

Spring-Summer 2010

# ཀུན་པོའི་ཐུགས་རྒྱུད། KÜNPEN TAMSAR

Trace Foundation's Quarterly Newsletter



Trace  
FOUNDATION

ཀུན་པོའི་ཐུགས་རྒྱུད།  
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**Note on Transcription System Used:** All Trace Foundation publications use The Himalayan Library (THL) Simplified Phonetic Transcription of Standard Tibetan for Tibetan terms that appear in our English-language articles. More information on this transliteration system can be found under the "Reference" tab at [www.thlib.org](http://www.thlib.org)

In cases where Chinese and Tibetan names exist, the Tibetan is used with the Pinyin in parentheses— e.g., Lhoka (Shannan). For the sake of simplicity, where Tibetan names are only transliterations of Chinese names, the Tibetan has been dropped (e.g., Sichuan, not Sitrön). Where Chinese names are transliterations of Tibetan names, the Pinyin has been dropped (e.g., Nakchu, not Naqu). In some cases Pinyin or non-THL Tibetan is used for Tibetan names where Tibetan names were unavailable or, in the case of personal names, when an individual has become well-known under another spelling.

# from the executive director

**HERE AT TRACE FOUNDATION**, we talk a great deal about community. Whether it's our work in the field, or our events and initiatives in New York, or even the attitude we attempt to foster amongst our staff, community lies at the heart of all our efforts. I am reminded of this as we launch *Künpen Tamsar*, our new quarterly newsletter.

*Künpen Tamsar* might best be translated from Tibetan as “news from Trace”—*künpen* (ཀུན་པོ་སྤྱོད་པ་), meaning *beneficial to all*, being the Tibetan name for Trace Foundation, *tam* (གནས་པ་), meaning *news* or *reports*, and *sar* (གསལ་བ་), meaning *new*. This does not mean, however, that in the following pages you will find a simple report of our achievements in the past six months. What you will find are the stories of the incredible places where and people with whom we work. From an audience member at an event held in New York, to the convener of a conference supported by Trace Foundation, to one of our research fellows, you will also hear the voices of several members of our community.

This newsletter is, and will remain, a work in progress, and it is a work that we invite you to join us on. Whether it is a photo, a comment on how we're doing, or a full article, with *Künpen Tamsar* we hope to create a space where the myriad voices of our community can be heard, where ideas can be shared, and where we can all learn something new.

We look forward to hearing from you,

Enrico Dell'Angelo



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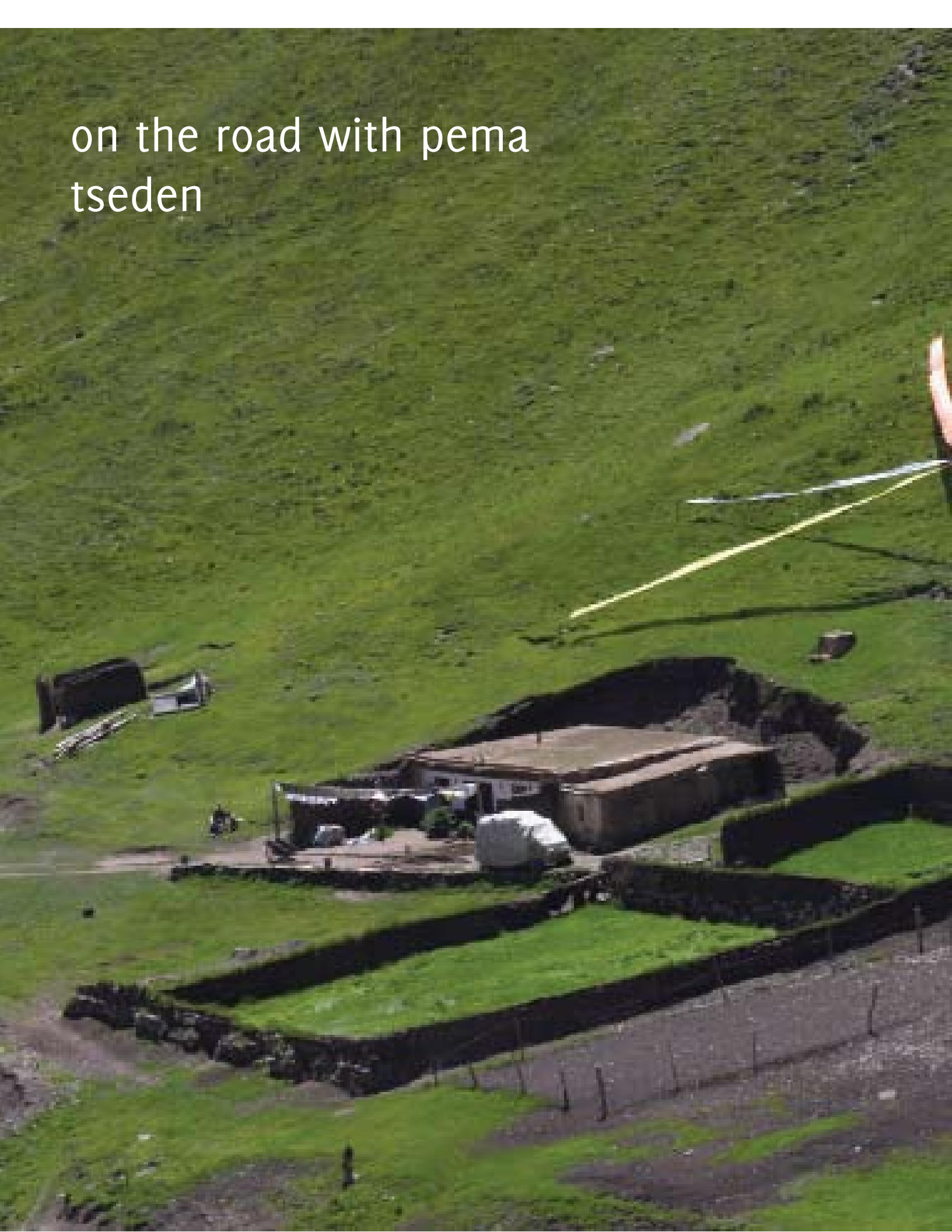
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on the road with pema  
tseden







**THE LOW BROWN** hills stretch on for miles under a clear blue sky. In the distance an SUV struggles along a dirt road, snaking through clusters of low mud brick huts, next to a winding muddy river. This is the opening of *The Search*, the second feature length film by Tibetan filmmaker Pema Tseden, and the first feature film to be shot entirely with a Tibetan cast and crew. Through the next two hours Tseden leads his viewers on a journey through a region of China rarely seen by outsiders.

Born and raised in Trika (Guide) County in Qinghai Province, Tseden reveals his homeland—and more importantly, its contemporary social life—in a uniquely authentic way. His latest production, *The Search*, demonstrates Tseden's disenchantment with the exoticization of Tibet in film.

In 2005, as China celebrated one hundred years of film history, Tibet's had only begun to surface. Though the diaries of British missions to Tibet record the existence of a few projectors and film cameras in Tibet, and the wild popularity of Charlie Chaplin in the Barkhor as early as

the 1930s, it would be nearly eighty years before the first Tibetan-made film, Tseden's first feature *The Silent Mani Stones* (2005), would be released. Although this can be considered a significant point of progress for the region, Tseden feels this can hardly be considered a positive landmark as "it took 100 years for a film that really reflects Tibetan life to appear."

That an authentic representation of Tibetan culture should be Tseden's goal is, perhaps, no surprise. One of three children born to nomadic parents on the high pastures of Qinghai Province, Pema Tseden was the only one to have completed his education. "From a young age," he says, "I studied Tibetan culture. Everything from my elementary to university education has been about Tibetan culture."

Though Tseden had enjoyed films since childhood, particularly the slapstick comedies of Charlie Chaplin that had been so popular in the Barkhor, it never occurred to him that he might one day become a filmmaker himself. Initially, like many other young Tibetans, a literature

and language student, Tseden's path to becoming a filmmaker has been anything but direct, leading him through teaching, writing and academic research.

After graduating from Tsolho (Hainan) Nationalities' Normal College in Chabcha, Tseden taught for four years in his hometown. He later went on to Lanzhou to Northwest Nationalities University (NNU) to obtain further training, before returning home to work for five more years. When an opportunity emerged to return to NNU for two years as a graduate student Tseden had no

idea that it would change his life. During his second year as a graduate student in Lanzhou, Tseden first learned of the Beijing Film Academy, the prestigious institution that has turned out some of China's most successful filmmakers including Chen Kaige, Jia Zhangke, Zhang Yimou, and Tian Zhuangzhuang, who would provide key production support for *The Search*.

"My friends and I had all seen many movies on Tibetan culture. However, most of these movies don't portray Tibetan culture, the way of life and value systems properly. We felt that

it would be good to see someone who has lived and experienced that culture himself make a movie representing that real experience. Everyone shared that view." Lacking the financial means however, Tseden had little hope of attending the academy.

"In 2000 I heard about Trace Foundation through some of my friends who worked there," he says. "At that time not many people knew about Trace Foundation's grants and scholarships." In 2002, Tseden applied for a scholarship through Trace Foundation with the intention

*“ We felt that it would be good to see someone who has lived and experienced that culture himself make a movie representing that real experience. ”*



of studying filmmaking. Excited by Tseden's qualifications as a student and a teacher and by the prospect of supporting the first Tibetan filmmaker to attend the Beijing Film Academy, Trace Foundation approved the application.

In his first two years at the academy Pema Tseden produced two short movies, *The Grassland* and *The Silent Mani Stones*, which was later expanded to a full-length feature of the same name. These first shorts were internationally recognized and awarded.

In 2006 Tseden returned to the Beijing Film Academy to focus on directing. Shortly thereafter he commenced work on *The Search* (2009), his most acclaimed work to date. This film-within-a-film narrates a Tibetan director's quest to find actors to star in a movie based on the traditional Tibetan opera Prince Drimé Künden, about a young prince who sacrifices everything—even his eyes—to help others. On his journey the director comes face-to-face not only with the rapid changes occurring across the Tibetan plateau but also with immutable aspects of Tibetan culture, what Tseden calls “the fundamental principle of Buddhism in Tibet.”

Like all his works, *The Search* focuses on “contemporary Tibet.” Tseden stresses this point as he believes the global audience is too often unfamiliar with Tibet as an evolving culture. “Tibet has always been my theme,” he says. “The perception of Tibet in the eyes of people who don't know Tibet well has not changed” from the politicized and romanticized films made in the West and in China:

from *Lost Horizon* and *The Serf* to the modern day. For these reasons, Tseden says he has “intentionally avoided succumbing to [foreign] images...and emphasizes on reflecting the basic conditions of people in Tibet as well as their basic emotional life.” But, in a culture facing such rapid changes this task is anything but basic.

For Tseden, film is the ideal medium for capturing the changes that are taking place in Tibetan culture, not just for outsiders, but for Tibetans as well. “For me,” he asserts, “I want to create a new system of culture. Films are a medium of the new modern culture. But this is a new form of art in Tibet. So, be it exhibiting Tibetan culture, contemporary Tibetan lifestyles or traditional Tibetan wisdom, the art of filmmaking should become the basic system of presenting the contemporary culture.”

While contemporary culture is his focus, he is not above borrowing a metaphor from the traditional Tibetan arts. “For my second movie, *The Search*, I have applied the same logic of painting and storytelling employed in a traditional *thangka*... [where] many stories, like the lives of the Buddha, can be expressed in a single painting.” Accordingly, the film is full of extended wide shots and the environment the characters are in is often more important than their facial expressions. This unique style reveals both human conditions and relationships in the new Tibet while leaving the precise meaning of any shot open to interpretation.

Filmmaking in Tibetan areas of China is not, however, without its challenges. The rugged terrain and biting

cold of Amdo winters can take their toll not only on the actors and crew, but also on equipment and film, which can't be allowed to freeze, one reason Tseden uses a digital camera. Filmmakers in Tibet can also face difficulties raising funds for authentic Tibetan films, due to a relatively small Tibetan audience and difficulties accessing them through distribution channels.

Additionally there is a severe lack of trained actors. This lack, however, has produced a significant side effect. “In my movies,” Tseden says, “life in a monastery, and life in a village are portrayed according to my childhood experiences. Even though they're a fictional reflection of my experiences, the emotional depth in them, the life of a monk in a monastery, or a villager's preparation and celebration of the Tibetan New Year, they're almost all real.”

These challenges, and the rich rewards of his efforts, have only encouraged Tseden to strive harder in his exploration of contemporary Tibetan society. Between traditional and contemporary arts, Tseden creates a unique portrait of an ever-changing Tibet. He will not resign as the filmmaker who launched Tibetan cinema, but will continue to pursue his role as his Tibet's premier cinematic voice. ♦



To see the full interview, visit:  
[www.trace.org/PemaTseden.html](http://www.trace.org/PemaTseden.html)



Pema Tseden at our event, Behind the Camera: Tibetan Filmmakers Discuss Their Art.



# chanting down the gods

by MICHAEL EIGEN

How lucky I feel to have learned about the musical event given by Phursang Kelak Lama and Michael Monhart at Trace Foundation's Latse Library, Saturday, June 12. The color, purity, and devotion of the music turned a demonstration into an offering.

The performance began with long bronze trumpets (*dungchen*), but to say "trumpet" can be misleading. These were not the short horns a Westerner is used to seeing, but very long ceremonial instruments that touched or nearly touched the floor when placed to lips in a seated position. The sound was very deep, reminiscent of deep chanting. What seemed repetitive had subtle variations in rhythm and tone, a semi-percussive use of a wind instrument.

rhythmic or tonal series. When I heard this I thought not only of the series of sounds in a bird's repetitive song, but of John Dewey's and Alfred North Whitehead's description of aesthetic and feeling time—the experiential sequence one goes through in viewing a work of art or going through a particular feeling state, an experiential arc rather than clock time.

For the final demonstration, Phursang Lama chanted and played cymbals and Michael played a drum. The chant was deep voiced and the cymbals were touched in a way that ended in something of a quiver, a light, barely perceptible flutter which gave me shivers.

The question-answer and interview

“*The sounds were at once stabilizing, mysterious, opening. They seemed to come from beyond the self and, paradoxically, their gravelly sounds dispelled the fog.*”

The second instrument played was the *gyaling*, a reed instrument something like an oboe, which was also called a flute. It was higher pitched, insistent, more yang, foreground, in your face, a wake up call. At first I thought it would be grating but it was deeply pleasing, sharp, stimulating. I thought of a child's voice and the high pitched sound of birds. The *gyaling* resonated in my chest, the *dungchen* someplace deeper in my body or deeper than my body.

We learned that a note in Tibetan ritual music is like a phrase, a

time was revealing. When asked what he felt when he played, Phursang Lama said he was trying to make sounds pleasing to the buddhas and bodhisattvas. He pointed to his ear, suggesting aural pleasure, fine attunement. He pictured deities, angels, buddhas and bodhisattvas and the pleasure this music might give them. When asked about the *bardo*—the period in Tibetan Buddhist thought between death and rebirth—he spoke of the music as preparation, accumulating merits, but also allaying fear, so that in *bardo* one would not be afraid and could hear the Buddhas

▶  
Phursang Kelak Lama and Michael Monhart playing the *gyaling*.



and Bodhisattvas' singing.

Phursang Lama spoke of the ceremonial and celebratory use of the music, played when important people visited the monastery, as well as usual ritual use. One person asked if new ritual music was being written and Phursang Lama said no: he played traditional music. Throughout the afternoon, he read from musical scores. A slight disagreement arose as to whether one of the instruments had roots in India or China. Phursang Lama thought China and a man from the audience suggested India. Phursang Lama raised his hands to his head and kept them there quietly.

Most western music is based on diachronic or chromatic tones. You move whole or half steps between well defined single notes. There are ways of trying to get around this, via

glissandos or a player varying tones slightly as feeling dictates. Electronic music opens realms between the single notes. Sometimes a player or composer hits an off tone that is particularly suggestive, tantalizing, juicy, eerie, mysterious, delicate. The Tibetan music we heard seemed to emphasize between moments, off tones which open fields of experience otherwise closed. I was struck by what seemed like home base tones becoming staging grounds for quivering variations, vibrations, tremolos that open dormant body states. At times, I felt my body was being retuned, kind of a spiritual acupuncture.

On a radio show I happened to tune into a few weeks ago, I heard what a scientist claimed was a computer representation of the background sound of the universe. A high pitched

sound (the *gyaling*) fused with very low sounds (*dungchen*) in off-tonal modes. I couldn't help wondering if Tibetan ritual music channeled this, tuned into it, or whether the coincidence is part of deep processes of which we have intimations.

My favorite parts of the Latse concert were the trumpets, cymbals and chants. The trumpets, especially, touched me in unknown places hungry for touch. The sounds were at once stabilizing, mysterious, opening. They seemed to come from beyond the self and, paradoxically, their gravelly sounds dispelled the fog. The cymbals, which usually clang and make loud sounds, were used as a delicate instrument, almost silken, creating ripples, nuanced currents, which made my spine and inside skin tingle. Tibetan chanting I've heard before, always enchanting and much





## list of talks at Latse

### january

Aspects of Culture in 11th Century Tsongkha. Tseten Dorjé (Editor, *Tsernyek* journal)

### february

Life of a Sakya Khön daughter: Jetsün Kushok Chimey Luding. Elisabeth Benard (University of Puget Sound)

### march

Behind the Camera: Tibetan Filmmakers Discuss Their Art. Pema Tsenden (The Silent Mani Stones, The Search) and Rigdan Gyatso (The Girl Lhari).

### april

*Drangchar*: the Life and Times of a Leading Tibetan Literary Magazine. Dawa Lodrö (*Drangchar* Editor-in-Chief)

### may

Tibet's First Modern Artist. Donald S. Lopez (University of Michigan)

### june

Trumpet Blasts, Cymbals & Chants: The Ritual Music of Tibetan Buddhism. Phursang Kelak Lama (Karma Raj Mahavihar, Nepal) with Michael Monhart (Columbia University)

### july

Breaking the Line: Examining New Ideas for Written Tibetan. With Tenzin Dickyi, Lama Pema Wangdak and Dhondup Tashi.



more. Trumpets played first, chants last, but fused deep inside. It's always good to hear the real thing.

Phursang Kelak entered a monastery in Tibet when he was thirteen. Apparently it was not uncommon to do that for education. By his late teens his musical studies began, and continued ever since, five or six decades later. He left Tibet with other senior lamas in 1959 and settled in Kathmandu, where he is currently ritual music director of Karma Raj Mahavihar, a Kagyu monastery located at Swayambhu.

He and Michael Monhart met at the University of Washington, where Phursang Kelak Lama taught Tibetan ritual music for two years and where Michael received a Masters of Arts in Ethnomusicology, specializing in ritual musics of Tibet and Japan. Michael then worked in the multimedia education department at Microsoft for 12 years and is presently a Master of Arts student in Tibetan Studies at Columbia University.

Meeting Phursang Kelak Lama and Michael Monhart was a perfect end for this wonderful afternoon. Although we had a language barrier, Phursang Lama touched my hand and my core with his gentle, warm, strong face. It was a pleasure to exchange a few words with Michael about the music. He is an accomplished saxophonist and creative musician in his own right, a dedicated translator of Buddhist work, deeply immersed in Tibetan studies. I don't see how the buddhas, bodhisattvas and deities could fail to be pleased by what Phursang Lama and Michael offered us. ♦

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*Michael Eigen, PhD, is a practicing psychologist and the author of Flames from the Unconscious: Trauma, Madness and Faith, Feeling Matters and The Psychoanalytic Mystic.*

# searching for common ground

*On Friday and Saturday, March 26<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup>, Trace Foundation convened the fourth event in our first Lecture Series, Minority Language in Today's Global Society. The two day event examined different perspectives on the standardization of written and spoken languages.*

*The series, hosted in New York City, brings together speakers from diverse national and disciplinary backgrounds to share experiences and examine themes such as language endangerment, mother tongue education, language planning, language vitality assessment, and more. The proceedings will be published after the series conclusion in 2010.*

▼  
*Geshe Nornang, a speaker at Perspectives on Language Standardization advocated in favor of a return to classical Tibetan pronunciation.*

**TIBETAN LANGUAGE** is closely tied to the extraordinary culture and history of the Tibetan civilization. It is a language with a rich literary heritage and has a unique position in the history of world literatures due to its central role in the development and transmission of Buddhism and Bön.

Today, Tibetan is comprised of six major dialect groups, spread across the Tibetan plateau. The three largest dialect groups are those of Central

Tibet, Kham, and Amdo. In the eighth century however, a single language united by a common religion and writing system stretched across this area, from Eastern Pakistan, to Western Sichuan and Gansu Provinces. While the written language has remained relatively stable due to its close ties to Tibetan Buddhism, today, more than twelve centuries since the creation of a standard writing system, speakers who belong to the different dialect groups frequently find it difficult to communicate amongst themselves.

Tibet's linguistic pluralism is a direct reflection of the region's vastness and rugged topography. Tibetan's linguistic diversity has greatly contributed to the unique customs and traditions of the various regions of the Tibetan plateau, but when these differences obstruct the basic need for communication, Tibetans are faced with both internal and external challenges.



For much of human history, the situation currently faced by Tibetan language has been the rule, rather than the exception for languages in general. In just the past few centuries the rise of state education systems and the tremendous growth in business, transportation, and media networks have given way to standard languages, simplifying commercial and cultural transactions across vast areas.

The pattern is being repeated on the Tibetan plateau with the rapid growth of infrastructure and the rise of advanced communications technologies in the last few decades. Today, speakers of various Tibetan dialects are coming increasingly into contact with one another. Driven by these ever more frequent interactions, a strong desire to formulate a standard Tibetan language has

emerged within Tibetan intellectual circles, but significant differences exist as to what should be the basis for a standard Tibetan language.

To evaluate this emerging discussion as well as the risks and benefits of standardizing languages in general, we brought together David Bradley, Jamga, Miklós Kontra, Dawa Lodrö, Geshe Nornang, and Jaffer Sheyholislami. In presentations over the course of the two day conference, they shared their research and experience working with different communities.

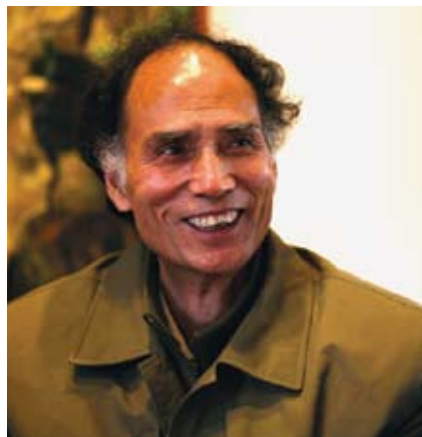
While many Tibetans today look positively on standardization, the way in which Tibetan language should be standardized—as well as the possible repercussions of that process—causes debate. Questions of identity, communication, and cultural unity

arise especially between Tibetan and non-Tibetan linguists, whose methods differ from their common goal of facilitating intra and inter-regional communication amongst the inhabitants of the Tibetan plateau.

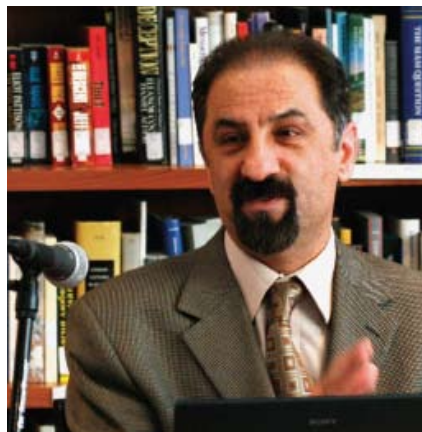
Tibetan speakers presented conservative, innovative, and representative approaches to the standardization of Tibetan language. Geshe Nornang, for example, a retired lecturer at the Asian Language and Literature department from the University of Washington, proposes a return to traditional Tibetan pronunciation as an effective way to reintroduce a common regional language, without risking linguistic injustices. By promoting cultural seniority as opposed to cultural superiority, he believes that re-embracing the Tibetan pronunciation preserved in the written language could eventually reduce the differences between the language's written and spoken forms. Although there can often be what David Bradley refers to as "tension" between the two forms of language, Tibet's thirteen-hundred year old standard writing system could serve as a common base of history and tradition, in the face of the region's cultural diversity and its population's wide geographic distribution.

While Geshe Nornang's proposal addresses one part of the standardization process, it does not address the ever-growing need for new standard terms in Tibetan language. Secretary General of the National Tibetan Language Terminology Standardization Work Committee in Beijing, Jamga, explains how new ideas call for the creation of new terms, and proposes standardizing Tibetan pronunciation and terminologies, as opposed to the language as a whole. The thirteen-hundred

▶ *Dawa Lodrö, editor-in-chief of the Tibetan literary magazine Drangchar, argued in favor of the creation of a standard Tibetan informed by current scholarship.*



▶ *Jaffer Sheyholislami shared the trials of language standardization amongst the Kurds in the Middle-East.*





year-old written language lacks terminology related to the modern sciences, technology, and contemporary society. Without standard terms fostering education, research, and even simple discussion of these fundamentals of modern life proves difficult to impossible.

Hoping to achieve both the standardized terminology and pronunciation advocated by both Jamga and Geshe Nornang, Dawa Lodrö, editor-in-chief of *Drangchar Magazine*, advocated for a scholarly effort to produce a standard language. Combining research undertaken by Tibetan linguists with a panel of scholars representing the varieties of spoken Tibetan, Dawa Lodrö believes that an intellectual consensus could provide a foundation for standardization efforts.

While most Tibetan-speakers present advocated for the formulation of a standard language, the non-Tibetan linguists argued that although standardization is often looked to as a means to revitalize a culture, the path to standardization is fraught with challenges and risks. Adopting a single language—regardless of its provenience—implies that that variety is the correct one, and all other ones

are not. This can lead to linguistic disparity and, eventually regional exclusion, as has been the case for Hungarian, Kurdish, and other Tibeto-Burman languages.

Professor David Bradley, of La Trobe University in Australia, emphasized the particular role that religion has played in stabilizing the written variety of Tibetan, and the tension that can arise between modern spoken varieties and an archaic literary variety of such importance. For such languages, he asserted, script reform can be particularly contentious, and the risk for standardization efforts in general is its ability to create greater internal division.

Applied Linguist Miklós Kontra from the University of Szeged in Hungary, more fully explored the social implications of standardized languages. He described how linguistic discrimination against other linguistic varieties, can emerge, and in some cases produce “linguistic hierarchization,” a ranked system of languages based on their cultural importance or status. Linguistic purism, a strict determination of correct and incorrect ways of speaking based on a normative standard, can further

negate regional heritage through means of the supposed cultural superiority which often attends the standard language.

This social fallout from the standardization process can have powerful effects on the community, particularly on speakers of non-standard language varieties. Language, according to Jaffer Sheyholislami, is not only a central element in personal and cultural identity, but also both a collective and individual right. Viewed from such a perspective the challenges of standardization take on a new dimension.

Cultural exclusion, internal division, and linguistic discrimination seem to be embedded in the very process of language standardization, yet a common language holds the promise of simplified and increased exchange within and across Tibetan regions. As the conversation on the standardization of Tibetan language continues to evolve the risks and benefits must be weighed in turn and always the people for whom Tibetan is not merely a language, but a key element of their individual identity must be considered. ♦

### UPCOMING LECTURE SERIES

#### **Interdependent Diversities: The Relationship between Language, Culture, and Ecology**

Friday, September 24 (6 - 8 pm) Saturday, September 25 (10 am - 5 pm)

Each language is a unique key to a community's world view and culture and plays a central role in transmitting historically-developed knowledge about specific, biologically-diverse environments. There is an increasing awareness and recognition of linguistic, cultural, and biodiversity as inter-related and mutually supporting aspects of the diversity of life. As such, the crises affecting these aspects—from biological extinction to disappearing languages—appear to converge and even drive each other on. Understanding the integrated nature of these crises is essential to working towards solutions.

As part of the UN-declared International Year of Biodiversity, on Friday and Saturday, September 24th and 25th, 2010, Trace Foundation will convene the fifth lecture in its lecture series *Minority Languages in Today's Global Society*. In this event, we will examine the relationship between linguistic, cultural, and biological diversity from the perspectives of traditional land use, livelihoods, and medical knowledge.

For more information visit [www.trace.org/events.html](http://www.trace.org/events.html)



# *postcards from the field* the urban space of lhasa

by KABIR HEIMSATH

**I AM INTERESTED** in the role of city space in the modernisation of Tibetan areas of China. My research concentrates on the built environment as it relates to the lifestyles and cultural affinities of city residents. Although my project concentrates on Lhasa, it was essential for me to view and make comparisons with other urban centres in Tibetan areas of China to get a better sense of the way in which urban development affects cultural space. The Trace Foundation Research Fellowship allowed me to travel to Xining, Kyigudo (Yushu), Kunming and Gyeltang (Shangri-la), as well as return to Lhasa to check on a variety of planned (and unplanned) development zones.

Differences in scale are clearly

important in these towns, but each in its own way serves as a node of modernity within a predominately rural area. The urban form exerts similar pressures towards professionalisation, commodification and standardisation regardless of location. However, local habits, lifestyles, and priorities seem to assert themselves despite attempts at regularisation, development or control. Appearances are always deceptive, but small things betray larger patterns.

The concrete high-rises that look so cold and grey from the Xining railway station hold bustling noodle restaurants in which Tibetans from all over Amdo converge to discuss the new Hollywood blockbuster and the price

of mastiff puppies while slurping their Muslim noodles. The fancy street-lights in Kyigudo don't actually work in the evening but this doesn't stop nomads from stumbling around the main square under protection of the massive new Gesar statue. Somehow it seems like those from Nangchen walk differently than those from Zatok, but it is hard to explain how. In Gyeltang, a.k.a Zhongdian, now called "Shangri-la," young women from Shenzhen dress up in Nazi dress and say that they are "Tibetan" while selling jewellery made in Nepal. The old buildings were built last year and the new buildings are already falling apart. Lhasa, of course, is "lha'i-sa"—the place of gods—and we come from all over the world searching for this



Losar in Barkhor Square, Lhasa  
Photo © Kabir Mansingh Heimsath



***Applications for the 2011-2012 Trace Foundation Research Fellowship are now being accepted. The deadline for applications is November 1st, 2010.***

The research fellowship is a program for professionals, scholars, and artists with the goal of supporting the advancement of knowledge in the fields of social sciences, humanities, and the sciences. The program supports work contributing to understanding the complexities of the ongoing modernization process in the Tibetan areas of China and aims to eventually contribute to the identification of sustainable and culturally relevant development models.

Fellowships are up to 12 months in duration for research conducted within China or abroad, or a combination of both.

This year we are giving priority to individuals working on the following topics:

- Challenges of traditional animal husbandry and agricultural economies on the Tibetan Plateau;
- Tibetan language issues;
- Environmental protection;
- Local histories;
- Minority education.

For more details including a list of topics research by previous fellows, and application criteria and procedures please visit

***[http://www.trace.org/grsupport/grsupport\\_fellowships.html](http://www.trace.org/grsupport/grsupport_fellowships.html)***

celestial sphere only to find Tibetans sending their prayers with plastic balloons off to some other realm.

The tempo of change in these towns is disorienting. It is not only “Chinese” and “Tibetan” differences, but a range of habits, lifestyles, and customs from different Tibetan areas and different social classes combine with a variety of national and global influences to make these supposedly isolated areas centers of cultural hybridity and change. ◆

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*Kabir Mansingh Heimsath was awarded a Trace Research Fellowship in 2009 to complete partial fieldwork for his DPhil thesis on “The Urban Space of Lhasa” in social anthropology at the University of Oxford.*

# cultivating traditions between the local and the global

*Reflections on the 7th Congress of the International Association for the Study of Traditional Asian Medicines (IASTAM), Thimphu, Bhutan, September 7-11, 2009.*

by **SIENNA R. CRAIG**  
(DARTMOUTH COLLEGE)

**FOUNDED IN** 1979 by the medical anthropologist Charles Leslie and the historian Arthur Llewellyn (A.L.) Basham, the International Association for the Study of Traditional Asian Medicine (IASTAM) represents a unique vision of bringing academics and practitioners of Asian medical traditions into dialogue with each other. The organization's mission is to promote the study and cross-cultural understanding of Asian medicines from a variety of disciplinary perspectives, and to do so in a way that not only honors but also embraces the sometimes-difficult task of reckoning the world of reflection and critique with that of engagement and practice. IASTAM's previous congresses have been held in places as diverse as Canberra (1979), Bombay (1990), and Austin (2006), but until last year, never had a Congress been held in a Himalayan country. Likewise, while one can find the occasional paper or reference to Tibetan medicine among the listings of abstracts from previous international congresses, neither scholarly nor practitioner perspectives on Tibetan medicine and related themes of Tibetan and Himalayan civilizations have been prominent in the history of the organization.

All of this changed last year, when the 7th IASTAM congress was held in Thimphu, Bhutan. Not only was this the largest international conference to ever be held in the Himalayan Kingdom, but it was also the first IASTAM event that thoroughly embraced and represented scholars and practitioners of *Sowarikpa*, the "science of healing" practiced and studied in its diverse forms across the sweep of High Asia and beyond, and known in the host- ing Land of the Dragon (*Drukyl*) as "Buddhist Medicine." More than 200 people attended this congress, which was held in the Royal Institute of Management (RIM) on the west- ern outskirts of Bhutan's capital, Thimphu, and hosted by the Institute for Traditional Medicine Services, Ministry of Health, Government of Bhutan. The event was covered by all major Bhutanese newspapers, and was also featured on regional televi- sion and radio.

The congress brought together not only scholars and practitioners of Tibetan, Himalayan, East Asian and South Asian healing systems, but also social entrepreneurs, civil servants, and representatives of global busi- nesses engaged in the commercial



An offering of chang at the Opening Ceremony of the 7th Congress of IASTAM (courtesy of IASTAM) © Meinrad Hofer.

sale of Asia-derived medicinal products. Students of Asian medical traditions—including those from the local Bhutanese Traditional Medical College—were present and engaged in the conference. This international gathering was also an opportunity for other Bhutanese students (e.g. those from the Languages and Cultures Program of the Royal University) to see world-class scholarly and professional presentations. This *mélange* of perspectives owed a lot to the theme of this congress: Cultivating Traditions and the Challenges of Globalization. During our five days together in Thimpu, many unique and innovative conversations were had between scholars, scientists, policy-makers and practitioners. Compared with previous congresses, there was a growth in the range of topics and

methodological approaches in the schedule, from history, anthropology, philology, law and religion to literature, art history, gender studies, and Asian medical and biomedical practices.

Particularly salient from a Tibetan Studies perspective were several panels that were conducted entirely in *Tibetan language*, and that were devoted to issues of practice as well as textual studies, including a large panel devoted to Bön medicine and a panel on the relationship between ritual healing and textual practices in Tibetan contexts. Tibetan studies perspectives were also prominent in more thematic panels on topics such as longevity practices, medical pluralism, and public health, while some scholars ventured into comparative discussions such as a

dialogue between medicine in Amdo and Korea, situated as they are on opposite margins of Chinese culture and civilization, and a panel on women and gender in medicine and healing across Asia, which included important contributions by Tibetan women practitioners and topics related to Tibetan women's health. Denise Glover and I organized a large panel on the themes of conservation, cultivation, and commercialization of Himalayan and Tibetan medicinal plants, which drew from practitioners and producers of Tibetan medicines as well as anthropological, legal, and social entrepreneurial perspectives.

As someone who has been collaborating with practitioners of Tibetan medicine for more than a decade in different national contexts (primarily Nepal and Tibetan areas of China),







▲  
Attendees at IASTAM came from a range of medical traditions from across Asia and around the world. © Meinrad Hofer

this meeting felt particularly important, given the pace at which Tibetan medicine is changing at present. Today, Tibetan medicine represents multiple, and sometimes conflicting, agendas. Tibetan medicines must at once be proven efficacious and safe according to international biomedical standards as well as appeal to non-Tibetan consumers. *Sowarikpa* must retain a sense of cultural authenticity

care options and paths to wellness are sought. Those who teach and practice Tibetan medicine must at once be attentive to new models of learning and state-mandated licensing and certification requirements as well as biomedical understandings of health and disease, while striving to retain, and sometimes even innovate, traditional practices and modes

“*Sowarikpa must retain a sense of cultural authenticity and, at times, a direct connection to Tibetan Buddhism, yet also reflect innovation within the scientific tradition from which it emerges, and from biomedicine.*”

▶  
A man in traditional Bhutanese dress reads the program of events at IASTAM's first congress in a Himalayan city in the Association's 30-year history. © Meinrad Hofer

and, at times, a direct connection to Tibetan Buddhism, yet also reflect innovation within the scientific tradition from which it emerges, and from biomedicine. Tibetan medicines must be capable of treating illnesses in Tibetan communities, often in places where health care is limited and basic biomedical treatment is also unavailable. Yet these medicines are increasingly finding a market within non-Tibetan contexts in many countries where alternative health

of knowledge transmission. For these and other reasons, the chance for such a well respected yet diverse group of *Sowarokpa* practitioners to gather, learn from each other, and discuss their work, was invaluable. It is important to note that many of these excellent panels, on which people from China, Nepal, India, and Bhutan participated, would have been impossible without generous support from Trace Foundation, among other sponsors.

The days in Thimphu passed quickly and memorably. I can still remember the feeling of flying into the airport in Paro: the verdant, monsoon soaked hills, the vertiginous turn toward a strip of runway at the base of Himalayan mountain ranges. I also remember the cacophony of languages on the plane and in the conference setting. Both within the formal contexts of panels and discussion, and as participants milled about in the lovely courtyard of RIM, feasting on *ema datse* and sweet tea, important connections were made and invaluable information was exchanged, here in Tibetan, there in Chinese, Nepali, Hindi, English, and lovely combinations of all of these.

One of the highlights of the trip for me was an excursion a group of us took the day before the scheduled panels began. We hiked up to Taktsang, the famous “Tiger’s Nest” monastery perched on the craggy cliffs above Paro, where Guru Rinpoche was famed to have flown on the back of a tigress in the 8th century. Among the group of pilgrims that afternoon was a doctor I’ve known for years who hails from Mustang, Nepal, the vice director of the largest Tibetan medical consortium in China, and various other scholars and friends. As we climbed up to the monastery, I delighted in overhearing conversations about the medicinal plants we were seeing, the lushness of Bhutan’s forests, comparative stories of medical practice, and practical discussions about future collaborations. By the time we reached the temple, high altitude sun had given way to ominous clouds. Soon, the rains came. We huddled together in the various temples (*lhakhang*), paying respects and delivering *kathak* from far-flung locales under the raucous sound of the downpour. By the time we began our descent, the red earth trail had

turned to slick mud, impelling us to hold hands, to help each other down the mountain.

What I found most striking, though, was participants’ sincere desire to communicate, to bridge gaps of culture or experience, and to come to know more about the diversity of healing practices throughout Asia, and, when it comes to *Sowarikpa*, on both sides of the Himalayas. One evening, most of the Tibetan *amchi* and *menpa* (practitioners of Tibetan medicines) in attendance gathered together for dinner and shared stories late into the evening. By the account

of this event I heard from friends the next day, it was an unprecedented, and moving experience. The following morning, I encountered a senior Tibetan doctor at the book display. This individual had spent the first half of his career in Lhasa, but was now a prominent practitioner in India. His voice cracked as he told me about the previous evening, and his delight in discovering that one of the young Tibetan doctors from China whom I’d helped to invite was the son of a dear friend of his, from his Lhasa days. “This,” he said in central Tibetan, “is lineage.” I couldn’t agree more. ♦

*The next IASTAM congress is slated for Fall 2013 in Seoul, Korea.*

*Sienna R. Craig is Assistant Professor of Anthropology at Dartmouth College as well as the co-founder of Drokpa ([www.drokpa.org](http://www.drokpa.org)). She is the author of *Horses Like Lightning: A Story of Passage Through the Himalayas* (Wisdom Publications, 2008), *Clear Sky, Red Earth: A Himalayan Story* (Mera Publications, 2004), and the co-editor (with Vincanne Adams and Mona Schrepf) of *Medicine Between Science and Religion: Explorations on Tibetan Grounds* (Berghahn Books, 2010 forthcoming).*



The conference website can be accessed for reports, images and abstracts: [http://www.iastam.org/conferences\\_VII.htm](http://www.iastam.org/conferences_VII.htm). More information on IASTAM activities can be found at: <http://www.iastam.org/home.htm>.







# reviving tibetan medicine

**IN 2009**, a study by the European Commission's Joint Research Centre and the World Bank revealed that less than 10% of the earth's land-mass is more than a two-day trip from a city with a population of 50,000 or more. With the dramatic growth not only of the earth's population, but also of infrastructure and technology in the last century and a half, even the wildest places left on earth are often in someone's backyard.

Of the most remote places remaining on the planet, none surpasses the Tibetan Plateau, the northern reaches of which, according to the study, could take as long as a month to traverse. Part of this area lies in Nakchu Prefecture, in the northwest of the Tibet Autonomous Region, and Sok County, in the far east of the prefecture, while far more accessible than the northernmost counties, remains one of the most isolated places on earth.

Rongpo Town, in the northeast of the county is no exception. Lying at an elevation of more than 3,700 meters (or about 2.3 miles, roughly ten times the height of the Empire State Building), the town lies just off the main route from Lhasa to Chamdo, but from there the road quickly gets harder. The nearest of the town's scattered villages is a two-day horse ride away.

Even more remote is Trido Township, in the southeast of the county. No roads lead to Trido, which lies in a wide bend of the Salween River,

known to Tibetan's as Gyelmo Ngulchu, or The Queen's Sweat, and, aside from a few months in spring the township is completely inaccessible. Due to the great distance from the county school, only a few residents have achieved more than a sixth-grade education. In both Rongpo and Trido the relative isolation has contributed to economic stagnation, and most resident's income falls short of the World Bank's \$1.25 a day poverty line.

It is here, however, in this most remote corner of the world that the seeds are being sown for the revival of one of the world's great traditions, Tibetan medicine.

The history of medicine on the Tibetan plateau stretches back millennia, but the origins of what is today practiced as Tibetan medicine were first synthesized during the Imperial period (7th – 9th centuries, c.e.). Early in the seventh century, Songtsen Gampo led the Yarlung kingdom in southern Tibet to victory over its neighbors, consolidating power over much of the Tibetan Plateau. He then turned to the conquest of neighboring peoples, a pursuit that would occupy his successors until the collapse of the Yarlung dynasty in the ninth century. As the empire expanded, Tibetan expeditionary forces encountered sophisticated and previously unknown cultural influences in neighboring territories, including areas of what are now India, China and Pakistan. As reports of these encounters reached Lhasa, Songtsen

Gampo took an interest in ideas and technologies that could help him in the administration of his empire.

During this period medical scholars from India, China, and Persia were first invited to the court of Songtsen Gampo. Over the course of the following decades Tibetan students trained under foreign medical scholars, and medical treatises were translated into Tibetan. During the reign of Trisong Detsen, his grandson's great-grandson, the first medical conference in Tibetan history was held at Samye, the first Buddhist monastery built in Tibet.

The philosophical foundations of

Tibetan medicine, as well as instructions on diagnosis and treatment, are contained within a four part treatise known as the Four Tantras, or *Gyüzh* in Tibetan. Viewed by some within the Buddhist tradition as a direct revelation by the Medicine Buddha, authorship of the Four Tantras is debated amongst scholars, though most agree that the current version was composed in the twelfth century by Yuthok Yönten Gönpo the Younger.

The Four Tantras lay out the philosophical foundations of Tibetan medicine. Stemming from Buddhist ideology, which views the body along with the rest of the physical as a

manifestation of the sentient mind, Tibetan medicine relates illness to the actions of the mind, and in particular to the three poisons of greed, hatred and delusion. Practitioners of Tibetan medicine diagnose patients on the basis of an interview, urinalysis and an analysis of the twelve pulses. Focusing on the interrelation between mind and body, treatments vary widely from proscriptions on behavior, to moxibustion and herbal medicines. Tibetan herbal medicines can be composed of as few as four to as many as one-hundred-fifty herbs, minerals and animal parts, and are usually given in the form of a small, round, clay-covered pill.

“ Hailing from Rongpo Town and Trido Township respectively, Trinlé and Künzang sought to bring medical care to areas where it no longer existed. ”





For centuries knowledge of Tibetan medicine was passed primarily from student to teacher through lineages in a system parallel to the transmission of Buddhism in Tibet. In the 16th century, however, the regent of the fifth Dalai Lama, Desi Sangye Gyatso, established a Tibetan medicine college at Chakpori which, for the next four-hundred years educated the doctors not only of the elite of Tibet, but also of the royal courts of other Himalayan kingdoms, including Bhutan.

The medical college at Chakpori was finally succeeded in 1916 by the new Mentsikhang, founded by the personal doctor to the 13th Dalai Lama, Khyenrab Norbu. Where the graduates of the medical college at Chakpori were primarily monks who, for the most part, remained within their monasteries, offering medical treatment to other monks, the Mentsikhang had a distinctly secular focus that would later allow it to become an institutional center for Tibetan medicine. During the early years of the 1960s the leaders of the Mentsikhang focused on modernizing and secularizing the practice of Tibetan medicine, creating specializations within the art, training doctors in a classroom setting with a standard curriculum, stock-piling medicines and requiring doctors to wear the white lab coats worn by Western doctors.

Beginning in the mid-1960s however, Tibetan medicine increasingly fell out of official favor. During this time both the teaching and the practice of Tibetan medicine were forbidden across the majority of Tibetan areas, bringing to an end many of the lineages of Tibetan-medicine training. By the early 1970s Tibetan medicine was on the verge of completely disappearing.

In 1980, the social and economic reforms meant to correct the excesses of the Cultural Revolution finally reached Tibet. Almost immediately Tibetan medicine was singled out for the significant contribution it could make to the state of healthcare in Tibet while preserving an important aspect of Tibetan culture. Reforms, however, brought both benefits and new challenges to healthcare in Tibet. Collectivization had reorganized the lives of rural Tibetans around the commune. Communes provided healthcare services, funded by the central government. With the transition to an increasingly market oriented economy in the 1990s, the costs of healthcare fell increasingly to the provinces and prefectures, and the patients themselves. Western medicine, however, is largely beyond the relatively meager means of rural Tibetans and, with the Tibetan medicine system still just beginning its recovery, many Tibetans forego medical treatment, seeking medical attention only after their condition has become critical.

Despite increasing government support for Tibetan medicine, by 2000 the Tibet Autonomous Region had a mere 500 beds in Tibetan-medicine hospitals and 1,100 formally trained Tibetan-medicine doctors, serving a population well over two million. In rural Nakchu Prefecture, there were only 113 Tibetan-medicine doctors who had achieved the minimum certification (a *zhongzhuan* degree, equivalent to a U.S. associate's degree) required to practice medicine. More than half of the medical personnel in the prefecture had received only short-term training, ranging from two weeks to six months.

Recognizing the dire state of healthcare in Tibetan communities, Trace



25

Each graduate of Trace Foundation's Traditional Tibetan Medicine Project received a starter set of medical supplies.

Field practica helped Tibetan medicine students recognize medicinal herbs in the wild.

A clinic in Sok, built during the course of Trace Foundation's Traditional Tibetan Medicine Project.

Rongpo Town in Sok County had never had a resident Tibetan medicine doctor before Trinlé, a student from Trace Foundation's Traditional Tibetan Medicine Project, built a new clinic with a grant from Trace.



▲  
Instruments used in the practice of  
Tibetan medicine.

Foundation began working to support the tradition of Tibetan medicine in 1999 with a variety of initiatives across the Tibetan Plateau. In the Tibet Autonomous Region, Trace sponsored a variety of initiatives, but the Foundation's efforts focused on strengthening Tibetan medicine and providing high-quality training for health workers who can in turn provide affordable, accessible health care to rural communities. Focusing on clinic management, identification and sustainable collection of medicinal herbs, documentation of practices, and basic healthcare worker training. The project ultimately

“ With no local clinic to rely on, residents were forced to make the ninety-mile journey to the county seat, a journey of several hours over winding roads by car, or of several days on horseback. ”

mately helped 72 students graduate with *zhongzhuan* degrees and another 52 to earn their *dazhuan* (equivalent to a U.S. bachelor's degree). Nearly 80 additional students received more than two years of training in Tibetan medicine. Among the trainees, two students

stood out in particular.

Hailing from Rongpo Town and Trido Township respectively, Trinlé and Künzang sought to bring medical care to areas where it no longer existed. Rongpo Town had never had a permanent doctor before and of Trido's two Tibetan medicine doctors, one had passed away and the other, too old to continue practicing, had moved to Lhasa. With no local clinic to rely on, residents were forced to make the ninety-mile journey to the county seat, a journey of several hours over winding roads by car, or of several days on horseback. Sick patients often found the journey impossible to make, and often the most critically ill died along the way.

Trinlé and Künzang joined the first of Trace Foundation's county-level health worker trainings in 1999. After completing the program, the two received additional support from Trace to pursue the four-year *dazhuan* degree at Lhasa Medical College. Although Trace was able to secure positions for fully half of the students we supported at Lhasa Medical College, in 2004, after their graduation, Trinlé and Künzang elected to return home to the countryside with only their education and

a starting set of Tibetan medical supplies provided by Trace Foundation: a selection of the most commonly used Tibetan herbal medicines, a bag, and a set of instruments to begin producing new medicines.

Trinlé returned to Rongpo where he



began practicing medicine out of a small room. Taking advantage of the training he had received in medicinal herb recognition, Trinlé was able to broker a deal to exchange herbs for pills with the Sok County Tibetan Medicine Hospital, a strong supporter of the Foundation's efforts to improve healthcare. Despite initial success, Trinlé still had bigger dreams.

In 2005, while overseeing the construction of a new primary school, Trace staff met up with Trinlé once again. It was then that he described his plans for a new clinic. This clinic would serve not only the residents of his village, but also the residents of the surrounding villages. Relying on the collection and manufacture of

Tibetan medicines, the clinic would provide free services to the poor while investing in its own future development. Eager to see his vision realized, Trinlé turned once more to Trace Foundation. In 2009, construction on the new clinic began with support from Trace.

In Trido, Künzang had also met with success. Through the support of the local government and community, Künzang was able to open a nine-room clinic in Trido and recruit four doctors to work together with him. By collecting herbs from the surrounding grasslands and buying additional plants from local residents in 2008 the clinic was able to produce sixty Tibetan medicines for the treatment of various illnesses. Seeing

the potential for much-needed self-sufficiency, Künzang applied for a grant in 2008 for machinery to produce Tibetan medicine. The medicines produced by the machinery not only provide a source of income for the clinic, which is now supporting two more students at Lhasa Medical College, they ensure that even when the township is cut off from the outside world, basic healthcare is still available.

Through the continuing efforts of Trinlé and Künzang, and others like them, the millennia old traditions of Tibetan medicine are offering new hope for the future for rural residents across the Tibetan plateau. ♦





# an education

**SITTING QUIETLY** at the end of the long conference table in Trace Foundation's headquarters in New York, Kelsang Kyi nervously plays with a few sheets of paper, shuffling and bending them. When she finally speaks, her voice is clear and surprisingly deep, with only a faint shadow of an accent. "It has been a long process of learning and struggling to live in a new culture," she says, and indeed, it has.

Kelsang Kyi was born in a small village in Chentsa County in the Malho (Huangnan) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, on the eastern edge of the Tibetan Plateau. Unlike the regions to the immediate south and west, which are dominated by high mountains and primarily populated by nomads, Chentsa County forms part of a small patch of arable land centered on the provincial capital

made her mother promise that Kelsang would go to school until she decided to drop out—at that time still the most common end to young Tibetans' education.

Kelsang did not drop out. In July of 1991 she became the first member of her family to graduate from senior middle school, which is roughly equivalent to American high school. She continued her education in Repgong at the Malho Teachers' College. After graduating with her *zhongzhuan* (the minimum degree required for teacher's in the PRC) in English and Tibetan she returned to her former primary school to teach Tibetan, Chinese, English, History and Geography.


From the beginning Kelsang was eager to improve her teaching skills, and soon began a three-year correspondence course to improve her

**“The most challenging part though is teaching your students how to become good people...”**

Xining. Many of its residents are employed in agriculture and Kelsang is no different. "I'm a farmer's daughter," she says, with a laugh that betrays an awareness of the cliché in English.

"Growing up, women my age had few opportunities to get an education," she says. "Girls had to stay home to help with the work of the family. All my siblings are uneducated." Kelsang's father, however,

English. "At home," she says "there was little opportunity to practice English, so I mostly practiced by reading, or recording my own voice and playing it back." Still unsatisfied with her language skills, she returned to school, enrolling at the Qinghai Teachers' College in Xining in 2001 to complete her *benke* (equivalent to a bachelor's degree) in English. Shortly thereafter she returned home to take up a new position at the Chentsa County



*On the eastern edges of the Tibetan Plateau the rugged landscape gives way to rolling hills where farmers grow wheat, potatoes, and rapeseed.*

Nationalities Middle School, where she soon became a head teacher.

Chentsa County Nationalities Middle School is a boarding school comprised primarily of the children of nomads and farmers whose homes are far from the school. As a head teacher, Kelsang was responsible for her students day and night, and taught as many as eighty thirteen- to fifteen-year-olds in a single small classroom, rotating seats each month to give each student an opportunity to be near the front of the class.

In 2004 Kelsang traveled to Xining for a workshop, sponsored by Trace Foundation, on student-centered teaching methodology for Tibetan English-language teachers. “It was a rare opportunity, particularly for English teachers,” she says. “I learned about more ‘hands-on’ teaching methodology, and became impassioned to learn more about

how to teach.” It was during this first meeting that Kelsang also learned about the international scholarships provided by Trace Foundation, which would eventually bring her to the US.

Kelsang applied for the scholarship in 2006 to pursue a Masters of Arts in teaching English at the School for International Training (SIT) in Brattleboro, Vermont but the admissions office was skeptical that Kelsang would be able to compete in the program with native English speakers. Ultimately, however, they decided to grant her the opportunity and in January 2008 she arrived in the US to begin seven months of intensive English-language training at the International Language Institute of Massachusetts.

At first, the adjustment was difficult for her. “Before coming to America, I’d never been outside of Qinghai—I’d never even been to a big city like

Beijing,” she explained. Everything felt new and unfamiliar to her and she dearly missed her family and the tight-knit community of her hometown. “I kept thinking: I can’t do it; I want to go home. I cried a lot.” But, she stayed, and in September of that year, began her studies at SIT with a focus on language acquisition, teaching methodology, and culture.

Although she admits to being shy at first, Kelsang eventually began regularly visiting each of her professors after class to discuss with them the situations she faced at home and possible solutions. Kelsang was inspired by these talks with her professors. “I found I was learning in two ways: in one way through the actual content and in another by sitting back and watching how my professors were teaching.”

Kelsang also had the opportunity to take part in teaching practica,







▲  
*Kelsang Kyi was raised on a small farm like this one in neighboring Bayen County.*



▲  
*Kelsang Kyi at Trace Foundation's Latse Library before her return to Chentsa*

▲  
*Many girls in Tibetan areas have no opportunity to attend school due to the family's need for help with farm work.*

including one at the Brattleboro Union High school where she was amazed by the incredible number of books and computers available for the students to use. "At my school," she told us, "we have a library, but we don't use it much as it has nearly completely collapsed." Crumbling infrastructure is not the only challenge she faces at home. "Being a teacher is a challenge, particularly in the countryside. We have very few teaching tools. The most challenging part though is teaching your students how to become good people...students need an education that will not only teach them skills, but one that will help them learn how to learn and how to be a part of a community."

Perhaps because of her interest in cultivating whole and well-rounded students, she took an early interest in course design. She was inspired by the emphasis her instructors placed on culture and the importance of relating new knowledge to the experience and context of students. "A textbook," she says, "is just a tool. It's not everything." Far more important, she believes is the relationship between a teacher and her students and the teacher's ability to make the lesson relevant to a student's life.

Kelsang progressed rapidly. Though she'd never used a computer before, the program required that she submit weekly typed assignments: a challenge she soon mastered, finding along the way that her writing improved dramatically. In 2010, when Kelsang graduated, the admissions counselor who had expressed concern over her ability to compete with her fellow students came forward to tell her that she had risen to the challenge, and counted amongst the best students in her class.

Thinking of the teachers who will follow in her footsteps, Kelsang advises "When living in another culture, it's hard, but all human beings are the same. Don't get intimidated or be afraid of making mistakes. Whatever's in your mind, just open your mouth and say it. You have to get out of your room, and go out and experience things; learning happens there too."

"There must be more opportunities for rural teachers to receive training. The teachers in these areas really need this opportunity to create even a small change in the community," she says, reflecting on her time in the US. "The more I see, the more I learn just how important education is." ◆

*On July 1st, Kelsang flew home to Qinghai to see her husband and son for the first time in two-and-a-half years. In the fall she will take up her former position leading English language classes at Chentsa County Nationalities Middle School.*



[www.trace.org/KelsangKyi.html](http://www.trace.org/KelsangKyi.html)



## *announcement*

# enhancement internship program

Trace Foundation has recently launched the Enhancement Internship Program, a new opportunity for outstanding individuals from Tibetan areas of China to advance their academic pursuits and careers. The program, which includes a one year enrollment in English classes as well the opportunity to put that knowledge into practice, aims at helping promising individuals to obtain experience living and studying English in the United States. The internship is based in New York with a commitment of one year.

In order for us to ensure the success of this new program, we need the active support and involvement of the communities around us. Once we have identified our promising individuals, we think that the best way for them to really immerse themselves in a new culture and learn the language is to be placed with a local host family in New York for part or the entirety of their stay.

We want to match the interns with safe, supportive and culturally sensitive local host families, who will provide them with the opportunity to practice their English, as it will be the only language spoken at home. This experience will also provide the Intern the chance to experience American culture first-hand, as they will be eating the local food, attending local activities and having full exposure to an American family's day-to-day life. The Intern will also get a chance to gain practical experience in a nonprofit setting that will improve their careers and broaden their overall perspective. This is a great opportunity for the Interns, but it is also a wonderful opportunity for host families. If you are involved with or interested in learning more about Tibetan culture, this is a terrific chance to enhance your family's life by sharing it with a Tibetan intern. It will give you the chance to teach an intern about American culture and values, while at the same time learning about their background, culture and beliefs. While gaining an understanding of a foreign culture, you will also experience a unique opportunity to view your own culture with new eyes. This kind of exchange is meaningful for all participants and will create bonds that last a lifetime.

Information on how to apply for the internship can be found at **[www.trace.org/about\\_getting\\_internship.html#enhancement](http://www.trace.org/about_getting_internship.html#enhancement)** or by writing to **[interns@trace.org](mailto:interns@trace.org)**

If you are interested in hosting an intern, please contact us at **[interns@trace.org](mailto:interns@trace.org)**. Please do share this with friends who may be interested.



## profile jigme gyaltsen

*Jigme Gyaltsen, a senior monk and educator at Ragya Monastery in Qinghai Province, is a longtime partner of Trace Foundation. Together, we have organized projects promoting education and development for over a decade. In 2000, we launched The Tibetan Yak Cheese Project, designed to produce a European-style cheese from the excess milk of the herds of local Tibetan nomads. In addition to providing a source of income for the nomads, the profits made from the sales supports two schools founded by Jigme Gyaltsen himself, The Jigme Gyaltsen Nationalities Vocational School (1994) and The Prairie Talent Girls' School (2005). In May of 2010 we sat down with Jigme Gyaltsen for a short conversation following Local Knowledge & Sustainable Development in the Himalayas, a two day conference at Trace Foundation .*

**"I STARTED** the Jigme Gyalsen Nationalities Vocational School in 1994 out of a wish to contribute to the promotion of Tibetan culture and education," he says. explaining his unique role as a monk headmaster of a secular school. "In general," he continues, "as a monk I should focus on monastic studies, uphold relevant rules and regulations. If I could practice meditation that would be wonderful, but if not, as a monk, I try to undertake things that are beneficial to others."

Of the many social issues Tibet currently faces, Jigme Gyaltsen decided to focus on education due to his belief that "for a nationality, a region, or a country the foundation of its development rests on education." His commitment to economic and

social development through education is thoroughgoing, and in 2005, unable to offer instruction to girls on the grounds of the monastery, he opened a second school—The Prairie Talent Girls' School—specifically for girls. "Girls' education," he asserts "is mothers' education and mothers' education is the initial education of all human kind."

Jigme Gyaltsen's efforts to promote open education can further be seen in the makeup of his student body. Despite The Jigme Gyaltsen's Vocational School's monastic setting, it welcomes lay students and they form a substantial portion of the student body. For both lay and monastic students an education at The Jigme Gyaltsen Vocational School or The Prairie Talent Girls' School is

▶  
*Jigme Gyaltsen, long-time partner of Trace Foundation, on a hill above Ragya Monastery in Golok Prefecture*

a unique opportunity to learn both about traditional Tibetan culture, as well as what Jigme Gyaltzen calls “the cultural knowledge of this new century.” Using the centuries-old techniques of Buddhist debate to teach contemporary subjects, the traditional is never far from the modern at these schools.

This fusion of the old and the new, the local and the global, which is crystallized in The Tibetan Yak Cheese Project, underlies all of Jigme Gyaltzen’s efforts as he seeks to create “a model that unites tradition with modern culture and promotes them simultaneously.” By embracing the region’s cultural and physical assets, Jigme Gyaltzen seeks to help Tibetan communities grow in a way natural to their culture society and

environment.

Many challenges, however, remain to the development of what is still largely a small-scale society facing today’s global markets. “In today’s Tibet, most families manage their own businesses,” explains Jigme Gyaltzen. “In the case of farmers, each one cultivates his own land, and sells his own barley. Therefore, each family has to have a businessman, and that’s very hard to accomplish.” With this in mind, in 2009, he started The Snowland Animal Husbandry Development Association to promote the efforts of small cooperatives of herders. These cooperatives actively work to promote and enhance local products, as a means to protect and revitalize local culture. By banding together,

these individuals have been able to gain access to larger and more distant markets, providing greater stability and long-term sustainability.

Ultimately, Jigme Gyaltzen believes that these small groups of nomads, rooted as they are in the land and the local community, hold the greatest potential for the future development of Tibetan areas. “At times, there may be sporadic development, but being sustainable and beneficial at all times is very important. From our Tibetan perspective,” he explains, “to our thinking, or in our religious beliefs: we believe in many previous lives and many future lives—until we achieve enlightenment—and we plan everything according to that mindset.” ♦



To read more about *Local Knowledge & Sustainable Development in the Himalayas* download the report, “Happiness is the Only Meaningful Measure of Development,” at [www.trace.org/downloads/REPORT\\_Roo5b.pdf](http://www.trace.org/downloads/REPORT_Roo5b.pdf)



# *pakéling*

by JEREMY BURKE

*Pakéling is the name of Trace Foundation's Tibetan language class at Latse Library. The class, held every Saturday morning, provides an introduction to Tibetan writing, grammar, vocabulary and culture. Classes are free and open to the public, for more information visit our website or write to [info@latse.org](mailto:info@latse.org).*



*This recurring column of the same name will feature a new Tibetan word or phrase every quarter with an explanation of its meaning, and calligraphy by master musician and calligrapher Phuntsok Dhumkhang. For the first issue of Künpen Tamsar, Trace Foundation's Controller Jeremy Burke shares his experience learning Tibetan at Pakéling.*

**IN FEBRUARY** of this year, Trace Foundation's Latse Library launched its first language class, *Pakéling: Fundamentals of Tibetan Language and Culture*. This elementary level class was intended for adult students to learn conversational and written Tibetan. It also offered those already familiar with Tibetan the opportunity to refresh or improve their skills.

The class was taught by Tenzin Norbu, an instructor at the Weatherhead East Asian Institute at Columbia University who teaches all different levels of students at the university. The students who

attended the course were from various backgrounds and nationalities (Tibetan, American, Korean, French, German, Italian, Sri Lankan), but all had a shared desire and interest to deepen their understanding of Tibetan culture through the study of its language.

I had only limited exposure to the Tibetan language before taking the class, mainly through my colleagues at Trace Foundation. In four years of working at Trace Foundation, I have been able to pick up some basic phrases here and there, but was not able to follow the spirited and

vibrant conversations of my coworkers. When I heard that the library would be offering a language class to the public, I was one of the first people to sign up.

The class was mainly conducted in Tibetan in order to immerse students in the language and allow us to become attuned to the sounds of the spoken language. I found the first classes overwhelming given my unfamiliarity with Tibetan. Many words sound similar and mispronouncing words can easily lead to misunderstanding and embarrassment.



ཡུལ་ཁྱིམ་ [ˈpʰakeiɭɪŋ] Pakéling can be loosely translated as “Tibetan Language Corner.” “Paké” literally means “father language,” referred to in English as a “mother tongue” or “native language.” One of the uses of the term *ling* is to refer to a special place for a certain activity. From as early as Tibetan Imperial times, one can find terms such as *dragyurling*, a place where individuals do translation work, or *samtenling*, an area dedicated to meditation. Pakéling, therefore, is meant to be a special corner devoted to the study and appreciation of the Tibetan language.



The written language provided further difficulty for me. The script is written from left to right like Latin-based languages, however the vowels are written above or below the consonant, similar to other Sanskrit-based languages. There is also no spacing between words, so it took me some time to be able to identify individual words.

By the end of the class, I was able to read and understand the Tibetan alphabet and some basic vocabulary, and was also able to speak a limited amount of conversational Tibetan. Having this foundation, I then enrolled in the intermediate-level class taught

by the Director of Latse Library, Pema Bhum, which commenced in late spring.

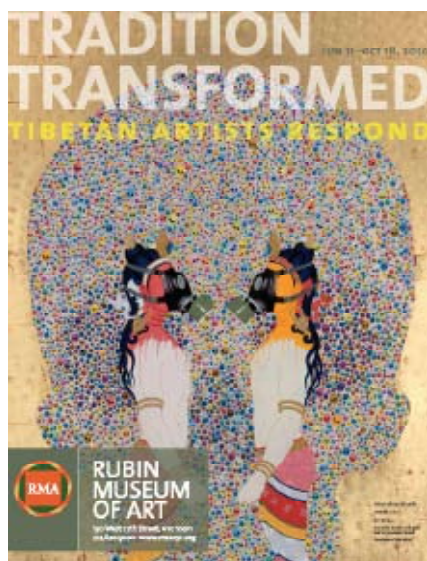
The intermediate class was designed around an old Tibetan folktale “The Farmer and the Nomad,” and each week we would read the story and use it as the basis for learning grammar rules, sentence construction, and new vocabulary. The class also included lessons in Tibetan calligraphy by Phuntsok Dhumkhang, a highly-regarded calligrapher and musician who has taught both subjects for many years.

If you are interested in learning more or enhancing your Tibetan language

skills, the library plans to offer additional classes in the fall. As one of my classmates, Seunghun Lee, an Assistant Professor of Linguistics and TESOL at Central Connecticut State University says, “Attending the Pakéling classes at Trace Foundation is a great way to get an introduction to the Tibetan language. Teachers make sure that everyone in the class understands the materials and allow students to build their Tibetan competency.” ♦

*Jeremy Burke has been the controller at Trace Foundation since 2006.*

## around town gods, redrawn



In the dim light, a hollow-eyed skull stares out from a field of dull gold. The skull, an important symbol in Tantric Buddhism, is perhaps to be expected in the galleries of New York City’s Rubin Museum of Art, an institution dedicated to the display and preservation of Himalayan art. A closer look however reveals that this is anything but usual. The three foot high skull is composed of thousands of smaller skulls in a rainbow of colors, before which stand two bodhisattvas, their normally serene expression obscured by gas masks. This is *Tradition Transformed: Tibetan Artists Respond*, the latest exhibition at The Rubin Museum of Art.

*Tradition Transformed* explores the thriving world of contemporary Tibetan art. Featuring nine artists from around the globe, including two members of the Gendün Chöpel

Artists Guild in Lhasa, the exhibition showcases each artist’s unique response to contemporary society, the competitive international art world, and Tibet’s rich artistic heritage. Items in the collection range from Dedron’s uniquely stylized representations of the Tibetan domestic sphere to the occasionally shocking works of Kesang Lamdark, but at the bottom of each work lies a deep meditation on what it means to be Tibetan in today’s world.

The exhibition catalogue, sponsored in part by Trace Foundation, contains an interview with the Foundation’s Director of Communications and Operations Paola Vanzo on the early days of the Tibetan art scene in Lhasa, and additional works and artists not featured in the exhibit. It is available for purchase at the Rubin Museum.

*Tradition Transformed runs through October 18th at the Rubin Museum of Art, at the corner of 17th Street and 7th Avenue in the Chelsea neighborhood of New York City. For hours visit [www.rmany.org](http://www.rmany.org).*

## announcement

*Trace Foundation regularly organizes lectures, conferences, concerts and exhibitions—all free and open to the public—to raise awareness, throughout the world, of Tibetan culture.*

*Now, we need your help: take five minutes to complete a short survey and help us improve our events for the future.*

*To take the survey visit:  
<http://bit.ly/9KWNVz>*

# library corner the bhutanese collection



**IN THE PAST** two years, Trace Foundation's Latse Library has acquired more than 500 items from Bhutan. These acquisitions expand the library's collection profile from three languages—Tibetan, Chinese and English—to four with the addition of Dzongkha. The national language of Bhutan, Dzongkha is mutually unintelligible with all but a few Tibetan dialects in the far south of the Tibet Autonomous Region. It is, however, written with the Tibetan script and its modern literary form, like that of Central Tibetan, is heavily influenced by classical Tibetan.

Currently, the Dzongkha Collection at the library is dominated by children's books. There is a wealth of children's storybooks in Dzongkha published in Bhutan, as well as materials to develop Dzongkha skills for younger students. Other new materials from Bhutan include grammar and language books, history, and traditional culture. Among the growing collection of English-language materials from Bhutan are photo essay books, publications on the recent enthronement of the new king, Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuk, and resources on the environment, natural sciences, modern literature, and general interest titles. The library has also acquired a number of audio-visual materials including films, documentaries, and music videos, and has initiated four periodical subscriptions, including Bhutan's first magazine for women, *Yeewong*, and an arts and film magazine, *Druk Trowa*.

The library plans to continue collecting comprehensively from Bhutan. All materials are available to visitors, so stop by the library and explore this exciting new array of materials from the land of the thunder dragon. ◆

*The Bhutanese Collection includes reference materials, audio-visual materials, histories, and an extensive collection of children's books.*

# web bytes online resources

*We are pleased to offer a variety of unique online resources. Our resources section, launched in May 2010, has recently been expanded to include our new Trilingual Place Names List, containing Tibetan, Chinese and English names for all prefecture and counties within Tibetan areas of China. More will become available in the next year so be sure to check back regularly. We hope you will find all our tools and reference materials useful and informative and we welcome your feedback and suggestions. Write to us at [pressroom@trace.org](mailto:pressroom@trace.org).*



**Library Catalog** (<http://www.latse.org>, under “Databases” tab): Complete catalog of the holdings of Trace Foundation’s Latse Library.

**Bya-ra Database** (<http://www.latse.org/byara/index.html>): Bya-ra is a bibliographic catalog of over 10,000 research articles in the Tibetan language published in the People’s Republic of China.

**Trace Foundation’s Latse Library Newsletter** (<http://www.latse.org/newsletter/index.html>): Past and current issues of Latse Newsletter in digital format.

**Unicode Tibetan Font Converter (UTFC)** (<http://utfc.trace.org>): Converts Tibetan text files between different encoding and transcription methods, including Unicode.

**Trilingual Lexicon** ([http://www.trace.org/resources/resources\\_tools\\_lexicon.html](http://www.trace.org/resources/resources_tools_lexicon.html)): A reference index of commonly used development terminology in English, Tibetan, and Chinese.

**Tibetan Font Compatibility Table** ([http://www.trace.org/resources/resources\\_tools\\_font\\_compatibility.html](http://www.trace.org/resources/resources_tools_font_compatibility.html)): A reference tool for how commonly used Tibetan Unicode fonts display in different operating systems and programs.

**Trilingual Place Names List** ([http://knowledgebase.trace.org/index.php/Main\\_Page](http://knowledgebase.trace.org/index.php/Main_Page)): Reference resource consisting of a list of names in English, Tibetan and Chinese of places located in Tibetan areas of China.



"Photography is a double edged weapon, a dangerous thing to practice in these parts," observed Fosco Maraini in 1948, along the route from Gangtok, in the then independent kingdom of Sikkim, to Lhasa. This was the thirty-six-year-old Italian photographer's second trip to Tibet, the first having taken place in 1937, with the Italian Tibetologist, Giuseppe Tucci. Between these two trips Maraini took more than 3,500 photographs. Many of them are the only existing records of buildings and art that were destroyed in later decades. Trace Foundation is partnering with the Italian library and cultural institution, Gabinetto Scientifico Letterario G. P. Viesseux to ensure that this unique glimpse of Tibet's past is publicly available.

## in the pipeline the maraini collection

The son of an Italian sculptor and an English writer, Maraini traveled extensively in Central and East Asia. He made two trips to Tibet, covering roughly the same route, in 1937 and 1948, taking thousands of images, using explosive magnesium powder for light and processing the film in Tibetan homes along the way.

Maraini moved to Japan in 1938, after graduating with a degree in anthropology, to study the Ainu people of Hokkaido. While there he learned of the Japanese art of *ukiyo-e* (wood-block prints) and his photography

was heavily influenced by the work of the master Hokusai in particular. In 1943, after refusing to declare loyalty to the fascist government of Italy, Maraini was interned for two years with his family in a Japanese concentration camp. After the war, Maraini returned to Italy, from where he continued to travel and photograph widely. His own account of his two journeys to Tibet was published in 1951 as *Secret Tibet*.

Upon his death in 2004, Maraini's collection of photographs was passed to the Gabinetto Viesseux. The Gabinetto, located in Maraini's hometown of Florence, was founded in 1819 by Giovan Pietro Viesseux, a merchant from Geneva. Originally a reading room for European periodicals, the Gabinetto grew to become an important cultural institution in Italy, helping to connect Italian culture with wider trends in Europe and drawing intellectuals and authors from across Europe and the Americas.

In collaboration with Gabinetto Viesseux, Trace Foundation is working to digitize the full collection of Maraini's photographs. When it is launched in 2011, the Fosco Maraini Collection will comprise more than 7,000 extensively annotated photographs by Maraini of Tibet and neighboring areas in Central Asia and will provide a unique visual record of Tibet's history. ♦



The collection will be freely available at [www.trace.org](http://www.trace.org) and on the website of the Gabinetto Viesseux [www.viesseux.fi.it](http://www.viesseux.fi.it).





## working culture

by **TENZIN GELEK**

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Coming from around the globe, Trace Foundation's volunteers and interns make the work of the foundation possible.

"Internship" was a fairly new concept to me when I first came to the US to pursue my masters in Global Marketing Communication and Advertising at Emerson College, Boston. So, when Trace Foundation offered me the opportunity to intern, I was naturally very excited and nervous at the same time. I didn't know much about Trace Foundation and was introduced to it by an American friend. However, when I initially started reading about Trace on their website, I was truly impressed by the Foundation's accomplishments and its visions for the future. Before coming to Trace, I had interned with a highly successful Hollywood production house. But as much as I appreciated working there, I will always regard the Trace internship as a unique experience. It is very rare to find an internship

that not only helps develop one's professional career but also provides the opportunity to learn about one's own roots and culture, and in the process, transform one's attitude towards everything. My internship at Trace is very significant for that reason.

Trace Foundation is a small organization with a big vision carried out through the different yet closely linked teams: Operations, Communications, Research, IT, Finance, Programs and Latse Library. The Foundation currently has eight interns and two volunteers in these different departments at its headquarters in New York. This group of young interns holds an eclectic mix of perspectives from Asia, Europe and the US. I believe that this characteristic resonates with the Foundation's core value of being a

## VOLUNTEERS & INTERNSHIPS

Interns with Trace Foundation will become part of our multi-cultural, multi-national team based here in New York City and gain experience and insight into working in the non-profit sector. As interns work towards the goals of the Foundation, they will have the opportunity to put their unique set of skills and knowledge to work in the real world. Internships within the Foundation are available in a wide variety of fields, including library sciences, research, communications and IT.

Past interns with Trace Foundation have:

- Generated ideas and written articles for newsletters, reports, and websites
- Assisted in the design of printed materials and our website
- Helped with the organization of a variety of academic and cultural events
- Assisted with the development of multi-lingual research resources
- Worked with multimedia production and editing
- Assisted in the cataloguing and digitalization of library materials

Trace Foundation accepts applicants for internships and volunteer work year-round.

If you are interested in applying for either an internship or a volunteer opportunity, please send your CV and a letter of interest to Trace Foundation, ATTN: Volunteers & Interns, 132 Perry Street, Suite 2B, New York, NY 10014 or [jobs@trace.org](mailto:jobs@trace.org).

dynamic international organization, bringing together diverse world experiences towards a common goal.

It is very important for an internship to be a win-win relationship between the intern and the sponsoring organization. Interns can bring fresh outlook and energy to an organization while the organization provides them with guidance and opportunities to engage real-life challenges. It is for precisely this reason that Thupten Gonpo, one of my fellow interns who works with the Research Department, chose Trace Foundation over another internship opportunity. Thupten is from Sichuan Province and is fluent in Tibetan, Mandarin and English. He is pursuing his MS at the Bard Center for Environmental Policy in New York and is currently assisting research into the environment in Tibetan regions of China. Thupgon, as he is known at the office, describes the internship as “a fantastic opportunity to utilize my language skills while also learning about the environment and related policies in China that I was not exposed to while studying in America.”

What I have found in my more than ten months of interning at Trace Foundation is that no two days are the same and there is always an element of excitement associated with the projects that interns are allowed to undertake. That is an incredible opportunity for anyone starting out to expand their academic as well as professional careers. I think Thupgon sums up this triumphant feeling best when he says, “Even though I am from Tibet, I am amazed at how much more there is to learn about the intellectual ability and resources of Tibetan people from different regions. Coming to work everyday, I am curious and excited to find out

what I’ll learn that day.”

There are many reasons for students to intern at Trace Foundation. However, Tenzin Tsepak, an MA student at Indiana University has an interesting one. An intern with Trace Foundation’s Latse library, he states that he is here primarily because of Pema Bhumi, the library’s director and a well-known Tibetan literary figure. “I am inspired by his vision,” he says, “and want to learn more about Tibetan language and literature through him.” Tsepak is currently working on collating a digital database for the Latse Oral History Project.

Another intern who adds to the diversity of the working populace at Trace is Irma Orlandi, an Italian student for whom Tibet is completely new. A recent intern with the Communications team, she is currently working on the Foundation’s newsletter and hopes to bring a wealth of fresh perspectives and ideas to the table.

I just mentioned some of my fellow interns, but there are others doing equally valuable and commendable work. While each intern at Trace is unique, through the interactions I have had with each one of them, I find a common denominator that is the essence of interning at Trace Foundation; it is that perfect blend of fun and professionalism, which is exemplified in different ways—from the insightful discussions during lunch-breaks to the variety of the responsibilities each intern is assigned. ♦

# announcement

## publications available



For more than fifteen years Trace Foundation has supported the publication of new and classic Tibetan texts. Today, we're offering libraries and cultural institutions around the world the opportunity to expand their collections with these important works in the hope of increasing scholarship on the Tibetan world.

In the cultural sector, Trace Foundation has been involved in a variety of initiatives including cultural heritage preservation, support of local traditions, documentation of folk culture and local history, as well as the promotion of contemporary Tibetan arts. Over the years, we have fostered major initiatives aimed at preserving and distributing rare and ancient texts and have supported the publication of an impressive number of books on various subjects in Tibetan language. To date, more than a million copies of these publications have been distributed in China and made available to a large audience free of charge.

While we are distributing these publications free of charge, we would require interested parties to cover shipping and handling charges. The books will be distributed on a first-come first-served basis. Interested parties can contact us at [publications@trace.org](mailto:publications@trace.org). If you would like to join a mailing list to be informed of any future publications, please let us know.

You can find details of all publications we have supported on our website at:

**[http://www.trace.org/resources/resources\\_references\\_publications.html](http://www.trace.org/resources/resources_references_publications.html)**

The following three titles are just a selection of the many currently available:

1. *bcom ldan rigs pa'i ral gri'i gsung 'bum* (10 vols.) - The Collected Works of a Famous Kadampa Master Jomden Rikpé Reldri (1227-1305), connected with Nartang Monastery
2. *mi bskyod mkhas grub rgya mtsho'i gsung 'bum phyogs bsgrigs* (1 vol.) - Selected Works of Mikyö Khedrup Gyatso, predominantly on Tibetan medicine and Buddhist meditation practice
3. *rgyal rong dmangs khrod gtam tshogs* - The Folk Sayings of Gyelrong, composed and edited by Tsenlha Ngakwang



# yülshül earthquake update



Trace Foundation has been actively supporting the ongoing relief effort in Yülshül. To date we have distributed \$50,000 worth of relief goods and tents to the affected area. Trace Foundation has also assisted in channeling donations. **To support this effort please contact us at [pressroom@trace.org](mailto:pressroom@trace.org).**

For more information on Trace Foundation's efforts please visit [http://www.trace.org/news/news\\_yulshulquake.html](http://www.trace.org/news/news_yulshulquake.html)

## talk to us

**We're always eager to hear what you have to say.**

Write us at [pressroom@trace.org](mailto:pressroom@trace.org), call +1 (212) 367-7380, come by our headquarters at 132 Perry St., Suite 2B, New York, NY 10014 or visit us at any of the sites below:

[www.trace.org](http://www.trace.org)



[www.facebook.com/tracefoundation](http://www.facebook.com/tracefoundation)



[www.twitter.com/tracefoundation](http://www.twitter.com/tracefoundation)



[www.youtube.com/tracefoundation](http://www.youtube.com/tracefoundation)



[www.livestream.com/tracefoundation](http://www.livestream.com/tracefoundation)



[www.issuu.com/tracefoundation](http://www.issuu.com/tracefoundation)

## deadlines

The Deadline for External Grant Applications is October 15th, 2010.

The Deadline for Research Fellowship Applications is November 1st, 2010.

For more information and to download the 2010 application forms, visit our website at [www.trace.org](http://www.trace.org).

Please note that older application forms cannot be accepted.

