padmasambhava”, the first (and presumably most archaic) describes him as seated on a lotus, having two arms and holding a *vajra* in his right hand and a *kapala* in the left, just as the central figure does in our stela. Moreover, among the various *siddha* figures, Padmasambhava is often distinguished by sumptuous cloaks, in which we may discern the reflection of some relationship with the bodhisattva figure.

If any historical background exists of the legendary biographies of Guru Padmasambhava, this should have been represented by the settled orientation of the religious culture of his homeland. Visual and material evidence now start shedding some light on this issue. The rock sculptures, in particular, of Swat depict a scenario fully compatible with the biography of Padmasambhava, thus providing a firmer factual foundation for the fame that Swat’s Buddhism had reached by the mid-8th century, to the extent indeed that it could constitute a driving force for the spread of Buddhism across the Himalayas. In this context, Padmasambhava appears as the epigone of a chain of unnamed masters in a consolidated tradition that preceded him and found in him its first recorded exponent. Many others will follow after him as his disciples till the dawn of modern times. Viewed in this light, legendary accretion is as historically significant as the identifiable historical core.

### **Conclusions**

At this point the reader will find useful the following lines, which in my view are the best ones to recapitulate the various

points touched *en passant* in this contribution<sup>12</sup>.

Uḍḍiyāna is mostly known as the legendary homeland of Padmasambhava, the great teacher who, summoned to Tibet by the king Trisong Detsen in the mid-eight century CE, introduced there an esoteric form of Buddhism – an inextricable melding of magic and mysticism – which is thought to be at the roots of Vajrayāna. Much less is known about Uḍḍiyāna as a historical region, which archaeology has long since identified with an area centred on modern-day Swat (north-western Pakistan). Excavations and surveys revealed here an astonishing wealth of Buddhist remains and civil settlements that to a large extent match the ancient topography of Uḍḍiyāna as described in ancient sources.

The favourable geographical position with relation to ancient communication routes between India and Central Asia and a long-lasting fame as one of the most sacred lands of Buddhism – still intact centuries after the Islamization of the country – ensured to Uḍḍiyāna economic and cultural prosperity, at least until the first decades of the sixth century CE. The words of the Chinese pilgrim Songyun, who visited the country in 520 CE, convey to us a vivid picture of Uḍḍiyāna: the pleasant weather, the abundance of crops, the sound of the bells that in the evening clang from the many Buddhist monasteries, the colours of the flowers that, everywhere and in every season, the land produces and people offer to the Buddha. Much different, one century later, are the words of another famous Chinese pilgrim, Xuanzang. He describes scarce crops, ruined monasteries, and a small population of monks who, incapable of understanding the true meaning of the

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<sup>12</sup> This is the abridged version of a text authored by my colleague Anna Filigenzi from the Uḍḍiyāna website (<http://www.oeaw.ac.at/uddiyana>) (reprint authorized).

doctrine, seem to be instead committed to magic and charms.

A dramatic change is also witnessed in Swat by the archaeological landscape of the second half of the first millennium CE. Research brought to light ample evidence of a general decay, possibly connected to some natural catastrophe (floods and earthquakes are not a rare occurrence in the region). At that time both Buddhist sacred areas and urban settlements show signs of decline, ill repair or even definitive abandonment. If the statement of Xuanzang about the “cultural” decay of the Uḍḍiyāna monks may sound like indirect evidence of a different form of Buddhism that we can dare label proto-Vajrayāna, more difficult to understand is how the famous doctrinal centre we know from Tibetan tradition could grow amidst the gloomy ruins of the past. Moreover, if we may give any credit to the legends about Padmasambhava and his homeland, we have to assume that Padmasambhava himself was the epigone, either real or fictitious, of a chain of anonymous masters who cultivated in Uḍḍiyāna, along with new doctrinal orientations, a related corpus of ritual practices and visual imagery. Thus if Uḍḍiyāna was so influential in the spreading of Buddhism across the Himalayan regions, it must have also been influential in the profuse artistic and cultural blossoms that grew out of this [...].

Particularly enlightening in this regard are the Buddhist rock sculptures. They long remained almost ignored or underestimated, and in any case regarded as having little artistic value and vague theoretical foundations, until analytical study highlighted how, with their refined aesthetics and innovative iconographic character, they can be considered the forerunners of themes which blossomed later in Himalayan art. Moreover, the seventh to eighth century is also the chronological frame of another

sophisticated artistic production, closely related to the rock sculpture: the bronze sculpture from the Swat/Gilgit region. When analyzed together, these two artistic phenomena outline a different picture of late-antique Swat, which starts convincingly matching the legendary Uḍḍiyāna [...].

At this stage, I would like to conclude my contribution with three statements, which derive their apodictic formulation from the solid ground of the archaeological field research. Therefore, they might be considered the best starting points for future discussions<sup>13</sup>:

- 1) Archaeological research in Swat has amply demonstrated the existence of a strong Vajrayanic background already in the 7th century CE.
- 2) Textual evidences show that from 5th Century CE, Chinese and Tibetan travelers and pilgrims for more than thousand years visited the Swat valley believing that it was Uddiyana (Figure 9).
- 3) If the true Uddiyana, as physical realm, should have been searched elsewhere than in Swat, we ought to conclude that those venerated pilgrims and travelers were wrong.

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<sup>13</sup> Besides the classic works by Giuseppe Tucci, further data to confirm the identification of Swat with the ancient Uddiyana can be found for example in Kuwayama 2002 (in particular Chapter XV). See also Davidson 2002, and the recent McDougal 2016, fn. 19.



Figure 9. The Swat Valley and the hill of Barikot seen from south-west. In the background the skyline of the Swat Kohistan Range. Courtesy: Italian Archaeological Mission in Pakistan.

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## **How the Sacred Teachings of Guru Rinpoche Relate to and Counteract Mental Difficulties**

*Dolpo Tulku Rinpoche\**

### **1) Definition of Guru Rinpoche's sacred teachings**

From my humble perspective, the Great Lopön Pema Jungne taught in two ways. Based on the explanation of these two, we can clearly understand what is meant by the sacred teachings of the Great Lopön.

#### 1) The teachings, which newly established the Nine Yanas

The teachings of the Buddha spread to many countries in a manner appropriate to them. Amongst them is the Himalaya region, where a special union of sutra and tantra teachings in their entirety took root. This is only due to Guru Rinpoche's kindness, which can be clearly seen in the ancient historical texts of Tibet and Tun-Huang. Here I cannot say more about these documents due to the lack of time.

Historically speaking the main topic of this part of the presentation is about the Khenpo Shantarakshita, the Dharma King Trisong Detsen and Guru Rinpoche. They not only built the great school of the unchanging, spontaneously present, great Samye temple in the 7th century, but they also decided to translate the sacred Dharma, so a Buddhist following could be established and maintained long term.

To summarize in a new way, that has not been used before, in just 70 years more than 200 Buddhist volumes were translated and edited until they were considered definite translations. This is an amazing feat of history. To illustrate this, these days it is an undertaking of four to five years to newly translate a text like *The Perfection of Wisdom Sutra in One Hundred Thousand Lines* in a monastic institution. Therefore the translation of more than 200 volumes in just 70 years is result of the powerful

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\* Dolpo Tulku Charitable Foundation in Switzerland, Nepal

kindness displayed by Khenpo Shantarakshita, the Dharma King Trisong Detsen and Guru Rinpoche. It is a truly amazing, pure, complete, faultless and kind story.

In this regard, during the years of the early spread of teachings the activities of the common pandits included the cataloguing of the two volumes on grammar, the *Karchag Pangtangma* and *Denkarma*<sup>1</sup>. This can be verified by looking up the Tibetan catalogues about ancient documents on the history of psychology, at texts like the extensive teaching *The Ornamental Flower* the Nang Jomden Rignal, who lived in the 13th century.

These 200 volumes of translated texts were composed differently due to the different explanations by the pandits, siddhas and awareness holders, who categorised them by different themes like the four and two types of bliss or the Four Dharma Seals.

It is said that Guru Rinpoche newly established the nine yanas amongst them and is therefore considered the Founder of the Chariot of the Nine Yanas. This is clearly demonstrated through his shastra *The Oral Instruction Garland of Views*. One might wonder what the reasons are to regard Guru Rinpoche as the founder of the nine yanas based on his role as the first composer of a shastra featuring this classification of nine yanas, and if there were any additional reasons. I will illustrate here through elucidating this shastra with the tantra it comments on, the root tantra *The Secret Essence*.

Even though *The Oral Instruction Garland of Views* is a commentary of the Mahayoga root tantra *The Secret Essence*, it details nine yanas, where the *The Secret Essence* only mentions five. This shows how the nine yanas were newly established. Please investigate this reason for yourself through the works of the old scholars.

## 2. It is a new way of lineage practice for a person traversing all the yanas

The Buddha expounded different yanas, depending on different

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<sup>1</sup> Collection of Tibetan translations catalogued by leading translators.

mental capacities, different needs, different motives, different aspirations, whether the society at large was the main focus or the individual. All these different ways of teaching could just be accepted for face value or completely discarded. Someone who does not engage in these foolish ways of accepting and rejecting purifies the mind from what troubles it, does the necessary to tame the mind stream and acts according to the three vehicles according to the three times without contradiction. During the practice these points are incorporated in the Ngöndro and the main practices. This is what is expressed here. These two kinds of practices mentioned are what is called the sacred teachings of Guru Rinpoche, which is categorized into the nine yanas. This shows that a person's mind stream needs both kinds of practice.

Why did I choose the Ngöndro practice to illustrate how the sacred teachings are connected to mental difficulties and how it remedies them? Because it is the foundation for the main practices as it creates the mental equanimity and the understanding to engage in the elaborate main practices.

## **2) The psychological impact of the Ngöndro practice**

The purpose and the sub-divisions of the Ngöndro practice is generally the same, but there are different texts of various lengths. The nine different parts presented now are remedies to the nine commonplace mental problems, which will be mentioned later on.

1. The contemplation on the precious human birth awakens the mental state of valuing one's life.
2. Contemplating the impermanence of life produces the mental state of urgency to engage in whatever positive deed quickly.
3. The contemplation on karma, the law of cause and effect, evokes the mental state that the joys and pains of life are not someone else's fault, but one's own responsibility.
4. The contemplation on the defects of samsara and the benefits

of liberation engenders the mental state which identifies where wellbeing and where suffering abide.

These first four parts belong within the nine yantras to both the Shravaka's and the Pratyekabuddha's practice. These two yantras are commonly called the lineages of the South and have spread to countries like Sri Lanka, Burma, Thailand, Cambodia, etc. They combine the Buddha's teachings on meditation, view and conduct into one.

5. When practicing the refuge, the mental state induced is not to resort to harming another under any circumstance.
6. The awakening of bodhicitta is the mental state which not only promotes non-violence, but also imparts the intention to benefit anyone regardless of nationality, religion, whether they are friend or foe, etc.
7. The mandala offering promotes the mental state to freely give one's wealth, experience, time, etc., without any stinginess.

These three parts belong to the practices of the bodhisattva vehicle. They are practiced as what is commonly known as the Northern lineage in countries like Nepal, China, Tibet, Bhutan, Korea, Japan, Vietnam.

8. The meditation and recitation of Vajrasattva gives rise to a state of mental strength to regret one's past negative actions and to resolve not to engage in them again.
9. Guru Yoga gives rise to mental state where one does not follow thoughts regarding views, habits, culture, etc., but the mind rests in its natural state.

Within the nine yantras, these last two points are practiced in the Kriya Tantra, Charya Tantra, Yoga Tantra, Mahayoga, Anuyoga and Atiyoga. The yantras are practiced in the aforementioned Northern Lineage. They particularly spread in Tibet, Nepal, Korea, Bhutan and Japan as the secret mantra teachings.

Even though these days some Tibetan historians distinguish three lineages, the Southern, Northern and Tibetan lineage, in the old documents Tibetan lineage is part of the Northern

lineage. Not only that, the Buddha predicted the sustained dissemination of these teachings to the North, which is an additional reason to include them in the Northern lineage.

### **3) Mental difficulties**

1. A mental attitude of low self-esteem leads to a sense of lack compared to the wealth, the qualities, the capabilities, etc., of others. This is a serious problem, whether it is on a social or individual level. The worst outcome of attributing no value to one's life is to commit suicide. Every year over 800,000 people worldwide resort to killing themselves.
2. If someone believes that everything is permanent, he will think that a difficult time in his life cannot possibly change. Many people suffer from this. Another example is someone who overworks herself for the sake of wealth without taking her health into account, believing that her life will last forever and suffers from endless insomnia.
3. When there is no understanding of what leads to happiness and what to suffering, someone might mistake committing a crime to be the appropriate action to ensure wellbeing or some sort of gain. Or even if there is a wish to be happy, one might succumb to laziness and not engage in what would lead to happiness.
4. If one is not aware of the resultant wellbeing or suffering of certain actions, one might get drunk, take drugs, amass fame and wealth, believing that the result should be enjoyment and wellbeing even though it is ultimately physical and psychological misery.
5. When someone is uses the wrong techniques or methods, she might engage in a life style that will not bring about happiness like working as a butcher. Also many religious and philosophical texts give instructions and advice which is mistaken.
6. A selfish-motivation leads to always wanting oneself and one's own group to win over other nations, religions, views,

etc. In the worst case scenario, the enemy should not simply be defeated but one works towards completely eliminating the other, because one cannot bear to eat together, enjoy or obtain something together. This is really a massive obstacle for a peaceful society.

7. A greedy mind leads to never feeling content, no matter how much one has. Some people even resort to robbery or theft to acquire the possessions of others. The idea that whatever one owns is sufficient never arises.
8. Without a feeling of regret, even though it might not be necessary to directly engage in positive actions or to make amends, it is impossible to say sorry when one acts negatively. Also one won't feel compelled to stop non-dharmic and harmful activities. Through regretting and apologizing many problems in this world can be solved.
9. When the mind does not rest in its natural state serious health problems can arise. If the mind circles within the boundaries of conceptual thoughts, dealing with what is and what not, good and bad, what is permissible and what not; gain and loss, there is never a moment's rest. If one can at least enjoy ten minutes in a state without mental fabrication, one can experience wellbeing.

#### **4) How two opposing mental states cannot abide simultaneously**

The mental states evoked through Guru Rinpoche's practices and the mental difficulties described before, cannot abide in the mind of a single person at the same time, like fire and water cannot abide at exactly the same place.

This logical approach, that one mental state eradicates an opposing one, if employed at the same time, is something to be made use of in life. One can pacify an anguished mind by taking advantage of this logic or this view and make a long lasting effort in it. It is impossible for example to be greedy and content at the same time. To eliminate one, the other needs to

be generated, strengthened and sustained for a longer period of time.

If two mental states can be present simultaneously, this practice is of no benefit. For example, if between pride and greed one is strengthened, it does not act as an antidote to the other as they can easily coexist. Contentment though directly eliminates greed like fire extinguishes water.

From this point of view of contradiction being the most important, Guru Rinpoche devised the nine parts of the Ngöndro to overcome the nine mental difficulties:

1. The instruction on the precious human birth is the antidote to low self-esteem.
2. The instruction on the impermanence is the antidote to believing in permanence and immutability.
3. The instruction on karma, the law of cause and effect, is the antidote to being unaware of the causes and conditions leading to happiness and suffering.
4. The instruction on the defects of samsara and the advantages of liberation is the antidote to being unaware of resultant happiness and suffering.
5. The instruction on refuge is the antidote to using the wrong methods.
6. The instruction on bodhicitta is the antidote to self-centeredness.
7. The instruction on mandala is the antidote to greed.
8. The instruction on Vajrasattva is the antidote to not regretting negative acts.
9. The instruction on Guru Yoga is the antidote to not resting one's mind in its natural state.

Why is it not possible for these mental states to be present simultaneously? It is because their aim, their conceptual make up are directly contradictory to one another. As mentioned before greed and pride don't have opposing aims and therefore

cannot cancel one another out. Greed and contentment on the other hand are fully incompatible in their aim and make up, so when one is present, the other cannot arise. To express this in a manner that is easy to understand, I said that they cannot abide simultaneously. The factors of aim and conceptual make up determine whether two mental states can be present at the same time or not. I explained earlier on about the opposing factors. As this is quite important, one needs to study the teachings on perceiving the deity when practicing Guru Rinpoche's main practices in the same vein.

Through identifying the nine difficult mental states that need to be overcome, the nine parts of the Ngöndro are practiced, which improves one's health, prevents harm to be done to the environment and inner strength to help others increases. The development of the wisdom, which unmistakably knows the true state of reality, brings wellbeing to this and the next life. Also, because if it abides in the mind stream, it cancels out wrong thinking.

All of us here have resorted to religion, psychology, neurology, medicine, etc., when searching for methods and knowledge on how to better the mind. Please investigate for yourself if through these methods a difficult mental state can abide simultaneously.

May the teachings of Tsodrung Wangpo spread far and wide!

## **Guru Rinpoche and Buddhism in Tibet**

*Geshe Ngawang Samten\**

I venerate the Buddha Shakyamuni and the Guru Padmasambhava. Today is a very auspicious day, and it is especially fortunate for me and for all of us to be here, on this very special occasion, to celebrate the birthday of Guru Padmasambhava and speak about him. It is a meritorious deed, as we say, to talk about the Gurus, the Buddhas, and the Bodhisattvas and remember their qualities and deeds as they inspire us to follow their path to enlightenment. On this occasion, I would like to pay my respect to His Majesty the King of Bhutan and also I would like to join the people of Bhutan in rejoicing at the birth of the Prince, which is being celebrated throughout the country - and wish him a long and successful life.

Padmasambhava, known as Guru Rinpoche, is a very important and highly revered figure in Tibetan tradition. We have been talking for the last two days about the life and deeds of Guru Padmasambhava: why he came to Tibet and the deeds he performed there that made a deep impact on the tradition of Buddhism in Tibet. I won't go into detail. However, to contextualize the matter it is necessary to give a brief historical account.

One of the three greatest Emperors of Tibet, Trisong Detsen, invited to Tibet Acharya Shantarakshita, a great saint and scholar from Nalanda Monastic University of India. Nalanda was the top-most academic and spiritual institution of ancient India, a single campus at which all different kinds of disciplines were studied, and a forerunner of the modern concept of the university. Later, Takshishila, Vikramashila, and Odantapuri mahaviharas, the other great Indian seats of learning, were founded on the same model. When the Tibetan

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Emperor Trisong Detsen invited Shantarakshita to teach and disseminate Buddhism in Tibet, and the great master began to teach dharma and do other spiritual deeds, such as building temples, the annals of history tell us that obstacles raised by human and non-human spirits prevented the dharma from flourishing. Therefore, the master Shantarakshita advised the Emperor Trisong Detsen to invite Guru Padmasambhava from India. He was invited, accordingly, and after his arrival, he used his spiritual power and miracles to subdue all the human and non-human forces that were antagonistic to Buddha's teachings and the dharma. Although the foundation of Buddha dharma already had been laid down by the earlier Emperors, commencing from the Emperor Songtsan Gampo, it is the "Khen-lop-Choe-sum" who were responsible for bringing Buddhism into full swing, for truly establishing it, in Tibet: *Khenpo* Shantarakshita, *Lopon* Guru Padmasambhava, and *Choeki Gyalpo* Emperor Trisong Detsen. They always are remembered with great reverence. We can now understand why these three figures are so important. In today's context we are talking about Guru Padmasambhava, who in association with Acharya Shantarashita, and the Emperor established a strong foundation of Buddhism in Tibet through founding the monastic system and establishing translation centres, on the basis of which Buddhism could flourish widely and deeply in Tibet.

In the process of the establishment of Buddhism in Tibet, the three components--translation, transmission, and transformation - are highly important; without them Buddhism could never have succeeded in Tibet as it did, reaching such heights and depths of both intellectual achievement and spiritual realization. It was a great idea to translate the huge corpus of Buddhist literature. Without translation of the original treatises into the indigenous language it would be impossible for Tibetans to have access to the riches of Buddhist literature. Therefore, the first and foremost task undertaken was the translation of the Buddha's teaching and the works of the Indian masters into the Tibetan language from Indian languages, primarily Sanskrit. This made the entire enterprise of receiving the Buddha dharma

in Tibet very different from that found in many other nations. Having such a large number of Buddhist texts accessible to them in their own mother tongue, Tibetans produced a huge corpus of literature in all of the disciplines, making significant contributions to the development of those disciplines. In the process of translation, the great Indian masters were invited and the great Tibetan Lotsawas worked with them with the support of the Emperor and the government of Tibet. In the course of four and a half centuries, they translated more than five thousand texts, which included more than one thousand five hundred of the Buddha's teachings and more than three thousand five hundred treatises of the Indian masters. These works include five major fields of studies, the *panca mahavidyas*: spirituality and philosophy, logic and epistemology, medicine, arts, and linguistics; and the five minor fields of studies, the *panca laguvidyas*: poetry, grammar, dramaturgy, lexicography, and prosody. These fields of study include all the knowledge, the *vidya*, prevalent in India that time. In those great monastic universities, not only Buddhist philosophical systems but non-Buddhist philosophical systems, too, were studied. These great monasteries played a vital role in developing Indian knowledge systems to a great height through high-level and intensive interaction between Buddhist and non-Buddhist Indian philosophical schools.

So far as the Tibetan translation project is concerned, it is unparalleled in the human history both in terms of quality and quantity. Several measures were undertaken to maintain the quality of the translation, by virtue of which the standard of the translation became so high that it cannot be matched even today, with all our facilities and advancements. Such a standard was possible to maintain because the project was meticulously planned, taking great care to maintain in the translation both the literal meaning and the thematic meaning of the original texts. Unlike in other translations, in the translations in the Kangyur and Tangyur, the great Lotsawas and Indian masters have retained the literal meaning with the great precision, which is crucial for understanding the essence of the texts. The thematic meaning of the original text is also retained, in such

a manner that the entire meaning, down to the fine details, is found in the Tibetan translation. Thus, many scholars are of the view that the texts in the Tibetan translation are a reliable “shadow” of the original Sanskrit works.

Mere translation alone was not sufficient for bringing Buddhism to Tibet. Therefore, great efforts were made to assure proper transmission. Every text has three levels: literal content, thematic content, and spiritual content. All of them, with their intricacies and complex systematic context, were transmitted from Indian masters to Tibetan masters - through whose practice they became part of individual life and national culture. Thus, it can aptly be said that the entire intellectual, spiritual, and cultural tradition of Nalanda, Vikramashila, Odantapuri and Takshila was transplanted to Tibet with the utmost authenticity.

Guru Rinpoche, being an enlightened being, transmitted his realization to a great many prominent disciples, such as *Jebang Nyernga* (the twenty-five disciples) and many others. Guru Rinpoche transmitted spiritual realization to his disciples as he travelled across the three provinces of Tibet: Utsang, Dotoe and Domey. He also travelled to Bhutan, Sikkim and Nepal where many people were blessed. This very course of transmission is a matter of great importance in the transformative spiritual system of Buddhism. In a similar manner, Acharya Shantarakshita transmitted the Nalanda traditions of scholarship and spirituality to many of his Tibetan disciples. Thus, together, these great masters established strong foundations for Buddhism in Tibet.

Basically, Tibet is a Mahayana country where the traditions of both Sutra (Prajnaparamita teachings of the Buddha) and Tantra (Buddha’s teaching belonging to the four tantra schools) are extensively practiced; and sutras (teachings of the Buddha) and shastras (treatises written by masters and scholars) are extensively studied. In this tradition, one dedicates from twenty to twenty-five years to complete one’s formal education and obtain the highest degree.

In the Tibetan tradition of Mahayana, which is the legacy of Nalanda, there are two traditions: the Sutrayana and Vajrayana. Those who lack a proper understanding of these profound, sophisticated and complex traditions, think that Hinayana, the lesser vehicle, Mahayana, the great vehicle, which also includes Vajrayana, are absolutely different systems, and are not related to each other. However, the reality is that in the traditional practice of Buddhism in Tibet, we begin our practice from the small-scope person, who is focused on a good rebirth, and then enter into the practice of middle-scope person, where one aspires to attaining liberation for oneself. Thereafter, the practitioner enters into the practice of great-scope person, the Mahayana, in which one aspires to attain enlightenment for the benefit of all sentient beings. Thereafter, persons who are capable and equipped with the pre-requisites - including a high level of understanding of the philosophy of emptiness and practice of Bodhicitta - enter into the practice of Vajrayana, the “fast track” to enlightenment, which is a sophisticated and complex system of practice that develops the subtle mind within a subtle physiological system. Those who do not understand this gradual stages of Buddhist practice and the relation among them tend to think and make statements as if they are not only unrelated but antagonistic to each other. In the Tibetan tradition of Buddhist practice, we undertake all these stages of practice in a single meditation session - not to mention in the course of a lifetime - moving through the gradual stages and culminating in the Vajrayana practice of the Mahayana. In the Tibetan Buddhist tradition, Mahayana sutras and treatises belonging to the realization paths, meditation and mind training, on the one hand, and the tenets of the four philosophical schools, on the other, are extensively studied. There also is a strong tradition of scholarship on epistemology and logic, which came down from the fathers of the Buddhist logic, Dignaga and Dharmakirti. Such extensive and profound study of philosophy, logic and epistemology is a unique feature of Tibetan Buddhism.

While Guru Padmasambhava visited various parts of Tibet, he visited Bhutan, too. After Guru Rinpoche, Kunkhyen Longchen

Rabjampa - the reincarnations of one of the 25 major disciples of Guru Rinpoche in eighth century - visited Bhutan and established monasteries and temples. Kunkhyen Longchen Rabjampa revealed many of the concealed texts known as Termas. Terma is not merely getting a text from earth or rock. If this was the case, a text found in an archaeological excavation could also be a terma. It is not that simple. Terma is revealed by a realized person who understands the literal content, thematic content, and most importantly, the spiritual content of the text. As he has the necessary realization, he can understand the text properly and can transmit to others. Later, four hundred years ago, Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyal came to Bhutan from central Tibet; he not only gave dharma discourses but also built infrastructure, like castles, systemic structures, in the form of structures for administration and governance. He also framed laws, a social order and even dress codes, which can be seen as preserved in Bhutanese culture even today.

Ever since Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyal's time, Tibetan masters and scholars have been visiting this peaceful nation of Bhutan, and today, hundreds of Bhutanese students are studying in various monasteries of the four traditions of Tibetan Buddhism in India, actively pursuing scholarship and spiritual practice. Hence, the relation between Tibet and Bhutan is deeply rooted in a common culture and spirituality.

## **Guru Rinpoche's Exclusive Sacred Places in Bhutan**

*Kunzang Thinley\**

(Translated by Phuntsho Gyaltshen)

### **Author's tribute**

I heartily welcome the most intelligent and beautiful  
honeybees,  
That have swarmed here setting aside all the  
predicament,  
Just to play their melodious throat-drum of excellent  
expressions,  
At this lotus-park of Paro valley!

The topic of my presentation  
Doesn't merit to be a gift to please erudite scholars, yet  
To the Lord Ogen, accomplisher of the perfect rainbow  
body,  
In order to pay my respect and commemorate his birth  
anniversary, I shall explain!

### **Introduction of Bhutan**

Among many sacred places blessed by Guru Rinpoche, the  
Dragon Kingdom of Bhutan is considered as a very special hidden  
sacred place. The reasons are: the text *Mind Accomplishment  
that Bears the Seal of Secrecy* (thugs sgrub gsang ba rgya can)  
states:

A place [in Bhutan] that I have not set my foot on,  
Even the size of a horse-hoe or sesame is not there!

In addition to this, in his *Religious History of Southern Dragon*  
(lho 'brug chos 'byung), Guru Rinpoche stated:

Just by traveling there, one would find the path [to

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\* Research Head, KMT Printing Press, Thimphu, Bhutan

liberation],  
My followers, who practice the dharma,  
Flee to the southern gorges, the hidden sacred land!

And said:

Find a retreat place at the southern gate of the  
southern gorges,  
If you did this what you accomplish in seven years in  
Tibet  
You will accomplish it in seven days in these sacred  
places.

And the *Lamp that Illuminates All Prophecies* (lung bstan kun  
gsal sgron me) says:

At mountain gorges and snow crevices in the border  
regions of southern Tibet,  
And at the forested gorges, so forth, in all types of  
gorges,  
As they will be needed at a future time,  
I, Padmasamabhava, blessed and left them as it is.  
Dharma Yogis could obtain accomplishment in these  
places very quickly.  
All country gods and local spirits will protect them  
from obstacle makers.  
Even devils and non-Buddhist heretics will not occur.  
It is the fatherland of all the dharma practitioners.

And:

At the border between Mon and Tibet, there are four  
[greater] hidden lands,  
Eight lesser hidden lands, and ten thousand sub-  
hidden lands,  
I, Padmasambhava, concealed them as they will of  
use in future!

These undecieving and indestructible words of the scriptures

thus confirm [Bhutan as a sacred hidden land]. Among many special sacred places of Bhutan, I will speak about: Paro Taktshang from among the sacred places of West Bhutan; about Bumthang Kurje among the sacred places of Central Bhutan; and Nering Senge Dzong from among sacred places of East Bhutan.

## **Section I**

### ***Taktshangs (Tiger's Lairs)***

#### **a. Scriptural statements and evidences that the Three Taktshangs are the gateway to Guru Rinpoche's sacred places**

- 1) May I present a brief introduction of the self-arisen replicas of Guru Rinpoche's enlightened body, speech and mind, at the three places of Taktshangs. The Lute with Ghandharva's Song Series, that which reveals the liberative biography of Khandro Yeshe Tshogyal - extracted from the treasure by Taksham - jointly authored by Gyalwa Jangchub and Namkhai Nyingpo (rgyud mangs dri za'i glu phreng), both of who were Guru's pupils, describes that the Onphu Taktshang of Tibet is the special sacred land of Guru's enlightened body. Here one can see the [self-formed] image of the Guru Rinpoche of Oddiyana, the Second Buddha, that which depicts him as he occurred from a lotus bud in the lake Danakosha. Then his enlightened speech is depicted by the [self-embossed] three syllables and the nine-syllables, while his enlightened mind is depicted by the [self-arisen] stupa and a Vajra.
- 2) The Taktshang of Kham represents special sacred land of Guru Rinpoche's enlightened speech. In this sacred place, about the time when Guru subdued devils and pervert heretics through the turning of the dharma wheel at Bodhgaya, India, and elsewhere, there arose uncreated forms depicting Guru's three Kayas; six-syllabled mantra, three-syllabled mantra and the twelve-syllabled mantra that depicted his enlightened speech;

and a stupa as well that depicted his enlightened mind.

- 3) The Paro Taktsang of Mon (Bhutan) is the special sacred place of Guru Rinpoche's enlightened mind. Here at this sacred place, the biography mentions that about the time of Guru Rinpoche's dwelling at the pure land of Akanistha, there arose the forms and figures depicting the Guru's enlightened body, speech and mind, by its own. I have provided their significances and explanations in detail in the following.

**b. Of all Guru Rinpoche's sacred places in Bhutan, Paro Taktshang is Guru's first sacred place**

The reason why we can establish that Paro Taktshang is Guru's first sacred place located in the Dragon Kingdom, the valley of herbal medicines covered by cypress woods, is stated in the Khandro Yeshe Tshogyal's biography (the one mentioned above) as thus:

[Guru Rinpoche] came to Padro (the name of Paro used in biography) Taktshang of Mon (Bhutan), concealed treasures everywhere, and wrote down their prophecies. As this is the sacred place of Guru's enlightened mind, the Guru said whoever does a retreat here will obtain the siddhi (attainment) of Mahamudra. The landmark features that represent the Guru's enlightened body, speech, and mind which are visible here self-appeared about the time when Guru Rinpoche resided in the pure land of Akanistha. Say aspiration and auspicious prayers to these self-formed Guru Dorje Drolod's image, self-occurred stupa, and to the self-embossed six-syllables!

**1) The self-formed image of Guru Dorje Drolod, the replica of the enlightened body**

Similar to Khandro Yeshe Tshogyal's biography Tertön Dorje Lingpa also describes quite clearly about the existence of Guru Dorje Drolod's self-formed image at Paro Taktshang in his biographical songs. Likewise, the

Ninth Je Khenpo Shakya Rinchen (1710-1959) in his Eulogy of Paro Taktshang (spa gro stag gi gnas bstod) mentions about Guru Dorje Drolod's self-formed image on the left side of the Taktshang cliffs as thus:

To the left side of [Taktshang cliffs], the  
Vidhyadhara Pema Gyalpo,  
His enlightened body that rips apart and  
liberates samaya-breakers (damsis), and  
Gyalgong spirits  
Like a hurricane bearing clouds,  
Stands tall as Dorje Drolod Tsal!

If I explain this verse, it says that Guru Rinpoche has self-appeared at the left side of the rocky-cliffs of Takshang in the form of standing Guru Dorje Drolod Tsal in order to tame devils, damsis, and Gyalgong spirits.

As stated by the two biographies and Eulogy of Taktshang above, the features of the self-arisen image of [Guru Dorje Drolod] are obviously noticeable at the rocky-cliff. The two eyes are located just above the two temples of Taktshang [Pelphug] and Taktshang Shama, and the nose is in between them. The cypresses above represent the hairs. How Guru transformed himself into Dorje Drolod and executed the enlightened activity for the sake of sentient beings will be elaborated later when I explain why Paro Taktshang is very special sacred place from among the rest.

Note: The view of this image is noticeable at the rocky-cliff face of Taktshang if you gaze from Satsham Chorten and Ra-pak-thang otherwise known as Ramthangka.

## **2) Palchen Dorje Zhonu's (Vajra Kilaya) self-arisen body**

The center part of Paro Taktshang's cliff is regarded as the self-arisen form of Palden Dorje Zhonu. It is described by Gyalwa Shakya Rinchen, the Ninth Je Khenpo, in his

Eulogy of Paro Taktshang as thus:

Specially, the central mountain is Dorje Throepa  
Jin  
In his youthful nature that has been arisen  
spontaneously.  
Thus, in the pure mandala of appearance and  
existence,  
It is this magnificent and solid mask that exudes  
pervasive clouds of blessings!

Specifically, this verse means the central mountain is Dorje Throepa Jin. It is the natural expression of Palchen Dorje Zhonu that has occurred spontaneously. The “pure mandala of appearance and existence that exudes pervasively...” means the clouds of blessings that is emitted by the magnificent face [of Guru Dorje Drolod formed] solidly on the rock are infinite both in size and numbers.

### **3) Self-arisen six syllables, the replica of the enlightened speech**

The self-arisen Mani or the six syllabled-mantra representing the enlightened speech is found on the rock-face is located near the lower cypress of the two cypresses that grow little above the lamp-offering shrine after taking the descent from the point of diversion that leads to Machig Ladron’s sacred place. This rock-face has fallen so close to the steps of trail that regular through fare by the pilgrims has already caused the letters to diminish considerably. The letters are hardly legible today.

### **4) Self-arisen stupa, the replica of the enlightened mind**

The self-arisen stupa is said to be the Enlightenment Stupa-like image, which is painted white today, seen on the rock face to the right of the four-guardian kings’ gate of Pelphug Temple. This can be traced to as one enters

into the temple through the security gate located nearby the Taktshang's Drupchu (accomplishment-stream).

Today, I have just inserted the picture of this image considering that it is the replica of Guru's enlightened mind as mentioned in the biography of Khandro Yeshe Tshogyal, but I petition the scholars to kindly research on this matter conclusively in future.

### **5) Guru Rinpoche's visit to Taktshang in the form of Dorje Drolod**

Paro Taktshang is one of the most special sacred places among all sacred places of Guru Rinpoche. It bears the replicas of Guru's enlightened body, speech and mind and they all occurred when Guru lived in the pure land of Akanishtha. Following this Guru journeyed to the southern continent of Zambudvipa, and then came to this sacred place of Paro having assumed Guru Dorje Drolod's form. He then subjugated devils and damsis of the land. This episode is described in the Seven Chaptered Supplication to Guru Rinpoche as:

At the Senge Samdrup's Taktshang,  
Tamed malignant Tirthikas, devils and Samaya  
corruptors.  
In this great sacred place of mountains and  
cliffs, he concealed great treasures  
Compassionately caring for the future beings of  
the degenerated age.  
To the Dorje Drolod Tsal, I supplicate!

Likewise, it is said in the Khandro Yeshe Tshogyal's biography as:

In the night after witnessing incredible signs of wonder, Guru Rinpoche assumed Dorje Drolod's form while his copulating consort Yeshe Tshogyal transformed into Ekazati's form and brought

the gods and demons of trichiliocosm, of Tibet, and of the four continents, under their control. His liberating consort [Tashi] Chidren who has transformed herself into a tigress lifted the Guru couple. The couple remained in the Vajra Kilaya's Samadhi while brandishing the nine-pronged Vajra scepter with their right hands and spun the walking staff of kilaya peg. From their aggressive bodies emitted countless forms of themselves and particularly, a dark blue kilaya called Throephur (ferocious peg) flew off to Paro Taktshang. And from there summoned the gods and demons of Bhutan, Nepal, India, etc., and bound them under his samaya."

**6) Ganteng Trulku Tenzin Lekpai Dondrub's account of seeing Guru Dorje Drolod**

Tenzin Lekpai Dondrub, the [Second] Gangteng Trulku [1645-1727], narrates how he saw the vision of Guru Dorje Drolod at Paro Taktshang in his auto-biography. Accordingly, at that time, at the cave of Taktshang cliff above the valley, a place where no humans could climb, a huge tiger appeared. It resided in the cave while strolling here and there, and even sometimes rolling over for almost four days. The people who were flocked down there in the valley also saw it but nothing more than an ordinary tiger. However, in Tenzin Lekpai Dondrub vision, he saw that the tiger was as huge as the size of two elephants while a dark-brown skinned Guru Dorje Drolod rode on it. The Guru stared with three fiery eyes and his mouth was clinched. His black hair was spiralled and tufted. He wore all ornaments, costumes, and implements. With an awe-inspiring pose, he appeared so real inside a raging fire and was surrounded by dakas and dakinis. This is how Tenzin narrates about his vision of Guru Dorje Drolod for three days at Taktshang in his autobiography.

## **7) Vision of Guru Rinpoche seen by many Lamas**

At this sacred place of Paro Taktshang many Lamas regardless of their different traditions saw the vision of Guru Rinpoche. Among them were Thangtong Gyalpo, the king among accomplished adepts, Mahapandita Naki Rinchen, Gyalse Tenzin Rabye, the fourth Desi, and others. As this encounter is stated clearly in their individual biographies I did not quote them here in full. Just as His Holiness, the late Dudjom Jigdrel Yeshe Dorje said, "If you think, I shall perform the accomplishment practice, please read the liberative biographies of the former masters," for those who wish to know these accounts in detail, kindly read the biographies of these masters.

### **c. Topographical visions of mountains at Taktshang**

#### **1) Appearance of the five Buddha families on the mountains behind Taktshang and other appearances on the mountains located before Taktshang**

The Mahasiddha Jinpa Gyaltsen [17th Century] saw all the mountain ranges located behind Paro Taktshang as the Five Buddha Families. This account is given in the liberative biography of Jingpa Gyaltsen authored by Namgyal Tenzin. Upon arriving at Nyangmed Gedkha, the Mahasiddha remarked:

This Taktshang was frequented by Guru Rinpoche in the past and blessed it. Hence it is a very ideal and special place of retreat. All the mountains behind it look like the Five Buddha Families are sitting. It is really spontaneous and majestic. The five spurs that are located before Taktshang are in the form of offerings of the five desirable qualities. The mountain on its right looks exactly like the hoisting of white silk scarves. The mountain on its left looks like heaps of turquoises dotted inside the silver ladle. The clean blue river is like making of water

offering. The location of the place, mountains, and the rocky cliffs, all look extremely ideal and beautiful.”

This is how Jinpa Gyaltsen remarked and it was noted in his biography.

## **2) Vision of the Protectors of the Three Families**

In his Eulogy of the Paro Taktshang, Gyalwa Shakya Rinchen, the Ninth Je Khenpo, states, “That also, externally signifies the Protectors of the Three Families...” The meaning of this statement is that Taktshang mountains signify: Manjushri - the embodiment of omniscience of the Buddhas of the three times; Avalokiteshvara - the embodiment of compassion of the Buddhas of the three times; and Vajrapani - the embodiment of power of the Buddhas of the three times.

## **3) The central mountain of Taktshang can be seen as the white Dharma conch**

Based upon the different devotional perceptions of the faithful individuals, Paro Taktshang’s topography is seen to represent many visions. When we take a look at Taktshang from Ogen Dorje Phendeling at Satsham Chorten, the central mountain can be clearly viewed as the white Dharma conch. How does it appear as the conch? Ogen Tsemo where the Zangdokpalri is located is the head part of the conch. The rocky cliff of Taktshang is the body of the conch. The foothill of the cliff is the tail of the conch. The Senge cave is seen as the end of the conch’s face. In addition to this, all the mountains to its right and left also bear the shape of a white dharma conch. Today why Paro Taktshang has become so popular in the world is all because of this conch-like topography. [Conch represents auspicious fame in Buddhism].

#### **4) Appearance of Tiger, Dorje Drolod's ride**

When we look from Samtsham Chorten or from Ramthangkha, we can see the image of a savage Tiger, Guru Dorje Drolod's ride, at the feet of the Taktshang's cliff. Here some visionary people have even noticed the vivid image of the Thuenpa Puenzhi, the four harmonious friends. However, I as a researcher, could not trace more than the image of an elephant at the waist of the mountain.

#### **5) Taktshang cliff seen as the Bhaga of a dakini**

Also, according to the elderly visionary people and their narratives, the Bumthrag Mountain represent the upper torso of a dakini. The hill on which the old Zangdokpalri temple is located is the dakini's right knee while the hill of Odsel Gang is her left knee. And the central mountain is seen as her private part - Bhaga. All these wonder - striking features are clearly visible.

However, all these visions are seen mainly based upon the individual's confidence, faith, devotion and reverence. In the words of the former Vidyadharas, it is stated:

80,000 great sacred places and thousands of  
minor sacred places,  
All that which bear infinite wonders, have  
although been identified by the Buddha,  
Yet their greater and lesser blessings are all  
dependent upon one's own mind.  
In case our private perceptions are impure, lack  
faith, and devotion,  
Everyone will see nothing more than earth and  
stones at all times!

Hence, just as it is said so, it is critical for each one of us to train in obtaining the pure perceptions.

Note: The accounts that I have provided in the

sections number 3 to 5 are not mentioned by former Vidyadharas. They are mostly my observations that I have made after studying the topography of Taktshang from various places and angles located at a distance in the front of Taktshang. Thus, whatever, that is possible to see through our ordinary eyes, I have presented here in black and white as a seed to trigger curiosity in the minds of the sacred place hunters from both in and outside the country of Bhutan.

**d. The values of Paro Taktshang**

**1) Duration of Guru's sojourn and concealment of treasures at Paro Taktshang**

If I present the account of Paro Taktshang in nutshell, in his *Chronicles of Golden Rosary* (bka' thang gser phreng ma), Guru Rinpoche says, "Four months at Paro Taktshang." Hence, Paro Taktshang is a very special sacred place where Guru Rinpoche spent four months, concealed many dharma and wealth treasures, and granted his blessings.

This statement can be understood through the following prophetic statement given by Terton Drukda Dorje as thus:

In the Senge Mountain of Paro Taktshang in the south, [there are]:  
The treasure bearing the heart-essence of the 84,000 dharmas,  
And the heart-essence of the great Vidyadhara of the past (Guru).  
To use this sacred place secretly is the samaya [that one should keep],  
As [its significances] are tied to time, individual perceptions, and intelligence.  
To the east, atop the *Lhashoe*-like (torma) stone,  
Is the mother, the bearer of the Three Doors of Emancipation,

Keurima, the chief of all families,  
She who leads her partner through the empty-  
bliss experience.

Also, in his versed Eulogy of Paro Taktshang, Gyalwa Shakya Rinchen, the Ninth Je Khenpo, explains the significance of Taktshang in the three levels of outer, inner, and secret details.

## **Section II**

### ***Bumthang Kurje, the second sacred place of Guru Rinpoche***

#### **1) Kurje of Bumthang**

The supreme deity of the degenerate age, Ogen Guru Rinpoche, set his gracious foot in the Valley of Medicines filled with cypresses (Bhutan) at the invitation of the King Sindhu Raja of Bumthang. Kurje located at the Drakmar Dorje Tsekpa (the red cliff of stacked scepters) is regarded as the first sacred place established in Bumthang by Guru Rinpoche. The Melodious Song that Fulfills Wishes—a guide to the sacred place of Zhabje Thang (footprint meadows) of Choekhor Toed of Bumthang—composed by Dokham Tulku Chonyid Rangshar (????-????) (bum thang chos 'khor stod kyi gnas mchog) says:

The one that is enumerated as the first one is  
Dorje Drak of Bumthang,  
I urge the scholars to know the rest [of the  
sacred places] after this!

Additionally, the Seven Chaptered Supplication to Guru Rinpoche says:

On the cliff of Monkha (Bhutan) toward the  
south, he left his body imprint,  
Left envoy statues of treasure for the purpose of  
Tibetans...

Moreover, as the basis for accumulating merits and purifying sins for the liberation-seeking people of Bhutan, Guru said himself that he left many body imprints on rocks and cliffs of Bhutan. This is further confirmed by Dokham Tulku in the guide (mentioned above) as thus:

Specifically, on the cliffs of the Monkha of the south,  
Guru has verbally said that he left many of his body imprints.  
In fact, in total there are a hundred and ten or eight of them.

Also, Kunkhyen Jigme Lingpa (1730-1798) mentions in this Collected Talks (gtam tshogs) as:

On cliffs, rocks, and crevices of Bumthang, so forth, toward the direction of Lhomon (Bhutan) there are a hundred and eight body imprints of Guru Rinpoche.

The Kurje's body imprint is formed upon merging of two body imprints. This is described in his versed liberative biography of Tertön Lethro Lingpa (1488-1553) gter ston lad 'phro gling pa'i rnam thar tsigns bca'd ma) as thus:

Guru Rinpoche of Oddiyana,  
Subjugated the haughty eight classes of Lhomon  
and left his body imprint.  
The body imprint at the cliff known as Dorje  
Drak,  
Two lotus-cap donning imprints of Guru,  
Are merged together, and in this solitary place,  
When I was doing my retreat  
I met with Guru Rinpoche  
And saw dreams such as these...

Abhayadvipa describes how he noticed the Guru Rinpoche's body imprint of Kurje in his meditative state as thus:

In my meditative experience of translucent awareness,  
I saw the body imprint on the cliff of Lhomonkha.  
The shape of the cliff resembled to that of the Chimphu cave.  
On the face of the peace-inducing and blackish cliff,  
I saw you in cloak including its creases,  
I had this audience extremely vividly.  
There, overwhelmed with unbearable devotion and respect,  
Waves of tear drops rolled down my eyes.  
Not able to bear my missing of the father, Ogen [Guru Rinpoche],  
I wished I could arrive upon that sacred place right now.  
This experience of the bliss-emptiness was the summit of all!

In the liberative biography of Selwala Jamgon Ngawang Gyaltsen (1647-1732), the author Gyalwa Shakya Gyaltsen, the Ninth Je Khenpo, writes:

In the past, there lived a king called Chagkharwa in that region (Bumthang). A powerful naga-spirit has caused a harm to the King. In order to dispel this evil-spell the Great Vidyadhara Padmasambhava was invited. There the Guru entered into the Samadhi of taming naga-spirits. Soon after the terrified naga attempted to flee but the Guru pressed the naga against the rock cliff with his body. As a result, rock bore the Guru's body imprint. This vivid body imprint was left by Guru through power of the Samadhi of illusion as a share for the future beings to

accumulate merits. Later this was enshrined by constructing a temple that possessed countless replicas of the enlightened body, speech, and mind, around it.

**2) Vision of Guru Rinpoche and the benefits of retreating [Kurje]**

Kunkhyen Longchen Rabjam said:

On the cliff of the northern mountain, nearby it  
(Tharpaling)  
There is the self-arisen body-imprint of the  
Pema Gyalpo.  
Even if you see that just for a single time,  
The doors to lower rebirths will be closed and  
one will tread on the liberation path.

The meaning of this statement is: On the cliff-face to the north of the Drakmar Dorje Tsekpa, one can see Guru Rinpoche's body imprint. Merely seeing it once is enough for anyone to block the gateways to lower rebirths, and one will find the way that leads to liberation and state of omniscient Buddhahood. Hence, it is very important for everyone to pay a visit to this site with full faith, devotion, and respect.

**3) All the grasses on the grounds of Kurje bear self-arisen syllables**

The grasses that grows in the meadows of Kurje bear the self-arisen mantra syllables. In the Oral Accounts of Successive Generations of Bhutan, Lopen Nyabe Thrinley Namgyal states:

In the past, Lama Drukpa Kunley, the lord of the dharmas, traveled to Bumthang and lived there. When he wanted to relieve himself, he said, "There is no place where I can relieve myself. All the grasses of Kurje bear self-arisen

syllable AH.

Later, Kunga Gyatsho (1722-1772) and Sangdak Yonten Thaye (1724-1784), the 12th and 13th Je Khenpos, as they went on a pilgrimage to the sacred place of Tsari, they passed by Jampa Lhaxhang and headed to visit Kurje. When they reached at the edge of the Kurje's ground, they saw the Vajra Guru Mantra syllables in every blade of grass that grew on it.

Owing to this reason, it is said that during the reign of the Second King of Bhutan, no domestic animals were allowed to graze on this ground. The Oral Accounts of Successive Generations of Bhutan says:

As Kurje ground is visited very often by Guru Rinpoche and grants the teachings of the profound secret mantra, not even insects and ants inhabit it.

Hence, we humans, defined as who can speak and understand, it is very important to avoid defecating or dumping litters in this area.

### **Section III**

#### ***Nering Dzong, Guru Rinpoche's third sacred place***

Based upon the King Sindhu Raja's biography, Guru came again to Bumthang (after his first visit) via Nering Dzong's cave and Khenpa Jong from Tibet. Therefore, it is credible to contend that Nering Dzong is the third sacred place visited, blessed and established by Guru Rinpoche.

#### **1) Nering Dzong is one of the eight great Yang Oen Caves of Guru Rinpoche**

Guru's Chronicle of Golden Rosary says:

Yangdzong, Chimphu, Kharchu, Sheldrak,

Monkha Nering, Taktshang, Sengephug,  
Shampo Gang, Drakmar, and Yama Lung,  
Are the eight great Yang-oen rocky caves  
Where Guru Padmasambhava meditated.

These are enumerated as the eight great Yang-oen caves where Ogen Guru Rinpoche performed accomplishment practices. Also, in the Guru's Chronicles, it is said, "Three months at Nering Dzong." Accordingly, Guru Rinpoche spent three months at Nering Dzong while doing accomplishment practices and blessed it as the sacred place of Guru's enlightened activity. Just as it is so the only mother, the queen of accomplished adepts, Khandro Yeshe Tshogyal, performed the Kilaya accomplishment practice and obtained its attainments.

**2) Senge Dzong is the sacred place of Guru Rinpoche's enlightened activity**

Rahor Choedrak Rinpoche, the pupil of Khenchen Zhenga (1871-1927), told to Tshangkha Rinpoche Lama Norbu Wangchuk that Senge Dzong is the sacred place of Guru Rinpoche's enlightened activity and the latter gives the account as thus:

The land of Lhodruk (Bhutan) is tameable by enlightened activity.

It is indicated by attire of multi-colored dharma costume.

Also, the face of the Kilaya mandala of the sacred place of Senge Dzong,

Is said to be facing toward Bhutan.

In this supreme sacred place of enlightened activity of Senge Dzong

With appropriate yogic practice of the Kilaya,  
If one can accomplish the wrathful activity excellently,

To reverse the war fare of our time is easier.

I said, "The authentic Yogi of the Kilaya

Is you, the most venerable Lama, please visit  
that sacred place!”  
At that time, the lama was pleased and with a  
smile,  
He said, “Yes, it is alright if I go there.”  
The lord Gyalwang Tshokey Dorje (Guru) and  
The mother Yeshe Tshogyal who blessed  
The Nering Senge Dzong as the supreme sacred  
place,  
Use it as the main spot of performing retreats.

The Tamboura, a Lute - condensed biographical  
supplication to Khandro Yeshe Tshogyal - composed by  
Pema Garwang Lodoe Thaye (1813-1899 mkha' 'gro ye  
shes mtsho rgyal gyi rnam gsol 'debs tam bu ra) says:

At the borders of Yagang, you obtained the  
blissful warmth of the Tumo,  
Then dropping ordinary attires you wore  
magnificently the six bone ornaments.  
As you performed the *Chudlen*<sup>1</sup> practice at  
Senge Dzong  
Even the ascetic medicine lord made offerings  
and supplicated to you!  
You exhausted your corporeal body and obtained  
rainbow body of Khechara,  
Your speech was perfected with the sixty  
branches of pure voice,  
Your mind was equipped with Vajra-like Samadhi.  
To you, the achiever both common and the  
supreme siddhis, I supplicate!

### **3) How to see the six wondrous marks of this sacred place**

As for this, Tertön Ratna Lingpa (1403-1478) describes  
in his liberative biography as thus:

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<sup>1</sup>*bcud len* is an advanced yogic practice done by surviving on highly  
nutritious pills made from medicinal herbs and extracts. The retreat  
can last as many as three weeks.

Namo Guru (Homage to Guru)!  
The lord, the king of power, is the crown  
ornament,  
And from the universal form of the Buddhas of  
the three times,  
Has appeared as the Nirmanakaya - a form to  
tame anyone in any way necessary,  
To the feet of the Great Orgen, I bow down!  
I, Rinchen, who is the lazy mendicant,  
At the sacred place of three Dzongs of Nering  
Senge Dzung,  
Where the mother Yeshe Tshogyal obtained the  
siddhi,  
At the time I travelled to that supremely sacred  
region,  
I noticed the six wonder marks.  
The Pema Dzung of heros on the right,  
Resembles a standing golden Vajra.  
What a great wonder it is that this is the sacred  
place to accomplish  
The unchanging reality, the supreme essence!  
The Rinchen Dzung of heroines on the left,  
Resembles a mound of the five precious jewels.  
It is the sacred place to practice Tsalung and  
the method path,  
And where one can accomplish effortlessly,  
what a great wonder!  
The white-cliff Senge Dzung in the center,  
Resembles a king sitting on the throne,  
It is the sacred place to accomplish the four  
types of enlightened activity<sup>2</sup>,  
And where one can fulfill every wish, what a  
great wonder!  
The front hill resembles a queen making an  
offering,  
It is the sacred place where one can obtain  
unceasing bliss-emptiness experience,

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<sup>2</sup> The four types of enlightened activity of peace, increasing, force, and wrath.

And where one can develop one's experiential  
vision higher and higher.  
What a great wonder it is that one can obtain  
the siddhis!  
The Yui (turquoise) Dzong of Nering in the front,  
A river bearing [the eight] qualities<sup>3</sup> flows  
smoothly.  
Its source is naturally ceaseless.  
Here, awareness become fresh naturally, what  
a great wonder!  
This region resemble a lotus that is blossoming.  
It is a sacred place where sky-farers thron  
forever,  
And where one overhears the talks of gods and  
demons.  
It give rise to sadness [toward samsara], what a  
great wonder!  
These six types of wondrous marks,  
I noticed them in these ways as I studied [the  
topography of the region].

Also, in his praises to this sacred place of Senge Dzong,  
Dungse Khedrub Kunga Wangpo, son of Tertön Pema  
Lingpa, says:

Nering of Monkha is like the pure land,  
The three Dzongs of Senge Dzong are like the  
celestial mansions of the Buddhas.  
The great caves that can accommodate a  
thousand people is like the pure Khechara.  
They resemble the union of the sun and moon of  
the Ogen Guru couple.  
The hills on the right resemble a file of

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<sup>3</sup> Water bearing the eight qualities are: 1) pure as there is no foul smells, 2) crystal-clear as there is no contaminants, 3) cooling as it is has a minty flavor, 4) soft as it causes no discomfort, 5) aromatic as it contains fragrance, 6) sweet as it possesses supreme taste, 7) quenching as it does not enhance the urge, and 8) blissful as it benefits the body.

Vidyadharas.

The hills on the left resemble a file of  
Mahasiddhas.

The great river in the centre resemble water  
offering.

The divine junipers resemble the offering  
goddesses.

The hills in the back resemble hanging of  
curtains.

The hills in the front resemble placement of  
ganachakra offerings.

The great ground of Nering resemble the  
turquoise mandala offering.

The dwarf plants *balu* and *sulu* resemble flowers  
that bloom eternally.

This supreme sacred place lauded by the  
conqueror [Guru Rinpoche]

Is so special that one's Samadhi increases just  
by merely dwelling there;

One's obstacles and incidents subside by merely  
recollecting this place,

And if one circumambulates it, one's bodily sins  
will be washed away.

May this sacred place have many wealthy ones  
offering ganachakras,

Have practitioners performing the practices  
diligently,

And have all the fortunate ones residing in this  
place!

May its virtue, in the minds of infinite numbers  
of sentient beings,

Cause to arise the inseparable experience of  
bliss and emptiness!"

So forth are the words that many sublime and noble  
masters of the past have praised and lauded. This is  
why this sacred place of Nering Senge Dzong has turned  
out to be a supremely special.

**Excellent concluding aspiration**

Driven by the chariot of merits accumulated in the past,  
The sun, all sublime erudite scholars, who are assembled here,  
Effectively abandon the perpetration by the opposing Rahula,  
And I pray that we shine here again like today!

## **Guru Padmasambhava of Odiyana (Odisha): The Founder of Lamaism in Tibet**

*Bimalendu Mohanty\* and Varish Panigrahi*

### **Introduction**

Guru Padmasambhava of Odiyana went to Tibet along with his wife Mandarva in 747 CE at the invitation of the King Trisong Detsen (755 CE to 797 CE) of Tibet and established a Buddhist order that was based upon Vajrayana practice developed in Odisha. He brought a synthesis among the Bon religion, which existed in Tibet along with Sahajagyana, and established Lamaism. From the biographical sketches available from the existing documents, it is known that Padmasambhava was the adopted son of King Indrabhuti, the King of Sambala in Odiyana. The second wife of Guru Padmasambhava, Dakini Yeshe Tsogyal, had written a biography titled *The Lotus Born: The Life Story of Padmasambhava* where the Guru has been described as the son of King Indrabhuti of Odiyana.

It is believed that before reaching Tibet, he had visited Bhutan along with his wife, to settle disputes among warring neighbouring countries and to bring peace in the region. He also spent some time in Sikkim and Nepal while en-route to Tibet.

Indrabhuti was a Tantric Sidhacharya and author of many Tantric works including *Jnanasidhi*, *Kurukulla Sadhana*, etc. Indrabhuti was a disciple of Kambalapada (683 CE) and Anangavajra (705 CE). He had to undergo various troubles and sufferings in his early life. His only son died a premature death and his territory was devastated by drought and famine. He and his subjects prayed to Lord Buddha for his grace. As a result Sakyamuni appeared as a boy resembling the Buddha at the centre of a lotus blossom on Lake Dhanakosha. In

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the *Encyclopedia of Religion*, it has been clearly mentioned that in Tibetan traditions, Padmasambhava is known as a native of Udiyana and he is the verily discovered son of King Indravodhi (Indrabhuti). A large literature developed around Padmasambhava but the *Padma Than Yig* (The Padma Scrolls) and the *Bka Than Sde Ina* (fivefold set of scrolls), both compiled in the 14th century CE, are considered as the principal works relating to events of his life and times.

Acharya Indrabhuti was succeeded in the spiritual leadership by his sister, Lakshminkara, who is credited to be a preacher of Sahajagyana. According to tradition and Puranic texts, Padmasambhava was incarnated as an eight year child appearing in a lotus blossom floating on the Lake Dhanakosha Sambal the Kingdom of Odiyana which was ruled by King Indrabhuti. It may be noted that the ancient Lake Dhanakosha is now within the submergence area of the Hirakud Reservoir. However the actual location of Odiyana in medieval India has been open to question. The Dictionary of Buddhism from Oxford University Press says: "Oddiyana is a small country in the early medieval India associated with the rise of Tantric Buddhism." Its actual location is open.

The Web based dictionary Wikipedia says "Odiyana, a small country in the early medieval India is ascribed importance in the development and dissemination of Vajrayana Buddhism." It is conveniently placed in Pakistan's Swat valley although the case can also be made for its location in the Indian State of Odisha.

A few researchers from India and abroad have placed Odiyana in the Swat Valley of present day Pakistan. More recent research and analysis by Nr. N.K.Sahu, Prof. Karunakar Kar, Pandit Hara Prasad Shastri and Prof Binoytosh Bhattacharya have shown that Guru Padmasambhava's Odiyana really refers to the present day Odisha.

This paper will derive a conclusion by doing a comparative analysis of the three areas from different perspectives:

historical, archaeological and linguistic.

### **Section I**

We will first analyse from the historical perspective. From the days of Hiuen Tsang's travel in the 7th century CE, we learn that the north-western territories of medieval India, particularly Nagarkot, Gandhara, Udyana and Takshashila were mostly non-Buddhist and had most of the monasteries in ruins. At the time, Buddhism was not in an active state in Udyana (Swat Valley). Mahayana Buddhism and its offshoot Vajrayana sect was minimally present there.

Contrast this with the fact that the Bhaumakara Dynasty has established their rule from 614 CE to 750 CE in the entire Odisha or Odrisa, covering the areas of Utkal, Kalinga, Toshali, and Koshala. The rulers of this dynasty were Buddhists and strongly supported the Buddhist sects. No wonder that the area surrounding Viraja (present day Jajpur), the capital of the Bhaumkaras, had a number of Buddhist monasteries that spearheaded the Mahayana Vajrayana sect at the time.

Hiuen Tsang's travels specifically mention about the Puspagiri Vihar near Viraja. We also know that there were other large monasteries, such as Ratnagiri, Langudi, Lalitagiri and Udayagiri, which flourished widely during the 7th and 8th century CE.

Udiyana, according to the author of *Pag-Sam-Jon-Sang* (of Tibet) is the place where tantric Buddhism first developed. It is well known through tantric literature that Odiyana (Odisha) was the place where tantricism had first developed and gained popularity; therefore, we can safely presume that it was from Odisha that tantric Buddhism had spread elsewhere, including Tibet.

Odisha was a centre of tantricism from the 4th century to the 11th century CE. The occasion of Odiyana in the Hindu tantric texts such as Kalika Purana and Kularnara Tantra is supposed to be in Odisha. Padmasabhava was a well-known scholar in

Buddhist tantricism which he pursued.

## **Section II**

We will now compare the two cases from the archaeological points of view. The Nyingma Tibetan sect started by Guru Padmasambhava includes tantra, mandalas, deities (both peaceful and wrathful) and Dharanis.

As far as the archaeological findings from the Swat Valley area are concerned, they are few and limited relating to the Vajrayana practice.

In contrast to Udyana, Odisha presents a rich variety of mandals and Buddhist pantheon. Five types of Mandals are found:

1. The stupa mandala with four Dhyani Buddhas flanked by two Bodhisattvas each.
2. The sculptural mandals of eight Bodhisattvas around a Buddha on a single stone slab
3. Four x four Bodhisattvas surrounding by four Dhyani Buddhas with the fifth one at the centre
4. Free standing Bodhisattvas forming a mandala
5. Mandala diagram on the back of image.

It is worth mentioning here that the mandala form of worship, which Padmasambhava learnt from Lady Kumango in Bihar, finds earliest representation in the Buddhist stupas and cultural mandals of Ratnagiri, Udayagiri and Lalitagiri as mentioned by T.E.Donaldson, 2001.

In the Udayagiri monastery, not far as the crow flies from the Viraja Khestra, a large inscription of twenty five lines is found on the back of a standing Bodhisattva. The inscription states that a “Tathagatadhistitha dhatugarba Stupa (a stupa with a relic inside and dwelt in by the Tathagata or Buddha).” The Stupa is believed to have contained the relics of Padmasambhava, and the ruins of it are seen at the spot.

The variety of Buddhist pantheon found in Odisha reflects the attempts to involve the people in the worship and rituals:

1. Twelve different forms of Tata at 178 places
2. Fifteen different forms of Avalokitesvara at 130 places
3. Ten different forms of Manjushri at 88 places
4. Nine different Boddhistravvas (Samantabhadrā, Maitreya, Lokeshwara, Ksittigarbha, Vajrapani, Alasagarba, Manjushri, Chandraprabha etc.)

In addition, there are many different emanations of Aksobhaya, Amoghasidhi, Kurukulla, Viaroohana found in Odisha.

In the Jambai Shiva Temple of South Arcot District of Tamil Nadu, an inscription was discovered in which Odisha has been referred to as Odiyana.

During the reign of Salua Narsingha Dev in South India, an inscription has been engraved in which Odisha and Odiyana are one and the same has been clarified.

Many works of South India, belonging to the 15th century CE mention Odiyana as Odisha. One of them engraved during the reign of King Birupakshya refers to Odisha as Odiyana.

### **Section III**

We will finally note the facts from the linguistic perspective

1. *Srang Sten Gampo*, the powerful and intelligent King of Tibet in early 7th century CE had led emphasis on developing a script for Tibet. His desire was that if a script was made, than Buddhist literature can be written for posterity. He had sent a brilliant Sambhota and 16 other curious seekers along with him to India. The brilliant Sambhota, not only created a Tibetan script but also wrote eight Buddhist classical texts. The Sambhota adopted a script similar to early Odia script rather than the script of Kafirstan or Kashmir.

2. Sahajiya Buddhist Sidhas had composed songs in proto Odia language in the 8th and 10th CE and these songs were popular amongst the Tibetan Buddhists.
3. It is now unmistakably recognized that Odia is a classical language known from the earliest times and the people of Odisha were known as Odiyas or Odiyans and also Udiyas or Udiyans.
4. In his famous work *Jnanasidhi*, King Indrabhuti, a deity intimately associated with Odisha and with no other area of India.

All the above few arguments from the historical, archeological and linguistic viewpoints confirm the fact that Odiyana, the homeland of Guru Padmasambhava, really refers to present day Odisha rather than Udyana (Swat Valley). Researchers have now shown that Indrabhuti was the King of Sambala, the present day Sambalpur area and that his sister Lakshminikara was married to the King of Lankapuri, the present day Sonapur or Subarnapur. Guru Padmasambhava was trained by both his adopted father King Indrabhuti and Princess Lakshminikara. Guru Padmasambhava married princess Mandarva, the daughter of the King of Johae, the present day Keonjhar area and Santarakshita was the brother of Princess Mandarva.

He attained perfection in Sahajajoga in Viraja Khestra (present Jajpur in Odisha). He was helped by his consort Mandarva to attain this siddhi. There is mention in many Buddhist manuscripts of Nepal, in which Gautama Buddha had stated that he would be reborn after 12 centuries in Udiyana as Padmasambhava and obtain perfection at Viraja Khestra.

C.I. Beekwith, in his book *History of Tibet*, has mentioned that King Trisong Detsen (755 CE to 797 CE) established Mahayana Buddhism as the official religion and invited Padmasambhava to his court. Prior to that he had invited Santarakshita to his court and that was corroborated by Lama Taranath in his book. The 2nd century Greek geographer Ptolemy had mentioned the ports of Nanigaina (Puri), Katikardama (Kataka) and Kannagara

(Konarak). The Mananda (Mahandi) was navigable, and Ptolemy had sailed upstream till Sambal.

Therefore, it can be safely concluded that Guru Padmasambhava was a native of Odisha from where he went to the holy land of Tibet and established Lamaism.

## **Guru Padmasambhava: A Profile and His Teachings**

*Arya Kumar Jnanendra\**

### **Introduction**

After the great Kalinga War in 261 BCE, Mauryan Emperor Asoka observing the horrors of the War, out of profound remorse, gave up his ambition of military conquest (Digvijaya) in favour of spiritual conquest (Dharmavijaya). After this Great War, Asoka embraced Buddhism and with great zeal started propagating Buddhism in every corner of India and also in distant countries like Sri Lanka, Indonesia, the eastern archipelago and the Far East. It augured well for Odisha that a religious creed being nurtured by it rose to the stature of world religion having passed through its very portals. Emperor Asoka had constructed a monastery known as 'Bhojakagiri Vihara' where his brother Tissa resided. Hieun-Tsang, the famous Chinese traveller, who visited Odisha around 639 CE, had seen nearly eleven stupas erected by Emperor Asoka. During the reign of Asoka and subsequently Hinayana sects, particularly the Theravadins and the Mahamahisasakas, had their sway. Hinayana Buddhism continued to be in prominence till 7th century CE. Prof. N. Dutta, an eminent scholar of Buddhism, has stressed that Mahayana Buddhism had originated from Kalinga in the 1st century CE. Taranath, the Tibetan historian, gives Odisha (Odisha) the credit of being the earliest centre of Mahayana Buddhism. King Subhakaradeva-I of Odra presented an autographed Buddhist manuscript to the Chinese emperor Te-tsung. The manuscript and a letter were entrusted to the learned monk Prajna, for a translation, who after wandering for eighteen years in various places including Nalanda settled in a monastery of Wu-ch'a (Odra) before going to China, which indicates the importance of Odishan monastic establishments.

Odisha is the cradle of many branches of Buddhism. The

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propagators of Vajrayana, Kalachakrayana and Sahajayana were Acharya Indrabhuti, Pitopada and Laxmikara and all of them were natives of Odisha. Also, eminent Buddhist Acharyas of Odisha have substantially contributed towards propagation, preaching and spread of Buddhism in other countries. Guru Padmasambhava who established the Tibetan system of Buddhism hailed from Odisha.

The cultural intercourse between India and Tibet is described sometimes as the Buddhist conquest of Tibet and sometimes as Tibetan repertory of Buddhism. Most of the Buddhist scriptures and commentaries are however lost. In India, even the titles like Prajnaparamita and other tantric literature would have been lost to the modern scholars. Biographies of Indian saints and scholars like Nagarjuna, Dignaga, Santideva, Padmasambhava were recovered from Tibetan literary treasures. Among them the name of Padmasambhava is the most venerated one in Tibet, Nepal and Bhutan.

Guru Padmasambhava belongs to Uddiyana, which is nowhere else but must be in Odisha. The purpose here is to have some insight on the related historical, archeological and epigraphical and literary works, and to collect and collate the facts to establish the issue. This needs to look into the subjects relating to that period and also before it both in Tibet, India and more specifically in Odisha, which could link and lead.

The related subjects are quite broad and the available resources for reference are also huge. The contents and references are mainly drawn from extensive historical and Buddhist literature.

### **Guru Padmasambhava and his religion in Tibet**

The King of Tibet *Khri-sron-lde-btsan* invited learned Santarakshita of Nalanda University to Tibet to spread the genuine teachings of Indian Buddhism among his people. The efforts of Santarakshita to preach Buddhism in Tibet, to establish the doctrines of Ten Virtues (Paramitas) and the Chain of Causal Phenomena (Protitya-samutpada) failed. He then recommended to the King to invite Pronouncements of

Padmasambhava. The rediscovered books were all credited also to Padmasambhava. Hence Padmasambhava was regarded as an emanation of the primary wisdom of all Buddhas, because these texts had been declared to have been written by him. In addition to transcendental legitimization, an historical legitimization was accomplished by declaring all famous *rDsogs-chen* masters as Padmasambhava's disciples.

The names of the large numbers of Indian scholars who taught different aspects of Buddhism around this time (750-850 CE) in Tibet have been preserved. Among them may be mentioned Dharmakirti, Vimalamitra, Buddhaguhya and Santigarbha. They taught tantric rituals and mysticism based on the Buddhist Tantricism. But the names of Santarakshita and Padmasambhava are held in special veneration. Padmasambhava was the greatest teacher of Tantric doctrines which spread all over the country. He became almost a legendary and mythical figure in Tibet.

At Padmasambhava's time all of Tibet prospered and was happy; their harvests were good and it was time without strife. All the provinces on the four frontiers were subdued. Both political and religious practices were firmly established. During the lifetime of the king *Khri-sron-lde-btsan* (755-797 CE) the Bon religion was suppressed and the holy religion was made to spread and flourish.

In Bhutan: In the middle of 8th century CE, the Indian saint Padmasambhava converted Bhutan to the Buddhist faith.

The teachings of Padmasambhava - The Eight Pronouncements and the Concealed Treasures: The Vajrayana is arranged in three major parts, i.e. (i) Tantras dealing with the ritual acts, (ii) Tantras dealing with ritual acts and meditational practices equally, and (iii) Tantras for the spiritual transformation. The above third part (Tantras for the spiritual transformation) is again sub-divided into three parts, viz. (a) The Great Yoga of development, (b) The Anu-yoga of accomplished meditation, and (c) the Ati-yoga of the Great Perfection. Again, the first one

of the above sub-divided parts (a) The Great Yoga or Mahayoga of development is divided into two parts:

- Tantra Cycles
- Meditative Realization

The Tantra Cycles: This section contains eighteen Tantras in general.

Meditative Realization: It contains practical instructions for meditation and spiritual exercitium. These instructions are contained in the text group of *Eight Pronouncements*. They constitute the eight main doctrines of Padmasambhava.

The Tibetan tradition agrees that the doctrine of the Eight Pronouncements was brought by Padmasambhava to Tibet.

Padmasambhava taught these 'Eight Pronouncements' to the king *Khri-sron-Ide- btsan* and eight of his vassals in Samye, which was then a flourishing hermitage. The Master (Padmasambhava) gave these nine Tibetans the religious empowerments necessary for exoteric, esoteric, and secret *Mandala* of these .great meditation exercises. In addition, he gave them instructions in meditational realization of the divine powers, which had visualized in the empowerment ceremony, so that they themselves could perform the exercises and finally realize the divine powers in meditation.

These eight religious persons from the entourage of the king are included in the "twenty-five religious persons, i.e. the king and his twenty-four vassals". They are counted as the transmitters of these doctrines. Also part of this tradition are the twenty-five Great Mystics, the twenty five Persons Gifted with Knowledge, the one hundred and eight Yogis, who reached the Body of Light.

This tradition of the Section of Meditative Realization is certainly the one which Padmasambhava had brought to Tibet.

The names of Eight Pronouncements: The names of these secret doctrines transmitted by literature do not lend themselves to a meaningful and concise translation.

Concealed Treasures: The texts originally belonging to the tradition of the “bka-ma” were later handed down as Concealed Treasures - the cycle of the Eight Pronouncements (*bka-brgyad*) and the Cycle of *kLong-chen-snyingthig*. Both Cycles were brought to Tibet by Padmasambhava. He hid these texts and made them a Concealed Treasure and thus he became the Master of Concealed Treasures. In this way he became more and more central figure in the Tibetan Buddhism’s Old School (4th - 9th century CE period).

Acharya Padmasambhava and a few other persons who were full of the holy truth concealed for the benefit of future disciples many instructions concerning the most excellent spiritual potency and common spiritual potency in hiding places. They blessed these books that no harm would come to them and entrusted them to Protector of Concealed Treasures for safe keeping. They said a prayer so that only capable persons might find the books.

### **Indrabhuti and Lakshmikara**

Indrabhuti (about 687-717 CE) was a King of Uddiyana/Odivisha (Odisha). He was a king as well as a Tantrik Siddhacharya. He was the foster father of Padmasambhava, who introduced Vajrayana Buddhism in Tibet.

Indrabhuti is the author of *Jnanasiddhi* and numerous other Tantric works. Indrabhuti, a Siddhacharya and a distinguished exponent of Vajrayana, argues in his *Jnanasiddhi* that the Truth or Reality has no objectivity, but, at the same time, it is non-existent like the horns of a hare, but such similes are also used by the expositors of Sunyata.

The Sadhanamala or Sadhana Samuccaya is of great importance from the point of view of Buddhist iconography. The authors mentioned in them belong to 7th – 11th centuries

CE and those authors also appear in other places as authors of Tantras and tantric literature. A Sadhana from Sadhanamala also is attributed to the great tantric teacher Indrabhuti.

In the account of 84 siddhacharyas, Kambala-pa is mentioned as belonging to Odivisha, as being a disciple of Vajaraghanta and as being preceptor of the Siddha king Indrabhuti.

Taranatha (in his *History of Buddhism in India*) writes that at the time of Dharmakirti there were three Acharyas headed by Saraha and his disciple Luipada, and the four distinguished Tantrik Acharyas, viz. Kambala-pa, Lalitavajra, Padmavajra and Indrabhuti.

Another teacher Vimalamitra, who learnt the Maya Cycle from Buddhaguhya and also composed an extensive commentary on the Prajna-hrdaya and a lot of other works, was staying in the court of king Indrabhuti. The Tibetan king *Khri-sron-lde-btsan* wanted him in Tibet and sent a team to king Indrabhuti for this purpose. Against the king's wish, the famous master went to Tibet.

Acharya Indrabhuti, who succeeded Anangavajra, was a king of Sambala, one of the two dominions into which Uddiyan was divided, the other being Lankapuri, which was ruled by Jalendra. Indrabhuti took to tantric practices even when he was ruling the kingdom. He received Acharya Lalitavajra with due veneration when the latter visited his kingdom, and learnt from him more of tantric sadhana.

## **Mahayana Buddhism in Odisha**

### ***Evolution of Mahayana Buddhism in India***

It is apparent that the history of Buddhism after Buddha's death was no longer a history of a single monastic organization, but quite a large number of growing independently of one another in different parts of India. There was no supreme head of the Buddhist Church either to coordinate the divergent views or to settle the rival claims. The session of the Fourth Council (held

under the inspiration and patronage of Kanishka in about 100 CE) synchronizes with the emergence of Mahayanism, which marks the first great split in the Buddhist Church and its fundamental doctrines. It did not assume any definite shape until about the beginning of the Christian era. Mahayana Buddhism spread all over the northern India in the first and second century CE to blossom into its full glory under the care of Nagarjuna, Aryadeva, Asanga and Vasubandhu. The growth of Mahayanism contributed to further development of Buddhism as a popular cult all over India and even far beyond its frontiers. The epigraphic evidences furnish the most eloquent testimony to its prevalence in different parts of India. The Mahayana Buddhism is divided into two systems of thought: The Madhyamika and the Yogachara.

### ***Emergence of Tantricism***

Tantricism was a natural growth among the Buddhists, because the circumstances were most favorable for this. The secret conclaves that grew on the ruins of monastic order developed in course of time into big organizations known as Guhyasamajas. Thus the Guhyasamaja Tantra was composed.

### ***Innovations by the Guhyasamaja Tantra***

The introduction of Sakti in tantrik worship, made in Guhyasamaja Tantra, is one of the most important events in the history of both Buddhism and Tantricism. The Buddhist Tantras were divided into four classes: Carya tantra, Kriya tantra, Yoga tantra and Anuttarayoga tantra. Another idea introduced is the theory of 'Dhyani Buddhas' presiding over the five *skandhas* or elements of which the universe is composed. The five *skandhas* are rupa (form), vedana (feeling), samjna (perception), samskara (impression) and vijnana (ego-consciousness) and these five are presided over by the five Dhyani Buddhas, viz. Vairocana, Ratnasambhava, Amitabha, Amoghasiddhi, and Aksobhya respectively. This is a curious mixture of philosophy, mysticism and materialism, and thus as a logical system of philosophy, Tantra appears to be crude.

**Attitude towards social restrictions**

The Guhyasamaja Tantra sanctions everything. It also asks its followers to disregard all social laws. It lays down: you should freely immolate animals, utter any number of falsehoods, take things which do not -belong to you and even commit adultery. The Vajrayana: The lay followers were more interested towards these matters. It thus combined all forms of mysticism in its system and host of other rituals. This system thus developed into a form of Tantricism, which was named Vajrayana, because sunya came to be designated as Vajra. It is a product of 3rd century CE. It was only during the middle of 7th century, that Vajrayana and its doctrines got wide publicity. The Vajrayana even travelled to Nepal and Tibet. The Vajrayana also gave rise to several later Yanas (paths) such as Sahajyana and Kalachakrayana. All these later Yanas, however, may be considered to be mere off-shoots of the Vajrayana School, without differing materially from the original Yana of the Guhyasamaja.

**Swat Valley is not Uddiyana**

It seems that some scholars have differed in identifying the location of Uddiyana in Odisha. Some identify Uddiyana to locate in Swat valley of the north-western region. Therefore, it is claimed by some that Padmasambhava belongs to Swat valley area called as Udyana.

Padmasambhava's birth and work relate to the 7th and 8th century period. It is obvious, that Padmasambhava belongs to an area which was flourishing with the Mahayana School of Buddhism and also its offshoot Vajrayana. It is also mentioned that many eminent Buddhist teachers (Acharyas) belong to Uddiyana during the 7th and 8th century period.

Uddiyana is Odisha - Not Swat Valley: But this does not affect in any way the idea of identifying Uddiyana with Odisha. The scholars who are inclined to place Uddiyana in the Swat Valley, seem to have depended greatly on Taranatha and the author of *Pag Sam Jon Zang* whose knowledge about the history

and geography of India is open to serious doubt. Much also is depended upon the records of the Chinese, particularly on those of Yuan Chwang. Dr. D.C. Sircar says "Hiuen-Tsang not only noticed the prevalence of Shakti worship in Gandhara, but has also left an account of the popularity of Tantric practices among the people of Uddiyana." But the record of the Yuan-Chwang do not point out definitely that the country of Wu-tch 'ang-na was the Tantric land of Uddiyana. The pilgrim describes the people of this territory as follows: "The people are soft and effeminate, and in disposition are somewhat sly and crafty. They love learning yet have no application. They practice the art of using charms (religious sentences as charms). Their clothing is white cotton and they wear little else. Their language, though different in some points, yet greatly resembles that of Mid-India. Their written characters and their rules of etiquette are also of a mixed character as before. They greatly reverence the law of Buddha and are believers in the Great Vehicle." The only important notice in the record is that the people of this territory practiced the art of using the religious sentences as charms, and it evidently refers to the use of Dharani by them, which was a common superstition, particularly observed by that time in India and in many countries of Asia. Thus, it is too much to conclude out of this evidence that the Wu-tch 'ang-na of the Chinese pilgrim was the Tantric land of Uddiyana.

Many of the Tantric Siddhas, like Saraha, Lui, Savaripa and others who are regarded by the Tibetan and other sources as belonging to Uddiyana, have composed large number of religious songs and *Dohas*, the language of which is claimed to be the parent stock of the modern Oriya, Bengali and Maithili tongues. We fail to understand as to why all these Siddhas, if they hailed from the Swat Valley would not write a single piece of song in the language then prevalent in the north-west of India and would express their religious and poetic sentiments in the dialects of eastern India. Evidently Uddiyana was situated in the east and not in the north west of India in the Swat Valley region.

The noteworthy fact in this connection is that no Tantric images

of any importance have yet been recovered from the Swat Valley, although images of much earlier times, belonging to the Gandhara School of arts, are coming to light in large number at various sites of it. It should be borne in mind that Uddiyana is intimately associated with the worship of the deities like Marichi, Kurukulla, Lokesvara, Urddhvapada-Vajravarahi etc. and as none of these deities are traceable in the Swat Valley, its identification with the Tantric land of Uddiyana cannot be maintained. In Odisha, on the other hand, all these deities are found in large number, alongwith such other images as of Dhyani Buddhas, Manjusri, Padmapani, Vajrapani, Trailokya Vijaya, Jambhala, Heruka, Bhairavi Chamunda, etc., carved out in grace and beauty with regard to the minute details prescribed in their Sadhanas. Images of Marichi, Tara and Lokesvara are found in many places e.g, Ratnagiri, Ayodhya, Khiching, Chaudwar, Banapura and Ganjam, while those of Kurukulla are recovered in the district of Cuttack in a small village known as Kurukura, which is probably so named after the Goddess. A few years back Mr. N. N. Basu declared to have discovered an image of Kurukulla at Ayodhya near Nilgiri, which was, however, afterwards considered to be a spurious one. But two of the images of this deity found in the village noted above, confirm closely in iconographic features to the dhyanas mentioned in their Sadhanas. It may be said that the Goddesses Kurukulla and Vajravarahi who are described in the Tantric literature as the presiding deities of Uddiyana, are found only in Odisha and nowhere else in India what to speak of the Swat Valley, and hence, in the light of it, Odisha may be identified with great amount of certainly with Uddiyana.

Some of the South Indian inscriptions belonging, to the 15th century CE refer to Odisha as Oddiyana. One of them engraved during the reign of King Virupaksha and dated in the Saka year 1385, the cyclic year Nandana, corresponding to 1473 CE, refers to the confusion caused by Oddiyana (Odisha) in the Deccan and the consequent cessation of festivals in the Siva temple at Jambala in the S. Arcot district for ten years. The "Oddiyana Galabai" (disturbance caused by Odisha) also finds mention in another inscription dated during the reign of

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Saluva Narasimha, and so, epigraphical evidences also support the view that Oddiyana (Uddiyana) is no other land but Odisha.

Guru Padmasambhava was instrumental in organizing, strengthening, propagating, popularizing and establishing the strong base of tradition of the Tibetan Buddhism, which was the Vajrayana (Tantric) form of Mahayana Buddhism in India.

Guru Padmasambhava belongs to Uddiyana and was the son of Indrabhuti, the King of Sambhala or Koshala which was known as Uddiyana, who was also a great teacher of Vajrayana school. Acharya Indrabhuti's sister Laxmikara was his spiritual successor and also preacher of the Sahaja-yana, an off-shoot of Vajrayana. Acharya Indrabhuti ruled Sambhala and his sister Laxmikara married to the King of Lankapuri.

## **Guru Rinpoche in Sikkim: The Bayue Dremo Jong**

*Tenpa Gyatso\**

In several prophecies and apocalyptic books of the Bodhisattva of Compassion, Avalokiteshvara and the Lotus Born Buddha, Mahaguru Padmasambhava, popularly known as 'Guru Rinpoche', several hidden countries have been mentioned. Of these, Bayue-Dre-Mo-Jong, that is, Sikkim is considered to be the epicenter and mother of all. The other sacred hidden lands are located in parts of Tibet, Nepal and in the sacred country of Bhutan.

During the course of his exorcism in Tibet, he decided to make a sojourn to Sikkim, the Bayue Dremo Jong. He first came to Guru Dongmar lake at its northern border where he examined an oracle in the lake and found it auspicious to enter into the heartland of Dremo Jong. He recognized the lake as a part of the places of worship of the famous *Dorje Nyima* or *Choedten Nyima*, situated at the northern border of Dremo Jong. This was his first step to the Dremo Jong.

After receiving favourable omen at the Guru Dongmar lake, he along with his retinue of 25 disciples, immediately reached and sanctified the entire landscape, including its caves, rocks, lakes, streams. He proclaimed Tashiding as *Denjong Ney-gi Teu*, that is, naval to all the sacred sites and abodes of Dremo Jong and left his hand-foot-body prints at various locations.

Apart from being the *Denjong Ney-gi Teu*, that is, naval to all the sacred sites, Drakar Tashiding is also known for its universally acclaimed Bumchu 'Vase of consecrated Water', which attracts numerous pilgrims and devotees from across the globe, particularly Bhutan.

Interestingly, at this point of time when the Mahaguru visited Sikkim, it was dominated by the negative forces under all

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\* Chief, Sangchen Pemayangtse Monastery, Sikkim, India

the destructive influence of the Khangchen Jonga (gangs chen mdzod lnga). After concealing major and minor dharma treasures *ter* across the appointed lakes, caves, cliffs, streams, rocks, etc, the Mahaguru, out of his miraculous powers converted and convinced all these negative forces as deities, led by Khangchen Dzonga as the Chief deity of Bayue Dremo Jong and bound them through solemn oath into being protectors of the faith and to refrain from causing harm to sentient beings. He also instructed the Mahakala to ensure that Dzonga keeps up with the solemn bound. In fact, by having hidden spiritual treasures (*ter*) to be discovered in later times by his own appointed incarnates, Mahaguru Padmasambhava brought Buddhism in Bayue Dremo Jong.

The deity, usually simply referred as Dzonga along-with other major and minor deities, are accordingly invoked and propitiated in various capacities and in various forms, the highest being the annual *Pang Lhabsol* (dpang lha gsol) ceremony observed in Sikkim to this day.

Scriptures says that anyone who practices in this blessed land would achieve instant accomplishment. Every cliff, peak, cave, hill and lake of this land is sacred and consecrated. He equated this land as sacred as his own Copper-plated-abode (Zangdopalri). Before departing, he prophesied that he would once again visit Bayue Dremo Jong in form of the *Naljoir Choe Ji* brothers, the Four Superior Yogic Brothers.

In another guidebook, *Thangyig Shel-Dra-Ma*, Sikkim, the Bayue-Dre-Mo-Jong has been mentioned as the most appropriate place of devotion wherein the *dakinis* would appear without being invoked. According to the *Denjong Neyig*, guidebook to all the sacred locations of Sikkim, Bayue-Dre-Mo-Jong has five great provinces and six hidden spots that protect all living beings.

**Terchen Sangay Lingpa** revealed Bayue Dremo Jong as a Mandala of Lama Gongdue (bLama dgongs'dus), one of the three main *rNyingma* texts. He generously

concealed dharma treasures *ter* in these appointed caves and lakes.

**Terton Pema Lingpa** prophesied that the Bayue Dremo Jong situated at the southwest is the hidden blissful abode of the Mahaguru and blessed by the physical presence of his 25 disciples. It declares that the Bayue Dremo Jong with Drakar Tashiding is consecrated and blessed with all the essential outer, inner and secret blessings of the Mahaguru during his stay here along with *Jewang Nyisu-tsa-chig*. The prophesied abodes of Nub Dechen Phu at the west, Lharig Rinchen Phug at the North, Dzonga Tagtse, Hungrih and Tsomein which is more popularly known today as Khechuperi Lake stands testimonials to his visit to Bayue Dremo Jong. The sacredness of Bayue Dremo Jong has been proclaimed by Pema Lingpa as equal to that of *Gyagar Dorje Den* (Bodh Gaya). Terton Pema Lingpa further mention that all the males born in this Bayue Dremo Jong are incarnate Pao, superior in all qualities, and female, a Pamo.

**Terton Rigjin Lingpa** has mentioned Dremo Jong, engulfed in between China, Nepal and India as the mother to all the hidden land.

According to **Terton Ratna Lingpa's** guide book, Sikkim as Bayue Dremo Jong is recognized as the highest of all the sacred places of pilgrimage and practice, which is visited and blessed since time immemorial by great Buddhas and Bodhisattavas like Avalokiteshawara (Chenrezi) himself, Jetsun Dolma (Tara) Dro-Nger-Chen, the celestial king Indra, Chogyal Song-Chen Gompo, the incarnated daka and dakinis, and finally the Khen-Lob-Cho-sum, that is, the Mahaguru Padmasambhava, Khenchen Bodhisattava Santarakshita and Chogyal Tri-song-Dechen followed by their retinue of several dakas and dakinis, devas, dharmapalas, tutelary deities, etc. They filled, blessed and sowed all kinds of virtuous seeds and deeds in Bayue Dremo Jong and hid sacred dharma treasures, known as *ter* including several sacred scriptures-texts, sacred objects and wealth.

He further explain that every cliff, cave, ridge, hilltop and river of Sikkim as been blessed and consecrated by the Mahaguru and thus, one with pure devotion and correct practice would surely attain spiritual perfection within no time. The book further says that the Bayul-Dre-Mo-Dzong houses a number of objects, both material and sacred like the wish-granting gem of king Indra Bodhi, precious and 500 rare wish-fulfilling gems, enormous sacred texts, miraculous vajra (dragger) having the power of subduing all the negativities, etc.

Later in the late 13th century CE, Sikkim was visited by tertons (revealers of sacred treasures) like Rigdzin Goedemchen and Kathog Ued Yeshe Bumpa, who established meditation centers and lhakhangs (monasteries) at sacred centers of Drakar Tashiding and Pawo Hungri. At the summit of Khangchen Dzonga, Rigjin Goedhethru Chen received image of Guru Gragpo. At the sacred cave of Lhari-Nyingphu, Terton Ngari Rigdzin Chenpo Lagden Dorjee discovered *Khado-Khalangma Tantra*. It was here that at the sacred cave of Lhari-Nyingphu, Terton Ngari Rigdzin Chenpo Lagden Dorjee discovered *Khado-Khalangma Tantra*. Rigdzin-Goedemchen simultaneously mentions that the Bayue-Dre-Mo-Jong will be filled with monasteries, retreat centers, hermitages and numerous places of pilgrimage and sanctity, and that there would be 1,00,000 dwellings, 1,000 monasteries, etc.

In fact, the rich heritage of, apart from Tashiding, such as Thragthung Rong, Phamo Rong, Sanga Dorden Dubdre, Drakar Tashiding, Sangchen Pemayangtse, Sanga Choeling, etc, stands testimonial to the historic sojourn of the Mahaguru to Bayue Dremo Jong with authentic and authorized legends and narrations.

While at Dremo Jong, the Mahaguru subjugated all the demons and negative forces of all the classes and directions. He in fact miraculously converted them as the local dharmapalas, the protector of faith.

His way back to Tibet, Guru halted at '*Tsemo Rinchhen Thang*',

the present day Tsungthang in North Sikkim and subjugated one mischief demon called 'Duetsen' who had been reluctant to come under his spiritual domain. He blessed the site with his footprint and a sacred *Ney-do* (the blessed rock). It is said that after having normal meal, he sprinkled a handful of grain on the spot which now miraculously produces paddy in this climatically Tundra Type valley over centuries.

The Medieval Phase: The Medieval Phase, that is, Tenpo Phadar of around 13th-15th century saw works of different sacred Treasure Revealers (*Terton*) as well as the inauguration of the blood-brotherhood between the Bhutias (Lhopo) and the Lepchas (Rongs) into a single entity.

The Modern phase: The Modern phase (Tenpo Chidar) saw the culmination and acknowledgement of different tribal groups under the central leadership of the Denjong Chogyals, the dharma rulers of Sikkim since 1642 CE and consolidation of Sikkim as a Nation-State.

**Gyalwa Lhatsun Chenpo Namkha Jigme:** Terten Rigjin Terda Lingpa proclaimed that Gyalwa Lhatsun Chenpo Namkha Jigme shall open the spirituals gate of Bayue Dremo Jong in accordance to the prophecy and instructions of the Mahaguru and no one is as eloquent and well-versed as him in Drejong Dzogchen lineage.

Even before physically coming to Dremo Jong, he revealed the *Denjong Neyig* in his *Gongter* - a *dharma* treasure received spontaneously in his nature of mind. He accordingly introduced important sacred sites such as the four sacred caves, 109 holy lakes, Dzoenga-Tagtse, Thragthung Rong, Phamo Rong, Sanga Dorden Dubdre, Drakar Tashiding, Sangchen Pemayangtse, Sanga Choeling, etc. He physically visited all the sacred sites in Dremo Jong. Gyalwa Lhatsun Chenpo Namkha Jigme was also the exponent of *Drejong Dzogchen* tradition.

Gyalwa Lhatsun Chenpo Namkha Jigme also revealed the secret *ter* of Rigdzin Sogdrub (rig 'dzin srog sgrub) -

*Accomplishing the Life-Force of the Vidyadharas* - which is a cycle of more than 800 pages in five volumes. These teachings were received by him in a vision while in retreat at Lhari Rinchen Nyingphug, one of the four sacred caves to the north of Drakar Tashiding. In fact, *Rigdzin Sogdrub* is today, central to Sikkimese Buddhism and its practice, which is also universally also known as Denjong Dzogchen.

Today's practitioners and devotees performs *sang* offering in form of *Riwo Sangchoe* (Mountain Smoke Offering), which itself was a concealed *ter* of Mahaguru and later revealed by Lhatsun Namkha Jigme in his vision. The offering of *Riwo Sang Choe* has become a universal phenomenon in the Buddhist world.

Thus the era up-till the 16th century sees Sikkim groomed and initiated to receive the full teaching and its fruition as well as flourishing of the Vajrayana tradition so intricately and elaborately inaugurated by Mahaguru Padmasambhava and his immediate emanations. The following centuries were quick to grasp the heritage and teachings of the Mahaguru, which is so intricately engraved in the life of the Sikkimese people, in their all aspects to this day.

Hundredfold are the spiritual and inspiring traces the Lotus-Born left on the path, from the caves of Khandro Sangphug, in the south, to the miraculous paddy field of Tsunghang to its north. The most important long-term effect is, however, the groundwork done towards a future safe harbour for the gentle doctrine and Buddhist devotees in general, and for Guru Rinpoche's monastic followers in particular. Several centuries later, a number of masters of the Nyingmapa tradition got shelter in Sikkim. They found everything ready for the establishment of the Buddhist doctrine, which was to become a foundation of Sikkimese culture and self-conception. And to the present day, Sikkim is regarded as the pathway to a prized hidden land, Bayue Dremo Jong, prophesied by the Mahaguru himself.

## **REPORT ON THE FIRST SOUTH ASIAN CONFERENCE ON GURU PADMASAMBHAVA, 14TH TO 15TH JUNE 2016, PARO, BHUTAN**

### **OVERVIEW**

Held on 14th-15th June 2016, the First South Asian Conference on Guru Padmasambhava was organized by the Centre for Bhutan Studies, Thimphu and Centre for Escalation of Peace, Delhi as a joint event to commemorate the Birth Anniversary of the Guru, also known as Guru Rinpoche, an Indian Buddhist master. The 15th of June is a very auspicious occasion for the Vajrayana Buddhist world and is of particular importance to various regions in India, Nepal, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Bhutan and Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) who have been celebrating Guru as the 'Second Buddha' since the 8th century.

In every 60-year cycle and lunar calendar, there is an extraordinary conjunction of auspicious horoscopic year and month; Guru was born in the monkey month in the monkey year. That is why this year is particularly significant. The birth anniversary of Guru falls on 14th June by Tibetan lunar calendar and on 15th June by Bhutanese lunar calendar.

This is the first time that such an event was held on a regional basis and it added to the various efforts made to accentuate the inherent similarities in terms of arts, culture and spiritual consciousness of the region. It also enabled people from different regions to come together in order to recognize and recapitulate the shared cultural processes centred on Guru.

A distinguished set of spiritual leaders and scholars who exemplify the vitality and valence of Guru in their respective regions attended the conference. The general aim of the event was to promote wider awareness in the common heritage of Guru who has been a strong aspect of cultural unity from the Hindu Kush to the Eastern Himalayas. In order to enhance this strand of unity, the event was covered by the presence of influential media from India, Nepal, and Bhutan.

**OBJECTIVES**

To promote public awareness of the common heritage of Guru in Southeast Asia and abroad through extensive media coverage

To promote Guru's common philosophy and culture in the Southeast Asian communities with special reference to peace and harmony

To renew the strand of Southeast Asian unity from the Hindu Kush to the Eastern Himalayas brought by Guru

To highlight, preserve and reinvigorate the positive ecological consequences of the Guru's holy places throughout Hindu Kush-Himalayan region

To strengthen scholasticism on the importance of Guru in Southeast Asia, especially in the Hindu Kush - Himalayan region

To promote trajectories of pilgrims-oriented travels following Guru's footsteps in Southeast Asia and beyond

To celebrate the flowering of Guru's cultural forms and expressions

<b>SPEAKERS/GUESTS LIST</b>				
<b>International</b>				
Sl #	Name	Country	Designation/Affiliation	Title proposed
1	Dolpo Tulku Sherab Sangpo Rinpoche	Nepal	Dolpo Tulku Charitable Foundation, Switzerland,	How the teachings of Guru Rinpoche relate to mental difficulties?
2	Daniela Hertmann (Dolpo Tulku Assistant)	Nepal	Dolpo Tulku Charitable Foundation, Switzerland,	
3	Lopon Tenpo Gyatso	Sikkim, India	Chief of Sangchen Pemayangtse Monastery	Guru Rinpoche in Sikkim
4	Khenpo Wangyal Dorjee Bhutia	Sikkim, India	Principal, Sangchen Pemayangtse Shedra	Terton Namkha Jigme, Founder of Drejong Zogchen and Guru Rinpoche
5	Chewang Pintso	Sikkim, India	Patron, National Sikkimese Bhutia Organisation (NASBO)	
6	Jamyang Dorjee	Sikkim, India	Master calligrapher and research student	

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7	Prof. Punya	Nepal		Power Places of Padmasambhava in Nepal
8	Chombay Kee	India	Journalist	
9	Geshe Ngawang Samten	India	Vice Chancellor, Central Tibetan Studies, Sarnath	Guru Rinpoche in Tibet
10	Dr. Bimalendu Mohanty	India		Guru Padmasambhava of Uddiyana
11	Dr Sourendra Kumar Mohapatra	India		Searching for Uddiyana - An Archaeological Perspective from Odisha
12	Dr.Dukhisyama Pattanayak	India		Uddian (Odisha) of Padmasambhava and his Saadhana : A Retrospect
13	Arya Kumar Jnanendra	India		Guru Padmasambhava and His Mission in Himalayan Region
14	Shougat Das Gupta	India	India Today	
15	Bandeep Singh	India	India Today	

16	Dhruba Jyoti Purkait	India	Hindustan Times	
17	Gurinder Osan	India	Hindustan Times	
18	Subindra Shrestha	Nepal	Kantipur Televisions	
19	Rajendra Maharjan	Nepal	Kantipur Televisions	
20	Dr Luca M Olivieri	Italy	Italian Archaeological Mission to Pakistan	Guru Padmasambhava in context. Archaeological and Historical evidence from Swat/Uddiyana (8th century CE)
21	Tatjala Schenke - Olivieri	Italy		
22	Prof. Dinesh Singh	India	CEP	Proclaiming the Truth: The Way of the Buddha
23	Vijay Chhibber	India	CEP	
24	Amitabh Mathur	India		
25	Mrs. Mathur	India		
26	Amjad Ali Khan	India	CEP	

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<b>Bhutanese</b>			
27	HE Tsuglag Lopen Rinpoche	Bhutan	Central Monastic Body
28	Lopen Gembo	Bhutan	Advisor, Central Monastic Body
29	Khenpo Karma Lhendrup	Bhutan	Researcher, Research Division, Central Monastic Body
30	Lyonpo Sonam Tobgye	Bhutan	Former Chief Justice
31	Lopen Kunzang Thinley	Bhutan	Research Head, KMT Printing Press, Thimphu
32	Dasho Karma Ura	Bhutan	President, CBS & GNHR
33	Dasho Chhewang Rinzin	Bhutan	MD, Druk Green Power Corporation
34	Dasho Karma Tshiteem	Bhutan	Chairperson, Royal Civil Service Commission
35	Dasho Karma Y. Raydi	Bhutan	CEO, Druk Holding & Investments
36	Dasho Penjore	Bhutan	Governor, Royal Monetary Authority
37	Dasho Tashi Wangyal	Bhutan	Eminent Member, National Council of Bhutan

38	Karma Yonten	Bhutan	Head, Office for Project Management, Royal Secretariat	
39	Phuntsho Gyeltshen	Bhutan	CEO, Construction Development Corporation Ltd. (CDCL)	
40	Chewang Rinzin	Bhutan	Coordinator, Royal Institute for Governance & Strategic Studies	
41	Kuenga Wangmo	Bhutan	Research Officer, Royal Secretariat	
42	Choni Selden	Bhutan	BBS, News Anchor	
43	Sigay Dem	Bhutan	Assistant Program Officer, RIGSS	
44	Phub Dorji	Bhutan	Research Analyst, Royal Secretariat	
45	Nidup Dorji	Bhutan	Vice Chancellor of the Royal University of Bhutan	
46	Sonam Topgay	Bhutan	Director General, Bureau of Law and Order, MOHCA	

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47	Maj. Gen. Vestop Namgyel	Bhutan	Ambassador of Bhutan to India	
48	Karma Lotay	Bhutan	CEO, Yangphel Private Ltd.	
49	Sonam Choiden	Bhutan	Lecturer, Royal Institute of Management, Thimphu	
50	Kinga Singye	Bhutan	Director General, Ministry of Foreign Affairs	
51	Sonam Wangchuk	Bhutan	Secretary, GNHC Secretariat	
52	Chhimmy Pem	Bhutan	Director, Tourism Council of Bhutan	
53	Rinzin Penjore	Bhutan	Director, Department of Culture	
54	Kinley Wangdi	Bhutan	Director, Ministry of Labour and Human Resources	
55	Chogyal Tenzin	Bhutan	Principal, Kuenga HSS, Paro	
56	Dr. Chencho Dorji	Bhutan	Psychiatrist, JDWNRH, Thimphu	

57	Dr. Ritu Verma	Bhutan	Associate Professor   Royal Thimphu College, Royal University of Bhutan Director
58	Aum Siok Sian Pek Dorji	Bhutan	Founder and Director, Bhutan Centre for Media and Democracy
59	Wangcha Sangay	Bhutan	Blogger
60	Karma Choden	Bhutan	Ministry of Education
61	Kalinca Susin	Bhutan	Lecturer, Royal Thimphu College
62	Dr. Tashi Zangmo	Bhutan	Bhutan Nuns Foundation
63	Dr. Kinga Wangmo Wangdi	Bhutan	Archaeologist, National Geography Explorer
64	Dr. Sonam Chuki	Bhutan	Senior Lecturer, Royal Institute of Management
65	Phuntsho Norbu	Bhutan	CEO, Bridge to Bhutan Tours

**Walk in participants:**

17 participants from The Royal Academy  
43 participants from different schools in Paro  
19 Gups (head of a village) from Paro

## **THE EVENT**

The inaugural day of the event started with the Marchang Ceremony (A greeting ceremony that consists of offering mar – butter, and chang – alcohol). Dasho Karma Ura, President of Centre of Bhutan studies and GNH Research, delivered the welcome note and Lam Neten Sonam Tenzin, Chief Abbot of the District Monastic Body, gave the Inaugural Address. The first few sessions were chaired by Venerable Prof. Geshe Ngawang Samten, Vice Chancellor of Central University for Higher Tibetan Studies, Sarnath. And then Prof. Dinesh Singh, Director of Mathematical Sciences Foundation, chaired the other half of the session.

Prof. Dinesh Singh was the first guest speaker who talked about how Guru and other philosophers like Socrates embodied the way of the Buddha on the subject ‘Proclaiming the Truth: The Way of the Buddha’. Then the former Chief Justice of Bhutan, Lyonpo Sonam Tobgye spoke about Guru Rinpoche and Law. He said, “It was Guru Rinpoche who espoused the rule of law in Bhutan, even those that many legal scholars are wrestling with today.”

Dr. Luca M. Olivieri, Director of the Italian Archaeological Mission to Pakistan, was the third speaker who orated about the aspects of particular importance for Giuseppe Tucci, the diffusion of Vajrayana, the relationship between Swat and the trans-Himalayan regions, and the role of Guru Padmasambhava in this connection.

Finally, the last four speakers from India, Prof. Dukhisyama Pattanayak of Utak University of Culture, Dr. Sourendra Kumar Mohapatra, Dr. Bimalendu Mohanty, and Mr. Arya Kumar Jnanendra, members of the Maha Bodhi Society of India talked about Guru’s relation with Oddiyana. The session ended with a discussion, followed by an official welcome dinner.

On June 15th, in a tribute to Guru Rinpoche, a giant 110-foot Thongdrol of Guru was displayed at Paro Rinpung Dzong in

the presence of His Excellency the Prime Minister, Lyonchhen Tshering Tobgay, where most of the participants lighted butter lamps. Addressing the gathering, Prime Minister Tshering Tobgay said the common and ancient spiritual heritage stemming from Guru Rinpoche is a vibrant strand of unity in the region. “Scholars, media and spiritual leaders from South Asia need to strengthen scholastic understanding on the importance of Guru Rinpoche through greater research and archaeology,” Lyonchhen Tshering Tobgay said.

Mr. Vijay Chhibber gave the vote of thanks on behalf of CEP, where he spoke about how the Conference fit in as a part of the organization’s many initiatives that are all geared towards the “*escalation of peace*”. Mr. Chhibber also highlighted the efforts of Mr. Arun Kapur, Chairman of the CEP’s Board of Governors to mobilise the requisite resources, within a short period of time, to ensure that the Conference was held on Guru Padmasambhava’s Birth Anniversary.

The vote of thank was followed by various mask dances and Bhutanese folk dances. After the performances participants headed back to the conference hall at the Hotel.

Dr. Luca M. Olivieri was the chairperson for the sessions. Venerable Professor Geshe Ngawang Samten, the Vice Chancellor of Central University of Tibetan Studies, spoke about Guru Rinpoche and Buddhism in Tibet. Then, Dolpo Tulku Sherab Zangpo Rinpoche talked about how the teaching of Guru Rinpoche relate to mental difficulties.

Prof. Punya Prasad Paranjule, Professor of Buddhism and Himalayan studies, Lumbini University, gave a brief presentation of the places Guru Rinpoche visited and blessed in Nepal. However, he said that during the 240 years of Hindu kingdom, many of these sacred places were marked as the dwelling places of Mahadev.

Lopon Tenpo Gyatsho, representing Sikkim gave a brief description of the sacred sites, which were hidden by Guru

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Rinpoche for future tantric revealers to explore so that his true followers of this era could once again connect to the wisdoms of Guru Rinpoche. He explained about the four sacred caves and the heart of the sacred place, which is Tashiding, the Vajraasan of Vajrayana (Sangnak Ki Dorjedhan) or the Bodhagaya of Vajrayana.

Khenpo Wangyal Dorjee Bhutia of Sikkim introduced Gyalwa Lhatsun Namkha Jigme and dwelt on the uniqueness of Drejong Zogchen, a great mind treasure of the Guru Rinpoche. Khenpo said, “Gyalwa Lhatsun Namkha Jigme was the revealer of Rigzing Sogdrup and Rewo Sangchoe text, recited by all schools of Tibetan Buddhism, yet he himself remained a forgotten saint of the Nyingmapa world. Even in Sikkim, Gyalwa Lhatsun Namkha Jigme did not receive much attention, although he is mentioned here and there”. Guru Rinpoche spoke in Leu Dunpa text, his Vajra voice “Sangye Tenpa tharu Gyalpar zod” meaning Buddha Dharma will eventually be revived from the border of Tibet, which is happening now. Today when there is renewed interest even amongst the westerners and scientists in particular to understand the science of mind of Buddhism, as a result of continuous dialogue initiated by His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama, it is even more relevant to organize more and more of such conferences in the Himalayan belt to create awareness of the wealth of Buddhist philosophy that our treasure revealers have left for us. More than two hundred of Lhatsün Namkha Jikmé’s writings ‘Accomplishing the Life-Force of the Vidyadharas and The Spontaneous Song of the Clouds’ have survived. His ‘sungbums’ biography is treasure box deliberating on the science of mind. It is time for us to come out of the incubation.

Lopen Gembo, Advisor to Central Monastic Body, Khenpo Karma Lhendrup, Researcher for the Central Monastic Body spoke about Guru’s journey to Bhutan and about Guru in the life of Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyel. Finally, the last speaker Lopen Kunzang Thinley, Research Head of KMT Printing Press, talked about the Holy sites of Guru in Bhutan.

The discussion in the conference saw professors and scholars from the Mahabodi Society of India trying to prove that Guru Rinpoche was indeed born in Odisha or Orissa contrary to the general belief that he was born in Swat, Pakistan. Oddiyana, a scholar said, is in Odisha and not the Swat valley in Pakistan. There is archaeological and historical evidence proving this, it was pointed out. “Tibetans and Bhutanese should move away from the convention destination of Oddiyana” said Dr. Sourendra Kumar Mohapatra.

The conference concluded by a passionate presentation by Venerable Professor Geshe Ngawang Samten saying that the root cause of imbalance in the world today is the lack of clear understanding of what we call education. He said for a holistic education it is important to incorporate the three root teachings of Buddha, good conduct or morality (Shila), mental development or meditation (Samadhi) and finally wisdom or insight (Prajna) into our education system. He praised Bhutan government for their continuous effort in walking the path of Buddha and the philosophy of Gross National Happiness is the only way for a sustainable development.

Lauding the initiative, Dasho Karma Ura said, “This initiative is the first of its kind at the international level and we are thankful to CEP, India for the support to bring all the South East Asian Buddhist countries to Bhutan to celebrate the birth anniversary of Guru Rinpoche.”

Delivering Guru’s message of peace and harmony, the conference sought to strengthen the unity of the Southeast Asian Region and spread his scholastic teachings. The conference also sought to highlight and popularize Guru’s pilgrimage routes and preserve the ecological habitats of Guru’s holy places.

**South Asian Conference and Celebration of the Birth Anniversary of Padmasambhava 14-15  
June, 2016 in Paro, Bhutan  
Organized by Centre for Escalation of Peace, Delhi and Centre for Bhutan Studies & GNH  
Research, Thimphu**

**Program on Tuesday afternoon, June 14, 2016 in Hotel Olathang, Paro**

Starting time	Ending time	Duration (minute)	Presenter	Title of Presentation	Affiliation	Country
			Registration			
1:30	1:40	0:10	Marchang Ceremony			
1:40	1:50	0:10	Dasho Karma Ura	Welcome Note	President, CBS & GNHR	Bhutan
1:50	2:10	0:20	Lam Neten Sonam Tenzin	Inaugural Address	Chief Abbot, District Monastic Body, Paro	Bhutan
2:10	2:15	0:05	Chair: Venerable Prof. Geshe Ngawang Samten		Vice Chancellor, Central University for Higher Tibetan Studies, Sarnath	India
2:15	2:45	0:30	Prof. Dinesh Singh	Proclaiming the Truth: The Way of the Buddha	Representative, CEP; Professor, Mathematical Sciences Foundation; Former Vice Chancellor of Delhi University	India
2:45	3:05	0:20	Lyonpo Sonam Tobgye	Guru Rinpoche and Law	Former Chief Justice	Bhutan
3:05	3:35	0:30	Dr Luca M Olivieri	Guru Padmasambhava in Context: Archaeological and Historical Evidence from Swat/Uddiyana (8th century CE)	Director, Italian Archeological Mission to Pakistan	Italy
3:35	4:05	0:30	DISCUSSION			
4:05	4:25	0:20	TEA			

4:25	4:30	0:05	Chair: Prof. Dinesh Singh		Representative, CEP; Professor, Mathematical Sciences Foundation; Former Vice Chancellor of Delhi University	India	
4:30	4:50	0:20	Prof. Dr. Dukhisyama Pattanayak	Uddian (Odisha) of Padmasambhava and his Saadhana: A Retrospect	Visiting Professor, Utkal University of Culture, Bhubaneswar, Orissa	India	
4:50	5:10	0:20	Dr. Sourendra Kumar Mohapatra	Searching for Uddiyana: An Archaeological Perspective from Odisha	Trustee & Governing Body Member, Maha Bodhi Society of India	India	
5:10	5:30	0:20	Dr. Bimalendu Mohanty	Guru Padmasambhava of Uddiyana	Vice President, Maha Bodhi Society of India	India	
5:30	5:50	0:20	Mr. Arya Kumar Jnanendra	Guru Padmasambhava and His Mission in the Himalayan Region	Governing Body Member, Maha Bodhi Society of India	India	
5:50	6:10	0:20	DISCUSSION				
6:10	7:10	1:00	DINNER WITH CULTURAL PROGRAM (15-item program by Royal Academy for Performing Arts while dinner is being served)				

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**Program on Wednesday morning, June 15, 2016 in Paro Rinjung Dzong**

Starting time	Ending time	Duration (minute)	Presenter	Title of Presentation	Affiliation	Country
7:30	7:30		All the conference participants should be gathered at Paro Rinjung Dzong			
7:30	7:40	0:10	Procession reception of His Excellency Hon'ble Prime Minister of Bhutan Tshering Tobgay and His Eminence Tsugla Lopen Samten Dorji Rinpoche, Central Monastic Body, Bhutan			
			Paro Dratshang will commence rituals for the Guru Dragmar Feast Offering from 7:40 AM			
7:40	8:20	0:40	Participants will lit butter lamps before the Thongdrel			
8:20	8:40	0:20	Address of His Eminence Tsugla Lopen Samten Dorji Rinpoche	Central Monastic Body		Bhutan
8:40	8:50	0:10	Address by His Excellency Hon'ble Prime Minister of Bhutan			
			Vote of Thanks by Mr. Vijay Chhibber		Representative, Center for Escalation of Peace, Delhi	
8:50	9:05	0:15	Zhengshi Pema mask dance by Paro Rabdey in the courtyard			
9:05	9:10	0:05	Bhutanese folk dance by Public of Paro in the courtyard while serving <i>suja desi</i> .			
9:10	9:25	0:15	Guru Tshengye (Eight Manifestations) mask dance by Paro Rabdey in the courtyard			
9:25	9:30	0:05	Bhutanese folk dance by Public of Paro in the courtyard of Paro Rabdey			
9:30	9:45	0:15	Zhanag Nga Cham (Black Hat Dance) by Paro Rabdey in the courtyard			
9:45	9:50	0:05	Bhutanese folk dance by Public of Paro in the courtyard of Paro Rabdey			
9:50	10:05	0:15	Return to the conference venue in Hotel Olathang			

**Program on Wednesday morning, June 15, 2016 in Hotel Olathang, Paro**

10:05	10:10	0:05	Chair: Dr. Luca M Olivieri		Director, Italian Archeological Mission to Pakistan	Italy
10:10	10:30	0:20	Venerable Prof. Geshe Ngawang Samten	Guru Rinpoche and Buddhism in Tibet	Vice Chancellor, Central University for Higher Tibetan Studies, Sarnath	India
10:30	10:50	0:20	Dolpo Tulku Sherab Zangpo Rinpoche	How the teachings of Guru Rinpoche relate to mental difficulties?	Dolpo Tulku Charitable Foundation, Switzerland	Nepal
10:50	11:20	0:30	Prof. Punya Prasad Parajuli	Power Places of Padmasambhava in Nepal	Professor, Buddhism and Himalayan Studies, Lumbini Buddhist University	Nepal
11:20	11:40	0:20	Lopen Tenpo Gyatsho	Guru Rinpoche in Sikkim	Chief, Sangchen Pemayangtse Monastery	Sikkim, India
11:40	12:00	0:20	Khenpo Wangyal Dorjee Bhutia	Terton Namkha Drimed, Founder of Drejong Dzogchen and Guru Rinpoche in Sikkim	Principal, Sangchen Pemayangtse Shedra	Sikkim, India
12:00	12:20	0:20	Lopen Gembo	Padmasambhava's Journey to the Hidden Land	Advisor to Central Monastic Body	Bhutan
12:20	12:40	0:20	Khenpo Karma Lhendrup	Guru Rinpoche in the Life of Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyel	Researcher, Research Division, Central Monastic Body	Bhutan
12:40	13:00	0:20	Lopen Kunzang Thinley	Holy Sites of Guru Rinpoche in Bhutan	Research Head, KMT Printing Press, Thimphu	Bhutan
13:00	13:20	0:20	DISCUSSION			
13:20	13:50	0:30	Venerable Prof. Geshe Ngawang Samten	Vote of Thanks	Vice Chancellor, Central University for Higher Tibetan Studies, Sarnath	India
13:50	14:50	1:00	LUNCH			

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**MEDIA LINKS**

<http://www.kuenselonline.com/celebrating-guru-padmasambhava-the-one-who-was-never-born-and-never-died/>

<http://www.northeasttoday.in/south-asian-conference-on-guru-padmasambhava-held-in-bhutan/>

<http://www.kuenselonline.com/guru-rinpoches-far-reaching-impact/>

<http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/bhutan-guru-padmasambhava-rinpoche/1/698800.html>

<http://www.hindustantimes.com/travel/in-pics-bhutan-s-big-idea-of-happiness/story-4F2I7cyZndzbo46NsgYYBP.html>