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# Exhibition and Conference on **Life and Legacy of Guru Padmasambhava**

29<sup>th</sup> January - 3<sup>rd</sup> February, 2019  
India International Centre, New Delhi





Exhibition and Conference on

***Life and Legacy of  
Guru Padmasambhava***

29 January- 3 February 2019

Kamaladevi Complex, India International Centre  
40 Max Mueller Marg  
New Delhi 110003

Organised by  
India International Centre, Centre for Escalation of Peace and Sahapedia



The exhibition on Life and Legacy of Guru Padmasambhava

## Event 1: Lamp lighting and opening of the exhibition

The exhibition was inaugurated by the President of the India International Centre, Mr. N.N. Vohra. Following the lighting of a traditional lamp and an invocation by Buddhist monks invited for the event, this exhibition, designed to accompany the Conference, was opened up to the audience. On display were a large number of rare and priceless thangkas, paintings, sculpture and photographs, contributed by the Secretariat of His Majesty the King of Bhutan; the Tsurphu Labrang Office of H.H. Gyalwang Karmapa in Dharamshala; Palpung Sherabling Monastic seat of H.H. the 12th Tai Situ Rinpoche at Tibet House in New Delhi; the Library of Tibetan Works and Archives in Dharamshala; and from the personal collection of two photographers, Amb. Deb Mukharji and Mr. Tashi Lhendup.

## Event 2: Inaugural Session

The session was chaired by Amb. Shyam Saran, Life Trustee of the India International Centre. He shared with the audience his recollection of a visit to Tibet in 1984, when he saw the long and arduous route on which pilgrims prostrate themselves every step from the river bank to the great Samye Monastery, to pay respect to the great Guru Padmasambhava. He introduced the Conference

in this context, to underline the abiding influence of this spiritual and historical figure in the Trans-Himalayan region. Amb. Saran concluded by expressing gratitude to His Majesty the King of Bhutan for loaning priceless exhibits and artefacts for the exhibition, and to the organizers of the Conference.

Opening remarks were made by Mr. Sonam Tobgay, Deputy Chief of Mission of the Royal Bhutanese Embassy; Mr. Arun Kapur, Chairman of the Centre for Escalation of Peace; and by Dr. Sudha Gopalakrishnan, Executive Director of Sahapedia. Thereafter, IIC President Shri NN Vohra delivered the inaugural address.

DCM Tobgay said that this Conference on the life and impact of the Guru – known as Precious Teacher (Guru Rinpoche) – was an appropriate way to conclude the commemoration of the Golden Jubilee of formal diplomatic relations between India and Bhutan. This is primarily because this India-born Guru remains a central figure in the daily life of Bhutanese people even today. His name is invoked incessantly by the people, and his likeness is to be found in thangkas in every home.

For his part, Mr. Arun Kapur thanked Amb. Saran and Dasho Karma Ura, and the Ven. Lhakdor, for conceptualizing the Conference and Exhibition, and for bringing it to life within two years of a similar exercise held in Paro, Bhutan. Mr. Kapur

said that this itinerant Guru's greatness lay in the fact that he had contextualized his presence wherever he went, first by accepting the unique identity of each location he visited. His non-confrontational approach to different cultures was unique because he began by not only accepting and respecting the particularities of other cultures, but went further, to exalt them. And yet, the Guru exercised such influence that he was able to leave behind a strong understanding of Buddhism in general and Vajrayana in particular. Guru Padmasambhava's unique approach to diversity makes him particularly relevant for these modern times. Mr. Kapur concluded by thanking the Sahapedia team, as well as Thupten, Nikita and Choki at CEP, and finally the President and Life Trustee of IIC.

Dr. Sudha Gopalakrishnan noted that this was one of the largest events in commemoration of the great Guru – and even though India is his birthplace, it was unfortunate that Indians did not know much about him. She said that it should be a goal to rectify this going forward.

Prior to delivering his inaugural address, Mr. NN Vohra released a special issue of the Ladakh review (Vol 5: On water), produced by the Public Centre for Research on Ladakh. After thanking the dignitaries present, Mr. Vohra spoke of the importance of the Guru Rinpoche across the entire Trans-Himalayan belt, and the central

space he occupies in Bhutan, to the extent that it is no exaggeration to call him the Patron Saint of Bhutan.

The inaugural session was brought to a close by Shri K.N. Shrivastava, Director of the India International Centre, who delivered the Vote of Thanks.

## SESSION I: Sage of the Himalayas: Guru Padmasambhava

This session was chaired by Dr. Kapila Vatsyayan, who introduced the speakers, beginning with Dasho Karma Ura, who, as she put it, was "here with us, eternalizing the voice of Guru Padmasambhava".

In his keynote address for this session, Dasho Karma Ura, President of the Centre for Bhutan and Gross National Happiness Studies, provided an outline of the conference for the next few days. He said that the Conference and its panel of eminent speakers would cover the history and evolution of tantric Buddhism, the impact of translating Sanskrit texts into Tibetan – not only on language and grammar, but also on society – and the implications of using terma literature and tertons in reviving Buddhism in very different material conditions. Most of all, it would look at the relevance of the teachings of the Guru to circumstances today.



The lamp lighting and prayer ceremony

Dasho Karma Ura said that Guru Padmasambhava is the embodiment of the three kayas, as well as lama, yidam and khandro. Although Buddhism already existed in Bhutan before the Guru's visit, he brought Vajrayana Buddhism to Tibet and to Bhutan. That apart, the Guru established the Samye Monastery in 775 A.D., even though he had visited the site earlier. In no less than his second visit to Bhutan, he gave instructions on the eight Herukas to several fortunate individuals. It is for this reason that His Majesty the King of Bhutan always acknowledges the Founder of Bhutan as well as Guru Rinpoche in all his discourses.

Central to the work of Guru Rinpoche is his contribution to taking Buddhism northward to Trans-Himalayan lands – Tibet, Bhutan, Mongolia and other places. This effort was helped by a conducive environment in the nearby mountain regions of India, such as Tantric practices in Kathmandu, tantric contributions from Shaivism in Kashmir, and so on. The parallel processes of tantra and spiritual renewal—Shankaracharya and Padmasambhava were contemporaries, although there is no record of them having met – ensured that there was a great deal of mutual learning in tantra between Hinduism and Buddhism.

Dasho Karma Ura also spoke of the Guru's contribution to Bhutan internally and to its engagement with India. In Bhutanese tradition the terma-based history opens with Guru Padmasambhava

bringing peace between two warring kings in the 8th Century. This is a landmark that Bhutanese take as a symbolic reference to relations between Bhutan and India.

Guru Padmasambhava also contributed to the spread of tantra outside India. Dasho Karma Ura said that outside of Vedantapuri and Vikramshila – among the great monasteries in India in the 8<sup>th</sup> Century – tantric practices were very common. Before formally being mentioned in Guhyasamaja Tantra, tantra already flourished. There was a great deal of mutual learning in tantra between Hinduism and Buddhism, and Guru Padmasambhava was able to channel tantric Buddhism from India to places with very different cultures and traditions. One of the particular contributions of the Guru in this regard was the establishment of Samye Monastery, to establish the Tantric tradition.

The Guru's work in bringing Buddhism to Tibet and making it eventually the State religion was not without challenges initially, but it did succeed, to the extent that Tibet displaced India as the source of learning on Buddhism. Contributing to this process of making Tibet the centre of the Buddhist tradition was a conversion of the cosmological framework, rituals, statehood, myths and narratives of the country. While Buddhist thought continued to be imported from India, this was fused in Tibet with Buddhist learning from many other countries too. As the popular biographer of



Shyam Saran speaks to the audience during the inaugural session



A special issue of the Ladakh review (Vol 5: On water) is released

Kublai Khan put it, Tibet was to become the chief inheritor of Buddhism from India. The northward journey of Buddhism, sustained by Tibet, also took root in Mongolia, in the Himalayas and especially in the eastern belt of the Himalayas.

In taking Buddhism northward from India, as Dasho Karma Ura noted, the role of the Guru as translator (lotsawa), and the one hundred and eight lotsawas, cannot be underestimated. The Samye Library undertook vast translation projects, including from Sanskrit and other languages, over thirteen long years. The translation teams required a large number of foreigners, and also complex philological and linguistic studies necessitating training in the Gangetic plains, since it was recognized that the act of translation is not just about a language but also the culture behind it. The state supported these critical works of translation, of literally a vernacular culture, into other languages. In this context, Dasho Karma Ura underlined Classical Choekyi/Tibetan has remained over 1200 years as a functional living language – unlike medieval English and other ancient languages. It even added to lexicon designations of many other languages in the region.

Dasho Karma Ura underlined Guru Padmasambhava's contribution to literature, arts and architecture as well. He noted that the construction of Samye Monastery in the period 775-789. The design and layout represented the

sacred cosmology of India, China and Tibet by placing the mythical Mount Meru in the centre of the complex. While designed as a library, the Monastery was also a place of veneration and pilgrimage, where anxieties could be set aside for a while. A similar design sensibility also informs the Boudhanath temple in Kathmandu, which was also built by Guru Padmasambhava. All of these attributes reflect the sense of the Vajrayana tradition and sensibilities.

The last great contribution of Guru Padmasambhava to the region, Dasho Karma Ura said, was felt in the area of the arts and terma literature. One instance cited by the speaker was the art of developing concentration in one lakh ways. Terma literature, guides to hidden places, hagiography, all flowed in the Guru's wake. In Bhutan, Longchenpa and in Sikkim, Vijyadhara and others produced many cycles of terma teachings and ritual dances inspired by association with Guru Padmasambhava. Dasho noted that art and sculpture also reflected these influences. For instance, earlier statues and images of Guru Padmasambhava with consorts were much more sparse and with less ornaments, but these have now become increasingly ornamental. Some of the ornamentation is reflective of the Vajrayana as well. Meditation visualization of the Guru is not restricted solely to the generation stage of tantra. This has a very deep significance.

Pointing out that Guru Padmasambhava



Dr.Kapila Vatsyayan chairs Session I: Sage of the Himalayas

absorbed tantras and dharanas from Hindu culture selectively, Dasho Karma Ura said that this indicated syncretism. One example of this syncretic approach was that as Buddhism absorbed Bon, animistic and other traditions in the region, including in the court of King Trisong Deutsen, alongside Vajrayana. Guru Padmasambhava especially valued Bon texts, used extensively in Samye Monastery translations. A third example of syncretism is the honouring of local deities and protectors, not an accident but an appreciation of the diversity by means of contextual traditions. The fourth and last example of Guru Padmasambhava's syncretism offered by Dasho Karma Ura was a Japanese scholar's work on the funeral rites of the Book of the Dead, by the 14th Century Karmalenpa, about how to approach death. Dasho Karma said that Tantric Buddhism has a great deal to offer on this subject, and both Tibetan and Bhutanese death traditions follow the text of the Indian sage.

On inclusivity, Dasho Karma Ura said that Guru Padmasambhava's legacy was to leave behind luminaries of Buddhism outside India, such as his 25 close disciples, who were of very diverse identities. In fact the Guru also searched for teachers all across India and Nepal, and his main guru was Manjushrimitra from Uddiyana. Another feature highlighting the inclusiveness of Guru Padmasambhava was the inclusion of disciples and peoples – including women – from different locations and cultures. This is also reflected in the

diversity of the many consorts, not just Mandarava and Yeshe Tsogyal (the latter's biography mentions how Guru Padmasambhava was able to bring together people). The racial diversity of his followers, disciples, consorts, and translators reflected his cosmopolitanism. Inclusivity apart, the wide social base of his followers – farmers, householders and non-celibates – and the fact that all could become practitioners, and not just monastics, was truly an example of social engineering. This helped Buddhism to remain and flourish.

Finally, Dasho Karma Ura summarized Guru Padmasambhava's impact on peace and security. The promotion of peace has always been considered a great contribution in Buddhism – after all, the Guru had first visited Bhutan to make peace between an Indian ruler and a Bhutanese king. This fact is particularly appropriate, as Dasho Karma Ura said, since this conference is supported by the Centre for Escalation of Peace.

Another valuable contribution of the Guru was to the concept of hidden lands, a concept related to ecology and preservation, since hidden lands combine internal and external peace. He said that hidden lands have many special esoteric qualities, but today, we must recognize these places have special biodiversity, and living and working there is less taxing. To this, Dasho Karma posed a fundamental question: Do we want to see blessed

places as precious, hidden lands, or as “developed” lands? The question should be, which is seen as more real and more valuable, and which will lead us to Buddhahood.

In this context, Dasho Karma Ura noted that in the Nyingma tradition of Buddhism, associated with Guru Padmasambhava and terma literature and tertons, connects us to our deepest potential. This is because it was the least gradualist, and the least restricted to only monastics. In this context, Dasho Karma Ura said that he had always been curious about how Khandro Yeshe Tsogyal was able to memorize, write and hide the teachings of Guru Padmasambhava. In her biography, her feat for writing what she received directly from Guru Padmasambhava and in visionary teachings, was her unfathomable ability to write from memory. Later tertons depend on what she has recorded.

Dasho Karma Ura concluded by underlining the contemporary relevance of the Guru's vast legacy. He asked rhetorically if Vajrayana is a fringe activity, and if not, what can it offer in a world of globalization and “hyper-reality”? Dasho Karma Ura answered that Vajrayana is about seeking pure vision and seeing the world in its true nature, of dharmakaya: once that is done, the channels of the body open to the floor with bodhicitta. And so, he concluded, Guru Padmasambhava's legacy is, therefore, timeless.

## SESSION II: Life and Teachings of Guru Padmasambhava

This session was chaired by Shri Kabir Saxena. The first Speaker was Neten Chockling Rinpoche, whose presentation was entitled “Padmasambhava: The Sage of the Himalayas”. The reverend Rinpoche said that he would select some themes and issues from the vast area of studies regarding Guru Padmasambhava. And so he began by reciting the Seven Line Prayer, a well-known prayer to the Guru that summarizes his life story as told by himself and his followers, which makes it distinct from the over one thousand stories that are told of the Guru's life. In general, life stories of a guru like Guru Padmasambhava have two aspects, as Neten Chockling Rinpoche said, namely, the common and uncommon biographies. Of these, one is limited to our mind's capacity and the other is beyond conceptualization. The Guru's life story is uncommon because his life was prophesized by Buddha himself.

Neten Rinpoche noted that in the 8<sup>th</sup> Century, King Trisong Deutsen attained the throne at the age of 13, and since his ascension, he had been fighting battles on various fronts. Due to his past lives' karma, the King had developed an interest in Buddhism from an early age. Hence he asked Abbott Shantarakshita to visit Tibet. He wanted the Three Jewels of the Buddha, Dharma and



The esteemed participants of Session II: Life and Teachings of Guru Padmasambhava

Sangha, to be established in a monastery, but the local spirits were not in agreement and had destroyed overnight whatever was built in the day. Also illness and suffering among the people made them superstitious and unwilling to get involved in this project. In this context, Abbott Shantarakshita suggested that the King invite Guru Padmasambhava to subdue these spirits and obstacles.

In this context, Neten Rinpoche said that for the Himalayan people, Guru Padmasambhava was born from a lotus. He had many manifestations living in India at one time. Citing a few, Neten Rinpoche said that one of these was that the Guru made many offerings in Bodhgaya, the Vajrasana seat. On another occasion, a man asked him his lineage, to which he said “I have no teacher”, shocking his interlocutor! After that, Guru Padmasambhava realized he must conform to conventions to be able to reach out to people. And so Guru Padmasambhava had many teachers, both male and female, of which the eight Vidyadharas were primary.

In this background, Neten Rinpoche said that on his way to Tibet in the 7<sup>th</sup> Century, Guru Padmasambhava had subdued many spirits, teaching them and converting them into earth-bound protectors of the dharma. When he reached Tibet to tame the King’s arrogance, instead of prostrating himself before the monarch, he showed

the King the subjugating mudra, which warms clothes. As a result, the King prostrated before the Guru in awe, thereby setting in place auspicious conditions for the spread of dharma in the land.

All three – King Trisong Deutsen, Abbott Shantarakshita and Guru Padmasambhava--jointly created great conditions for the spread of dharma. Neten Rinpoche noted that there were those who said that ever since Guru Padmasambhava reached Tibet, the country began to decline. The Rinpoche accepted that this was one way of looking at history since it was a fact that since the visit of the Guru, people became less interested in any violent and security-oriented actions that went against dharma.

Even today, Neten Rinpoche noted, many signs of Guru Padmasambhava and mahasiddhas can be seen across the entire Himalayan belt, these include footprints and so on. Even today, some mahasiddhas live in the region. Guru Padmasambhava not only covered all the teachings of the Buddha, but had also invited many mahapanditas from India, and trained many Tibetan lotsawas, teaching them Sanskrit so that they could communicate with the Indian panditas. The building of the vast Samye Monastery, with its many functions and places of practice, was one of the successes of the Guru. When Atisha Dipamkara Srijana came to Tibet in the 11<sup>th</sup> Century, he was amazed at the collection of Buddhist texts in Samye Monastery: even though



Neten Chockling Rinpoche



Yongey Mingyur Rinpoche

he thought he had seen them all, he saw a number of texts for the first time. As Neten Chockling Rinpoche put it, this was like the “sunrise time” of the Buddha’s teachings.

Guru Padmasambhava’s speciality, Neten Rinpoche underlined, is the terma or treasure-tradition. Since time and situations have continued to change all the time from the Buddha’s era – in accordance with the nature of samsara – Guru Padmasambhava designed the terma or treasure-tradition for it to be revealed at the appropriate time, in changing conditions. This included not just teachings, but precious relics and hidden lands, all set up and designed to help sentient beings into the future. Here, as Neten Rinpoche mentioned, the extent to which this work would depend on how well we are able to follow the Guru’s instructions.

There is a deeply-held belief in Guru Padmasambhava because he is “like a father who is always there for you, from small matters to big things”. Neten Rinpoche recalled that the Guru himself had said that for those who have faith in him, he is always guarding their doorstep. And so, the obstacle-dispelling prayer (barchelamsel) is there, even to help in mundane life. Later, he said it was time for him to go to Chamaara (The Pure Land), to subdue those who might harm sentient beings. He consoled Tibetans by saying, “Even if I am not physically there in Tibet, as I am beyond life and death, I am always there and those who

believe in me, their commitment is to practice the dharma.” Many practitioners since have attained rainbow bodies – a sign of accomplishment as the body dissolves into dharmakaya.

In closing, Neten Rinpoche said that Guru Padmasambhava visited many places across the Himalayas, and to this date, people worship him in those places. The people would never forget the kindness of the great Indian Mahapandita Guru Padmasambhava, for which reason, the Rinpoche noted, it is very auspicious to be remembering him at this conference in the land of his birth. Guru Padmasambhava is very important for today’s times and the future for all sentient beings, so it is very auspicious we are gathered here today.

The Second Speaker in this session: Yongey Mingyur Rinpoche’s presentation focused on the Life and Teachings of Guru Padmasambhava. He noted that the main teaching of the Guru was to connect humanity to its primordial wisdom or pure awareness or rigpa – which is deathless and unborn, unlike human beings like us, who are aging and will die. As Guru Padmasambhava had said, all of this is like an illusion, which we are able to recognize when we realize wisdom. To explain this, Yongey Mingyur Rinpoche described the sense of a dream of having a samosa in the Himalayas, to offer to Guru Padmasambhava, which “suddenly a bird comes and swoops it away”. In this analogy, as Yongey Rinpoche explained it, as long as you



Hungtrampa Sey Namkah Dorji

know you are in a dream, you can recognize that it does not matter if the bird took the offering, and that another one can be made. In this way, the main teaching of the Guru is to realize that life and death are like a dream. To realize this is to be able to realize the rainbow deathless body.

According to Yongey Rinpoche, the main message of Guru Padmasambhava is to realize who we are and attain wisdom. He categorized Buddhadharma into nine yantras: shravakayana, pratyekayana and so on, as well as tantrayana. Yongey Rinpoche said that the Guru had eight different manifestations, which illustrate how he learned about the nine yantras. The main focus, however, is the three yogas.

Yongey Rinpoche spoke of the first yoga, mahayoga as the developmental stage (using the power of imagination, like if we imagine eating an orange, saliva comes in the mouth). There are 3-4000 sadhanas in this category and a majority of them have been hidden in the rocks and elsewhere for treasure-seekers to unearth. As Yongey Rinpoche put it, the amazing thing is that all of these sadhanas that come from one person, Guru Padmasambhava, are simple and experiential. He explained that when we visualize, we see a deity as a reflection of the moon in the water, not as solid being. For this, developing shamatha is necessary. He invited the audience to imagine all the qualities of an enlightened being – Bodhicitta – for the motivation to help others. For this, he asked the

audience to do a small practice: to imagine that their tathagathagarbha and that of all enlightened beings are the same: as he said, “it is not so important to have a form and colour of a deity; most important is to have vajra pride – I am the embodiment of all enlightened beings!”

Anu-yoga is to do with body and channels and nadis. Guru Padmasambhava focused on less and can be dangerous.

The third, Ati-yoga, as Yongey Rinpoche put it, is most importantly a direct connect to primordial wisdom. Our fundamental nature of mind is unborn and pure, like the sky. At the same time, the sky allows pollution, clouds and conditioned things, and so does our mind allow conceptual thoughts.

The speaker recollected that in his childhood, everyone in his village did Om Ah Hum Vajra Guru Padma Siddhi Hung mantras; as a child, Yongey Rinpoche had panic attacks, so he chose to recite this mantra. There were a lot of treasure-revealers, and Yongey Rinpoche had been fortunate to meet them and also to meet reincarnations of Guru Padmasambhava, including his own teacher, HH the Tai Situ Rinpoche, who is the fourth manifestation of his speech. Yongey Rinpoche underlined that there would be two others in the future.

Third Speaker:

Hungtrampa Sey Namkha Dorje spoke of the legacy of Guru Padmasambhava in Bhutan. He said that he had chosen this topic to outline the activities of the Guru Rinpoche in Bhutan, and the uniqueness of Bhutan’s history – as the only country to have never been colonized, and to have a unique notion of GNH to replace GDP. He asked rhetorically how Bhutan had managed to be the only country not to be colonized, and to be the last Vajrayana Kingdom. He also asked how Bhutan had retained such a high rank in the global happiness rankings.

In setting out his presentation, the Speaker noted that Guru Padmasambhava in Dorjo Drolo form had manifested in Paro Takstang. Possibly in Kalachakra Root Tantra and other writings, Bhutan – a land blessed by Guru Padmasambhava – is referred to as the ideal place to practice dharma without obstacles and to live happily. 750 A.D. and 762 A.D. were years when the Guru had visited Bhutan. The Speaker described (with images) the story of King Sindharaja and the oath pillar erected by Guru Padmasambhava, and the construction at the time of the Kyerchu Lakhang and Jampa Lakhang monasteries which are two of the oldest ones, built in the era of King Trisong Deutsen. 750 A.D. and 762 A.D. were years when Guru Padmasambhava visited Bhutan. At the time, Guru Padmasambhava developed many fine teachings in the Nathang area. He also gave eight Herukas empowerment to two kings. In

the Guru’s journey, Pharping in Nepal is where Guru Padmasambhava achieved enlightenment (therefore, in tantra, as the speaker noted, this is a Bodhgaya of sorts).

After peace-keeping in Bhutan, the Guru went to Bodhgaya to subdue tirthikas. Here, the Guru met Denma Tsemang with his tantric connections, whose parents had just passed away. Denma Tsemang was an 8-year old, and so the Guru performed the funeral rites of his parents and then took him along and passed on his teachings. Denma Tsemang became one of the most important of the 25 disciples of Guru Padmasambhava.

On his second visit, the Guru visited Bumthang. And on his third visit, Guru Padmasambhava went to Tiger’s Nest Monastery as Dorjo Drolo – the Speaker displayed an image of the Guru in this manifestation, for blessings. The Speaker narrated the story of the Tiger’s Nest monastery, underlining that Kyabje Dilgo Khyentse, Kyabje Dudjam Rinpoche and many others went for long retreats and practices there. There were attempts in later times to denigrate the teachings and contributions of Guru Padmasambhava, but none succeeded. And thus, the legacy of Guru Padmasambhava in Bhutan cannot be underestimated.

Fourth Speaker:

Khenpo Pema spoke of the biography of Guru Padmasambhava and explained the essence of his



Khenpo Pema discusses the biography of Guru Padmasambhava and the essence of his sermons

sermons, speaking with great feeling and emotion, in Hindi.

### SESSION III: Guru Padmasambhava- Buddhism and the Local Contexts

This session was chaired by M.D.Muthukumaraswamy and it focused on localization of the Guru's work.

First Speaker:

Thupten Tenzing spoke of the legacy of Guru Padmasambhava in the dissemination of Buddhism in Sikkim. In his presentation, the Speaker focused on three main points: hidden terma treasure; hidden lands and hidden teachings. There were prophecies of Sikkim becoming a yidam land of pilgrimage. Tashi Ding is the epicenter of holy places in Sikkim, with many special events associated with it. When Guru Padmasambhava came to Sikkim, he hid many terma treasures and texts across the land for the benefit of future generations, to be revealed by tertons.

Second Speaker:

Professor Lokesh Chandra's presentation was on the topic, 'Prominence of Guru Padmasambhava: Interiorization of Local Deities'. Professor Chandra began by asking the question: From where did Guru Padmasambhava go to Tibet? With this,

he posed an additional question: What is the role of Tamil in the expansion of Buddhism?

Pointing out that he had been working on the role of Tamil in the expansion of Buddhism, Professor Chandra said that "Uddiyanam" in Tamil is equivalent to Kanchi in Sanskrit. He said that there are three very similar sounding words, one referring to a place in Kashmir, one in Orissa, and the third being Kanchi. In Tibetan literature, it becomes clear that this word refers to Kanchi. In this context, Professor Chandra regretted that there was not enough attention paid to what Taranatha had set out in this regard.

Approaching these questions from a different angle, Professor Chandra asked the question: Who was Padmasambhava? He noted that the legend was closely connected to the story of King Indrabhuti – and the title, Chintamani, which has many meanings, one of which is "wish-granting jewel", while another meaning is a horse. So in the legend, King Indrabhuti takes a horse and goes to an island and returns with a child. The further history of this King, as told by the speaker, shows that he did not like the royal life and eventually went away to meditate, choosing to do so at the monastery now known as Nagarjunakonda, in a locality where the Sri Lankan kings supported monasteries.

Professor Chandra clarified that the sacred place of Guru Padmasambhava – "copper-coloured



Thupten Tenzing speaks on the legacy of Guru Padmasambhava in the dissemination of Buddhism in Sikkim



Prof. Lokesh Chandra presents on 'The Prominence of Guru Padmasambhava: Interiorization of Local Deities'

mountain" – actually refers to monasteries of Sri-Lankan monks, who were spreading Buddhadharma, and Guru Padmasambhava got his inspiration from them. He noted in passing that "Tso-pema" only means a pond with lotuses: it does not necessarily imply only the one in Himachal Pradesh! Similarly, Professor Chandra explained that "Samye" means "inconceivable": this shows that the great Guru knew of life in royal palaces, which made it possible for him to stun the people of Tibet with the grandeur of Samye Monastery, which is so rich in symbolism but also exquisite in its craftsmanship.

After being in Tibet, Guru Padmasambhava returned to Nagarjunakonda. In this sense, "Samvara" in Tamil lexicon means "where the Buddhists live", is today turned into Shambala, correlated with heaven. The Guru went to Jambavadweep near Sri Lanka, although the actual location is still not identified. Professor Chandra called for all of these places to be demarcated so that pilgrimages can be started. He urged that people should not remain under the misapprehension that the Guru came from Swat, which is also politically not convenient!

Third Speaker:

Nawang Tsering Shakspo spoke on the theme: The Impact of Padmasambhava's Charismatic Teachings on Ladakhi Society and Its Way of Life. Various versions of the biography of the

Guru were brought out by the speaker, including some that locate his place of birth as Tso-Pema, others in Swat or Uddiyana, while others suggest that he spent five years studying in Kashmir. These versions impact upon depictions of the Guru. For instance, accounts saying he studied in Kashmir depict him with Aryan features.

It is known though that Guru Padmasambhava first visited Skardu, where legend has it that he planted a walking stick, which later became apricot trees. Thus, in Ladakhi folk songs, Guru Padmasambhava is attributed as having given them this native fruit. He later went to Zanskar valley and central Ladakh. Guru Padmasambhava's deeds are celebrated across gompas of Ladakh with ritual mask dances of his eight manifestations, for example, at Hemis.

It is recorded that the Great Master was born on the tenth day of the fifth month of The Monkey Year, which continues to be marked by many special celebrations. Praying to Guru Padmasambhava is said to bring many benefits and protection from many obstacles and dangers. Many tsog offerings, with tsampa and water offerings, are routinely made to him. [It was clarified that sur offerings are made to bardo beings.]

The impact of the Guru remains strong in Ladakh: chanting of his mantra, Om Ah Hung Vajra Guru Padma Siddhi Hung, is widely practiced in Ladakhi



Nawang Tsering Shakspo discusses the impact of Padmasambhava's charismatic teachings on Ladakhi society and way of life

monasteries.

#### SESSION IV: Impact of Guru Padamsambhava in our Time

This session was chaired by Sudha Gopalakrishnan. The first speaker was Ian Baker, who spoke of Padmasambhava's Hidden Lands. The speaker began by introducing his teachers, Dudjam Rinpoche and Chatrul Rinpoche, who introduced him to the concept of Hidden Lands (beyul). Explaining the concept, Baker said that Hidden Lands could be described as more proximate versions of Shambhala and even Shangrila, a hidden Himalayan land. At Chatrul Rinpoche's request, Baker had visited many hidden lands. Many great tertons or treasure revealers have explored the hidden lands, and the speaker linked his presentation with images that he had brought for display, of some of these places in Nepal and elsewhere.

The hidden land concept emerged in Tibet, where Guru Padmasambhava and Yeshe Tsogyal spent the maximum time. These remain active places for the practice of Nyingma and other traditions. Baker explained that Hidden Lands have to be decrypted through meditation and are not just easily found: it requires to be understood as "a visionary realm or experience, where the world as we see it now and the world as it really is start dissolving".

Baker said that Pemako, at the great bend of the Tsangpo river, and the site of the deepest gorge of the River, was the focus of this lecture. He had made 13 visits to the area and had a map of it. In "Liberation through Hearing of the Great Blissful Land of Pemako", Guru Padmasambhava says even visiting the place leads to liberation. Referred to as Lotus, the site represents the body of Vajravarahi (Dorje Phagmo), and it is said women in the area are dakinis and manifestations of her.

In short, Baker suggested that hidden lands are outer manifestations of our innermost pure potential and yet are deeply physical. Hidden Lands have equivalent of outer, inner and innermost secret aspects. Those with a pure vision will see Vajrasattva with a consort at the innermost secret place of Pemako; ordinary beings will see rocks. All the hardships to get there are to be seen as sadhana. Many extraordinary experiences, of others anticipating one's arrival and circular rainbows become commonplace in Hidden Lands.

Second Speaker:

Wangchuk Dorjee Negi made a presentation on Guru Padmasambhava: his miraculous life story and the meaning of his Sadhana. In this context, he said that while the mind is paramount to attaining lasting happiness, it is neglected in today's world. And yet while Buddha was teaching Prajnaparamita at Rajgriha, he also simultaneously manifested as Shree Kalachakra and gave

tantrayana teachings to the King elsewhere. He noted that such accounts of Buddha performing multiple activities simultaneously abound. In this context, he explained that Vajrayana, also called the resultant vehicle, is a way to realize the union of bliss and emptiness. Body, speech and mind are inseparable in this view. It is not for the ordinary people and secrecy must be maintained.

The speaker explained that many mysterious events have not been accepted in modern writings of history. And yet uncommon biographies of great beings and masters contain many accounts of them travelling to Tushita realm to give or receive teachings. For example, Buddha Shakyamuni goes to teach his mother, or get blessings from the wisdom body of a great being or master long after they have passed on for ordinary beings. One other such example is Acharya Chandrakirti receiving from Arya Nagarjuna and then writing a commentary on Guhyasamaja Tantra.

Similarly, Wangchuk Dorjee Negi noted, Guru Padmasambhava was lotus-born, as many accounts have it. He was a great tantric practitioner who accomplished many feats, including longevity. Atisha Dipamkara Srijana, the great master, also acknowledged the biggest role played by Guru Padmasambhava was as a second Vajradhara. He also noted that the Guru's legacy was to leave behind many scripts of dakas and dakinis at Samye Monastery.

Third Speaker:

Lobsang Tsewang spoke on Guru Padmasambhava's concept of Nine Yanas. Beginning by noting that Buddhism is very relevant even in today's scientific age, as it is empirical, and because it requires no dogma to practice, Lobsang Tsewang said that both the big divisions of Sutra and Tantra require great understanding of wisdom and Bodhicitta, as they are antidotes to self-grasping ignorance and a self-cherishing attitude. He underlined that Tantra is the shortest quick path to enlightenment in one lifetime. By using channels winds and drops, a tantrika can dissolve gross consciousness and activate the subtlest clear light mind, which when used to meditate on emptiness, leads to the removing of all obscurations. This is ati-yoga or dzogchen. Lobsang Tsewang said that Guru Padmasambhava specifically taught tantra and conferred empowerments to 25 close disciples who achieved swift enlightenment; the Guru found suitable disciples for tantrayana in Tibet.

The speaker underlined that there was a division of three types of sutrayana - shravaka, pratyeka, and bodhisattva which goes from cause to result and is a long journey of many lifetimes. Tantrayana, on the other hand, while being very difficult, seeks to bring results into the path and the practitioner. After receiving initiation and permission to enter the mandala of the yidam deity from a qualified vajra master, it must be practiced while maintaining



Wangchuk Dorjee Negi presents on 'Guru Padmasambhava: His Miraculous Life Story and the Meaning of His Sadhana'

vows and commitments. Sexual attachment (seeing, smiling, embracing and intercourse) must transform into the spiritual path, so that finally there is an indivisibility of bliss and emptiness. These are divided into outer tantrayana and inner tantrayana (maha, anu and atiyoga).

Lobsang Tsewang said that all nine yanas are teachings of the Buddha: Bodhicitta and wisdom of emptiness are practices common to both sutrayana and tantrayana.

## SESSION V: Iconographies of Guru Padmasambhava- Thangka Paintings, Sculptures and Murals

This session was chaired by Karma Phuntsho. He began by remarking on a lighter note, that the Conference had not managed to collapse and expand the notion of time here, which only Guru Padmasambhava would have managed. This session, he explained, would look at representations of the Guru as a means of accessing his inconceivable qualities.

First Speaker:

Tsering Norboo Martse and Tashi Morup jointly spoke on Guru Padmasambhava in Ladakh. They noted that the Trans-Himalayan region to which the two Speakers belonged is rich in the heritage of Guru Padmasambhava, as well as lots of local gods

and deities, along which lines many social and ecologically-aware institutions have mushroomed. The region promotes cohesiveness on the back of a living tradition.

The Speakers noted that Guru Rinpoche visited the area, and, instead of rejecting the local traditions, he respected and added to them, as Mr. Arun Kapur had said. The Guru's cymbals are said to be amongst the most prized possessions of Hemis Monastery. The area is resplendent with many Guru Padmasambhava sites: Durthod Dechendal in Zaskar; Bragthog Gonpa; Rgot Tsang To Snemo; Phokar, the second most important site of Guru Rinpoche in the area; Skyur Bu Chan; MdoMkhar; Ltewa; Klu Akhil; Snemo; Phyi Twang; and in Leh, at the foot of the Khardong la Pass. The Speakers said that these were only some of the many places associated with Guru Padmasambhava in Ladakh.

Second Speaker:

Gyetrul Jigme Rinpoche said that since he was three years old, he had "lived, breathed, slept, and dreamt of Guru Padmasambhava." Guru Padmasambhava's impact in the Trans-Himalayan region is unparalleled; it could be said that his advent to these lands in the 8<sup>th</sup> Century transformed the region forever. It is the sole living tradition where Theravada, Mahayana and Vajrayana are all practiced together in this area.

Gyetrul Rinpoche said that the great Guru had



Lobsang Tsewang speaks on Guru Padmasambhava's concept of Nine Yanas



Tsering Norboo Martse and Tashi Morup discuss the legacy of Guru Padmasambhava in Ladakh

lived in the area and in the subcontinent for centuries, appearing in as many manifestations and emanations as necessary to carry out his enlightened activities. Yet, a record of his archaeological legacy remains scant in his homeland. There are two reasons for this, as the Speaker noted: first, as in the case of Nalanda, it needs to be acknowledged that Buddhist icons and symbols were likely to have been assimilated into non-Buddhist traditions.

When Guru Rinpoche was to be installed at Samye Monastery, he is reported to have said, "It looks like me." It became the first and most prominent of his images, which was blessed by Guru Rinpoche himself. Another famous representation that became universal, is the one in connection to Mandarava's father where he set himself on fire sitting on a freshly bloomed lotus and in the fearless mudra. Guru Rinpoche's wide-open gaze is resonant of the mahasandhidzogchen gaze. The Guru is often depicted in elaborate clothing.

Gyetrul Rinpoche speculated that thangka paintings may have originated in Orissa. The usual iconographic representation of the Guru was explained by the Speaker, who said that the Guru is often depicted surrounded by 8 Vidyadharas of India and his two consorts, Yeshe Tsogyal and Mandarava.

Apart from Buddhism and Tantra, Guru Padmasambhava also gave the people of the

Himalayan region social and cultural identity. This is why devotion to the Guru is shared across the region. While it is often debated when Buddha began to be visually represented--possibly early on, even though nothing survives today--in the wake of Guru Padmasambhava and tantric mandalas, there was an explosion in visual sacred imagery and culture -- pure vision as the result of a projection of a mind that is primordially clear and luminous.

As noted by others, Gyetrul Rinpoche underlined that Bhutan remains the only Vajrayana kingdom in the world; indeed, Bhutan lives Guru Rinpoche's legacy as seen in depictions of Guru as Dorje Drolo in Takstang, who blesses the land, in Tsechu masked dances that are regularly performed across the land in some incredibly old and blessed monasteries and dzongs. These experiences need to be lived and not intellectualized, since feelings bring experience. Religious and visual culture shapes every aspect of temporal and spiritual life in the Trans-Himalayan region. The real question is how much of this is known in the home country: Gyetrul Rinpoche suggested that this is at the heart of what this conference ought to address.

Third Speaker:

Tashi Lhendup gave a detailed presentation on the iconography of Guru Padmasambhava, as seen from Thangka drawings and paintings, and from statue-making. He used images collated from many famous sites and Dzongs across Bhutan, to



Gyetrul Jigme Rinpoche addresses the audience

illustrate his presentation.

## SESSION VI: Legacy of Guru Padmasambhava- Rituals and Mandala Drawings

This session was chaired by Rajiv Mehrotra. The first speaker was Khenpo Lobsang Tsultrim Bhutia, who spoke of the concept of ritual and mandala in the Vajrayana system. He began his presentation with mantra recitation of a verse that summarizes the teaching of the Buddha. Thereafter, he said that he would focus on the historical figure, Guru Pema Jungne. He noted that Taranatha states that Guru Pema Jungne was born in Zahor, in the Swat Valley, although there had been a lot of debate here over his birthplace.

In Vajrayana, Lobsang Tsultrim Bhutia noted, the inner object of refuge is the Guru; he is inseparable from yidam and one's own nature of mind. Generating the mind of enlightenment, both aspiring and engaging, after the four immeasurables, is also very important in Vajrayana practice. He advised visualizing one's body as that of one's yidam; one's speech as their speech and one's own mind as their mind. In this manner, he said, there are many aspects peculiar to Vajrayana, such as outer, inner and secret offerings. Going further, Lobsang Tsultrim Bhutia noted that the Mandala contains deep meaning: it is a three-dimensional

palace where the yidam resides. He noted that the Hevajra Tantra makes a mention of the mandala's ultimate meaning of bliss and emptiness, and various kinds of mandalas are suited to different types of capacities of each individual.

Second Speaker:

Karma Phuntsho spoke of Guru Rinpoche as an object of worship and realization. He said at the outset that his lecture would not be given as a practitioner of Guru Padmasambhava, but through images, and by problematizing issues as a historian. Through these means, he would try to bring the Guru to life before the audience.

While it has been recognized that art, architecture, society and polity were all promoted by Guru Rinpoche in Bhutan and the Trans-Himalayan region, a historian has had to ask himself or herself a difficult question – who or what is Guru Rinpoche? Was he a historical figure, who really came to this region in the 8<sup>th</sup> Century? Early historical evidence suggests he came in the 10<sup>th</sup> Century – not as the grand figure invited by the King, but as someone who came and upset the conservative order and was asked to leave. Others follow, so that by the 10<sup>th</sup> Century, records exist of the Guru having visited Bhutan.

The other question that is to be asked is when he was mythologized. Karma Phuntsho said that earlier, it was thought it was with the treasure

teachings. However, the Dunhuang manuscripts, which date back to the 10<sup>th</sup> Century, mention Guru Rinpoche bringing the Vajrakilaya teachings from Pharping to Tibet. And there are others to testify to his presence in the region. In this case, Karma Phuntsho asked the question: If he had the stature he is given today, why don't Central Tibet's official records mention the Guru? Answering this, he noted that modern scholars suggest that the Guru may have lived in the border areas and in southern Tibet. He speculated that Nyangral Nyima Ozer, the main biographer of Guru Padmasambhava, may have played a key role in elevating and mythologizing him in the Central Tibetan Court literature. Thereafter, Guru Chowang introduced the Seven-Line Prayer, as well as the eight manifestations, and after Guru Chowang came many treasure revealers.

Karma Phuntsho also noted that there was also a process of transforming Guru Padmasambhava into a principle and a symbol of all Buddhas of the three times; as an embodiment of the three jewels, three roots and all Buddhas; the epitome of all objects of refuge; and the nature of one's own mind. Thus there was a clear movement of Guru Padmasambhava from being a divinity to being a universal principle. Karma Phuntsho said that this is best seen in the writings of Mipham and Dudjam Rinpoche – whose analogy is best described as the immutable sky – with all descriptions, manifestations, visual and other representations

merely pointing out this principle.

Third Speaker:

Pranshu Samdarshi spoke on, "Distinctive forms of Guru Padmasambhava: An Indic Mahasiddha Prototype in the Tibetan Cultural Landscape." To start with, he noted that the only text provided to scholars at Delhi University is that of Rahul Sanskritayan, who relegates Guru Padmasambhava to one paragraph in his book on Buddhism and says Nyingmapas concocted many stories to mythologize him. Samdarshi noted that recently, a scholar at the SOAS had also said that before the 12-13<sup>th</sup> Centuries, no representation is to be found of Guru Padmasambhava in Himalayan monuments -- a colonial legacy, he said, where "tantra is the stepchild for both Hinduism and Buddhism."

Samdarshi also noted that Guru Padmasambhava is not represented in the 18 Nalanda Masters, and neither are his works included in the Tengyur and Kangyur. Literary and archeological records of him also do not exist, and those records are required by mainstream historians. Vimalamitra existed 300 years apart; Samdarshi suggested that he could possibly have taught in Nalanda University although there is no record of that. Citing Yeshe Tsogyal biography, Samdarshi notes that she quotes him as saying "he has no father or mother, no teacher and so on". Thus, he concluded that Guru Rinpoche can be best portrayed as a prototype of the mahasiddha, though he does not appear in



Tashi Lhendhup discusses the iconography of Guru Rinpoche

standard accounts of the 84 mahasiddhas.

## VALEDICTORY SESSION: Lopen Samten Dorji

The valedictory session address was delivered by His Eminence Samten Dorji, who was described by Dasho Karma Ura in his introduction as the Jewel of the Sangha. His Eminence underlined the resonance of the name of the meeting room--Kamala Devi--with the theme of Guru Padmasambhava.

Referring to Guru Rinpoche with regard to the Bhutanese people, His Eminence said that while it was for historians to debate whether Guru Padmasambhava visited Bhutan twice or thrice, in reality, being a *Nirmankaya* manifestation, ordinary people cannot fathom the enlightened activities of such a being. The great Guru proclaimed that his purpose was to serve sentient beings, which is what he does: the Guru can be anywhere he is needed. In this regard, His Eminence Samten Dorji noted that Guru Rinpoche had visited at least 51 retreat places across the land, leaving many signs and blessings for future seekers. He hid treasures of dharma and of wealth for others to reveal in times to come. Beyond that, Guru Padmasambhava's teachings can be classified into distant oral transmission – the short *terma* transmission and pure vision transmission. In this regard, His Eminence noted

that the concept of lineage does not refer to storing such teachings as texts in a library, but as living traditions passed down from Guru to disciple in unbroken lines. These traditions also include Guru Padmasambhava's prophecies, which include the rise of Bhutan's leaders and its Royal family.

His Eminence noted with regard to the practice of the Guru's teachings in the Dzongs of Bhutan, the most important aspect is that of *Vajrakilaya* being practiced daily at around 7-8 pm every day for the past 400 years. There are also many ceremonies and *drupchens* for world peace and Bhutan's peace. And, he noted that there are also many practitioners of Guru Padmasambhava's teachings, including layfolk, monastics and retreatants.

In Bhutan, His Eminence noted, in the domestic sphere, three days after a baby is born, a ceremony is held to cleanse the baby as well as the home, invoking the blessings of Guru Padmasambhava. From that moment on, the household has taken refuge in Guru Padmasambhava and their life and death are dominated by the deity. Also, *barchelamsel* or joined recitation of 100-million *vajra guru mantra* are practiced to remove obstacles on a regular basis. After death, ceremonies are performed that are all related in one way or another to Guru Padmasambhava. Thus, His Eminence noted, the Guru Rinpoche plays a vital role in the daily life of all people in Bhutan.



The Most Venerable Samten Dorji delivers the valedictory speech

With that message, His Eminence Samten Dorji closed the session with a prayer.

Vote of Thanks: It was delivered by Shri K.N. Shrivastava, Director of IIC. He thanked Mr. Arun Kapur of CEP, Sudha Gopalakrishnan of Sahapedia and Amb. Shyam Saran, Life Trustee of IIC, as well as all the participants and the audience for their presence.



Khenpo Lobsang Tsultrim Bhutia presents on "The Concept of Ritual and Mandala in the Vajrayana System"

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Thangka: (tib: thang ka) Tibetan Buddhist hanging scroll painting.

Terma: (tib: gter ma) Treasures hidden by Padmasambhava in the natural world to be discovered by a Tertön (treasure discoverer) at the appropriate time. Terma or Treasure texts from an important part of the Nyingmapa Buddhist Canon.

Tertön: (tib: gter ston) Treasure Discoverer. A realized practitioner who unearths Terma (Treasures) hidden in the natural world by Padmasambhava.

Three Kayas: (skt: trikāya) The *trikāya* or ‘three bodies’ doctrine refers to the Mahāyāna Buddhist classification of Buddhahood into three bodies or spheres of activity: the *nirmāṇa-kāya* or *body of emanation*, the *saṃbhoga-kāya* or *body of enjoyment*, and the *dharmakāya* or *body of truth*.

Lama: (tib: bla ma) A teacher/master in the Tibetan Buddhist tradition.

Yidam: (tib: yi dam) A tutelary meditation deity.

Khandro: (tib: mkha’ ’gro (m) or mkha’ ’gro ma (f), skt: ḍāka (m) or ḍākiṇī (f)) A class of male or female enlightened spirits.

Herukas: (skt: heruka) A class of wrathful meditation deities.

Guhyasamāja Tantra: (skt: guhyasamāja-tantra) The Guhyasamāja tantra is an important scripture of Tantric or Vajrayāna Buddhism.

Tantra: (skt: tantra) In the Buddhist context, Tantra can refer to either the Tantric or Vajrayāna path in general or to the texts that delineate that particular path (i.e. the guhyasamāja tantra)

Lotsawa: (tib: lo tsa ba) The term for the Tibetan translators of Buddhist canonical texts from Sanskrit to Tibetan.

Choekyi: (tib: chos skad) Literally “*language of the dharma*.” The Classical Tibetan Language in which all Tibetan Buddhist texts are composed and which continues to be used as a medium of Buddhist transmission.

Dharanas: (skt: dhāraṇa) Collections of Buddhist chants, incantations, and mantras.

Dharmakāya: (skt: dharmakāya) The Body of Truth of the Buddha (see three kāya doctrine above).

Bodhicitta: (skt: bodhicitta) The Awakening Mind or the Mind of Enlightenment. In Mahāyāna Buddhism, bodhicitta is understood as the altruistic mind that strives towards Buddhahood for the benefit of all sentient beings.

Dharma: (skt: dharma) The body of teaching of Buddhism.

Saṅgha: (skt: saṅgha) The Buddhist community.

Vajra-asana: (skt: vajra-āsana) The Buddha’s Seat of Enlightenment, below the Bodhi tree in Bodhgaya.

Vidyadhara: (skt: vidyādhara) An accomplished tantric practitioner or yogi.

Mudra: (skt: mūdra) A symbolic ritual gesture.

Mahasiddha: (skt: mahāsiddha) A group of realized Tantric adepts understood to have founded the various lineages of Vajrayana Buddhism.

Mahapandita/Pandita: (skt: mahāpaṇḍita) Great Pandits or scholars skilled in the five sciences: logic, grammar, medicine, dharma and arts.

Barche Lamsel: (tib: bar chas lam gsal) A supplication prayer to Padmasambhava believed to clear obstacles on the path.

Chamaara: (skt. chamara) The name of the subcontinent lying to the southwest of the continent of Jambudvīpa (our world) according to Buddhist cosmology. The Glorious Copper-Colored Mountain (tib: zangs mdog dpal ri), the Buddha-field of Padmasambhava, is located there.

Rigpa: (tib: rig pa) Primordial wisdom or awareness. The recognition of one’s innate primordial state or Buddha-nature.

Samosa: An Indian savoury deep-fried pastry stuffed with potato and vegetables.

Buddhadharma: (skt: buddha-dharma) The teaching of the Buddha.

Yanas: (skt: yāna) Vehicle or path towards Buddhahood (ex: Mahāyāna - the Great Path or Vehicle)

Shravakayana: (skt: śrāvakayāna) The path of śrāvakas, the early disciples of the Buddha.

Pratyekayana: (skt: pratyekayāna) The solitary or individual path. This refers to the path of those who achieve liberation by their own means and do not teach it to others.

Tantrayana: (skt: tantrayāna) The path of tantra, also known as the Vajrayāna (the adamant path).

Yoga: (skt: yoga) Buddhist practice.

Maha-yoga (skt: mahāyoga) A particular class of Vajrayāna Buddhist practice focusing on visualization.

Sadhana: (skt: sādhana) In the Vajrayāna Buddhist context, a ritualized liturgy containing the instructions to carry a particular practice.

Shamatha: (skt: śamatha) “Calm-abiding” meditation focused on developing one-pointed concentration.

Tathagathagarbha: (skt: tathāgatagarbha) The Buddha-nature existent in all sentient beings.

Vajra pride: “Indestructible pride.” The state of knowing that one reaches through direct understanding of teachings and the confidence that arises from this knowledge.

Anu-yoga: (skt: anuyoga) A particular class of Vajrayāna Buddhist practice focusing on the manipulation of one's inner channels (nāḍī), wind energies (prāṇa) and drop essences (bindu).

Nadis: (skt: nāḍī) Subtle channels in the body through which circulate winds (prāṇa) and drop essences (bindu).

Ati-yoga: (skt: atiyoga) The highest class of Vajrayāna Buddhist practice synonymous with the teaching of Dzogchen (tib: rdzogs chen) or “Great Perfection,” focusing on the realization of the nature of reality.

Om Ah Hum Vajra Guru Padma Siddhi Hung: The mantra of Padmasambhava.

Dorje Drolo: (tib: rdo rje gro lod) One of the eight manifestations of Padmasambhava in wrathful form and riding a tigress.

Kalachakra Root Tantra: (skt: kālacakra-tantra) The Kālacakra tantra is an important scripture of Tantric or Vajrayāna Buddhism.

Tirthikas: (skt: tīrthika) A proponent of non-Buddhist views.

Uddiyanam: Tamil term referring to Kanchi.

Kanchi: (skt: kānchi) An ancient city in the modern Indian state of Tamil Nadu.

Chintamani: (skt: cintāmaṇi) A wish-fulfilling jewel.

Tsog: (tib: tshogs) An important Vajrayāna practice of offering and purification.

Tsampa: (tib: tsam pa) Roasted barley flour.

Sur: (tib: gsur) Sur offerings consist of burning flour mixed with various fragrant substances such that the smoke produced is offered to beings, including non-material beings.

Bardo: (tib: bar do) The intermediary space between death and rebirth.

Beyul: (tib: sbas yul) Hidden lands conducive to Buddhist practice consecrated by Padmasambhava.

Shambala: (skt: shambhala) A mythical kingdom ruled over by Maitreya, the future Buddha, according to the Kālacakra tantra.

Shangrila: A term coined by British author James Hilton in his 1933 novel *Lost Horizon*, to refer to a fictional utopian and mystical valley hidden in the Himalaya.

Nyingma: (tib: rnying ma) The oldest of the four schools of Tibetan Buddhism.

Vajravarahi: (skt: vajravarāhi) Vajravarāhi, or Dorje Pakmo (rdo rje phag mo) in Tibetan, is a wrathful manifestation of the female Buddha and ḍākiṇī Vajrayogini.

Dakinis: (Same as “*khandro*” entry above). A class of male or female enlightened spirits.

Vajrasattva: (skt: vajrasattva) Vajrasattva, or Dorje Sempa (rdo rje sems dpa') in Tibetan, is a bodhisatt-

va in the Mahāyāna Buddhist tradition associated to practices of purification.

Prajnaparamita: (skt: prajñāpāramitā) Prajñāpāramitā, or The Perfection of Wisdom, refers to the Mahāyāna Buddhist teaching on the emptiness (śūnyatā) of all phenomena.

Shree Kalachakra: (skt: śrī kālacakra) The principal meditational deity of the Kālacakra tantra.

Vajradhara: (skt: vajradhara) Vajradhara, or Dorje Chang (rdo rje 'chang) in Tibetan, refers to the primordial Buddha, the essence of the historical Buddha's realization and enlightenment.

Dakas: (Same as “*khandro*” entry above). A class of male or female enlightened spirits.

Sutra: (skt: sūtra) Canonical Buddhist scriptures recording the words of Buddha Śākyamuni.

Tantrika: (skt: tantrika) A practitioner of tantra.

Dzogchen: (tib: rdzogs chen) Dzogchen, or “Great Perfection,” refers to the teaching and realization of the ultimate view of Atiyoga in the Nyingmapa school of Tibetan Buddhism.

The highest class of Vajrayāna Buddhist practice synonymous with the teaching of Dzogchen (tib: rdzogs chen) or “Great Perfection,” focusing on the realization of the nature of reality.

Sutrayana: (skt: sūtrayāna) The Buddhist path delineated in the sūtras.

Shravaka: (Same as “Shravakayana” entry above). The path of śrāvakas, the early disciples of the Buddha.

Pratyeka: (Same as “Pratyekayana” entry above). The solitary or individual path. This refers to the path of those who achieve liberation by their own means and do not teach it to others.

Bodhisattva: (skt: bodhisattva) Mahāyāna Buddhist practitioner aspiring towards Buddhahood for the sake of all sentient beings.

Mandala: (skt: maṇḍala) A ritual diagram, chart or ritual pattern symbolizing the cosmos. In Vajrayāna Buddhism, maṇḍalas typically represent a particular Buddha's field of activity.

Mahasandhi: (skt: mahāsāṅdhi) A term synonymous with Atiyoga and Dzogchen.

Hevajra Tantra: (skt: hevajra-tantra) The Hevajra tantra is an important scripture of Tantric or Vajrayāna Buddhism.

Dunhuang: A city in Northwestern China along the ancient Silk Road famous for its Mogao Caves, where a large number of manuscripts dating to the tenth century were discovered.

Vajrakilaya: (skt: vajrakīlaya) An important meditational deity of Vajrayāna Buddhism.

Nirmankaya: (skt: nirmāṇa-kāya) Body of emanation. It is one of the three bodies or spheres of activity under the Mahāyāna Buddhist classification of Buddhahood, along with the *sambhoga-kāya* or *body of enjoyment*, and the *dharmakāya* or *body of truth*.

Drupchen: (tib: sgrub chen) “Great Accomplishment” practice. A group sādhana practice usually lasting seven days.

