

# Yungdrung Tenzin: When I translate, it is a kind of shock

written by Jitka Polanská



**Yungdrung Tenzin - Dominique Troulay by his civic name - was translating into French the teaching of Khenchen Tenpa Yungdrung Rinpoche in this year's summer retreat. What does the process of translation look like from his perspective? "It is a kind of shock," he says. "The teacher starts talking and you have no choice but to listen very carefully, with absolute focus. It is a big responsibility to translate teachings, but I am happy to take this responsibility. "**

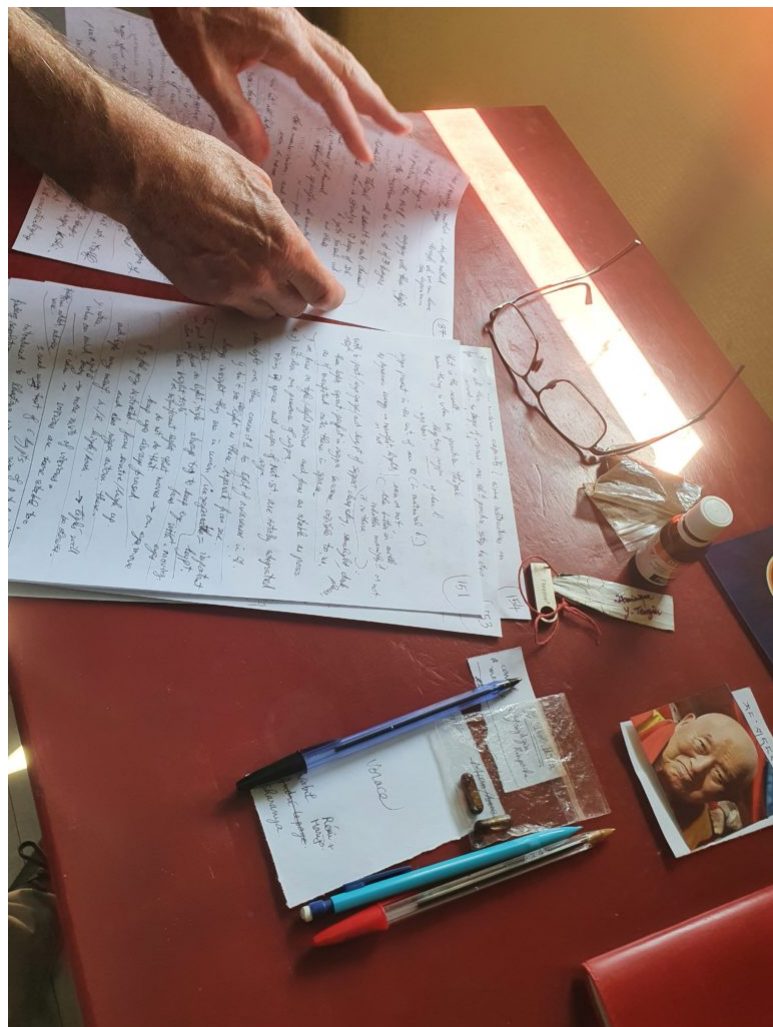
**When you translate a teaching, do you know the text that the teacher is explaining?**

Usually, I don't. I am completely open to what I will hear, and I reproduce it in French. Sometimes the teacher may digress and talk about something that is not in the text, maybe comparing it with some other text - I need to be ready for anything. I just focus on what the teacher says and convey it in French accurately.

**I see you writing a lot...**

The notes are extremely important for me, I write down the maximum that I can of what the teacher says, almost every word. I want to be as faithful as I can. I feel this is a big responsibility, because

what is explained is of great importance. Actually, I do not like having to write so fast, but this is the only way I can do it. My memory is weak, and I cannot keep in my mind a speech lasting sometimes several minutes. So I need to write these notes. I have written more than two hundred pages during the three weeks of the summer retreat. In the evening I go through my notes again. It is an inspiring activity for me. But if it was possible not to take them, I would be happier. For example, if some technology could transcribe what the teacher says directly onto a screen and I could only listen – that would be much more comfortable for me.



"In the evening, I go through my notes again."

**How do you feel when you translate? Does that kind of concentration have any benefit for you?**

It is a kind of shock. The teacher starts talking and you have no choice but to listen very carefully, with absolute focus. Sometimes I have one or two seconds to listen to a bird outside, but in general I have to be a hundred percent focused on what was said and what I have to say in translation. Even a small distraction is risky. I think it is a good practice, for sure.

**It is a delight to listen to your translation, I mean it. Do other people come to you saying that they appreciate your translation?**

Some people do. They tell me it helps them, even if they understand English. When they listen to my translation it helps them understand something that they did not understand or to be sure they understood well. And if some people have some doubts about what I said, I have my notes and we can check.

**Does Khenpo Rinpoche understand your translation? His passive knowledge of French seems good.**

I do not know exactly but I noticed sometimes, when somebody was translating and I was just listening, that he corrected the translation at a point, which means he understood the French words that were chosen.





"I am completely open to what I will hear."

**Khenpo Rinpoche usually waits until you finish translating, but in some cases it happens that he starts talking before you completed your translation. Is it stressful when you have**

**to stop him?**

Yes, a little bit, but I have to do it. Sometimes I also have to ask him to repeat a word about which I am not sure or I forgot it. I would rather not but it is necessary. I have to be sure that I translate accurately. It is a responsibility, but I am happy to take this responsibility. I have big respect for Khenchen Rinpoche and devotion to him and I am very happy that I can translate for him and for the sangha.

**You translated Khenpo Rinpoche's occasional public talks in the past, but not regular retreats. You started to be more involved as a translator when Shenten began with online teachings, is that right?**

Yes, I was not very confident about being able to do it, before and I am really surprised that I can. The online teachings during all those lockdowns were good practice for me. I did many, many hours of translations for Khenpo Gelek and his daily sessions, and then also for other teachers. Gradually, I gained more confidence. Online translation is simultaneous, and I like it, especially because I do not have to take any notes (he laughs).

*The second part of the interview will bring a personal story of Yungdrung Tenzin, a Yungdrung Bon monk from a Western background.*

Photos: Jitka Polanská

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## **When I clean rooms and do laundry, I recite A KAR A ME, Cristela says**

written by Jitka Polanská





**Cristela Trujillo has been coming to Shenten since 2008 and everyone knows her magic hand. She is a karma yoga queen. When she became in charge of the laundry, sheets and towels stood in no time in perfect, one-color stacks and the place changed its vibes completely. And when she cleans rooms, as quick as wind, she purifies herself too.**

I have been living in New York for quite some years. I do mainly housekeeping and baby-sitting. I have several jobs at a time, actually, to earn as much money as I can (she laughs). I came to the city when the owners of the store in Valle de Bravo, where I worked for a long time, had to close their business. There was nothing to do in Valle de Bravo and *narcos* began arriving in the area. I thought the time had come to go and try something different, somewhere else. I knew New York because I had lived there when I was young, with my husband and my little daughter. She was two-year old at that time. The marriage did not work well, and we decided to split up soon after. I moved back to Mexico, to Valle de Bravo because my mum is from there. I started to work there in a gym, as a spinning trainer, and in my spinning classes I met a nice lady. We became friends.

She was the owner of the store selling ethnic furniture. One day she asked me if I could take care of her business for two months because she was going on holiday abroad with her family. I said yes. The shop kept me busy only at weekends, while during weekdays I still worked at the gym. When she came back, she offered me a steady job with her because she was happy with how I had managed. And sometime later, she invited me to join her for meditation in her friend's house. Finally, one day she asked me if I wanted to go with her for a retreat. I said yes. Why not? It was a retreat dedicated to Red Garuda practice with Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche, in 1999. I liked it, I felt very connected right away with the teacher and the teaching. Bon seemed to me like something close and familiar.

Since then I continued going to a retreat every year, and I went to group meditation with my friend every week. In 2008 the Mexican group of Bon followers invited me to come with them to Shenten. I did not feel like going. I had surgery to remove a cancer two months earlier and I was very weak. They insisted that I should come, and offered financial help. That year the teaching was about the healing practice of Yeshe Walmo. So I joined them.

When I saw Yongdzin Rinpoche for the first time, it was a shock. I felt fire in my chest. It was very touching. I remember me, during the teachings, leaning on the wall in the gompa, very weak, sitting still, my heart filled with this strong, special, emotion of awe. It was a kind of love for Yongdzin Rinpoche. I cannot explain in words what I feel each time I see him. And each time that I come to Shenten I feel his presence. When I see his photo, wherever I am, it is as if he is looking at me.

That time, when I came to Shenten, I also spoke with Khenpo Tenpa Yungdrung Rinpoche, I told him about my illness, and he said: keep your practice of Red Garuda. I did not tell him about it, but he knew somehow.

When I was leaving Shenten for Mexico, I promised to myself: I have to come back, this must not be my last time here. But I continued having health issues and my condition did not allow me to come the following year. In 2010 I would have loved to come when His Holiness and Yongdzin Rinpoche were at Shenten together, but I had my second surgery. My Mexican friends all sent me photos from Shenten, and I followed events from a distance. I remember being happy.

I only came back to Shenten in 2013 and I felt immediately at home again. Each time I come to this place it feels like coming home. From then on, I came in 2015, and 2016... every year.

I always try to do something for the place, offer my help, mainly cleaning. To me it is like cleaning my house, and I really love cleaning a place where Yongdzin Rinpoche spent so much time. In 2017 organizers of the summer retreat asked me to take care of the laundry. It was my pleasure.



The laundry of Shenten has changed its vibes under Cristela's magic hand. Shenten, August 2022.

In 2018 I decided to take a year off work and go to do a work retreat where I was needed. I saved money for that beforehand. First, I went to the center of Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche, Serenity Ridge, in Virginia, and I met Khenpo Tenpa Yungdrung Rinpoche there. He came to teach. From there I moved to Kathmandu and continued my karma yoga at the monastery. Finally, I arrived at Shenten. It was in April and there was nobody there, only Khenpo Gelek and Geshe Samten. Then, Yongdzin Rinpoche came. It was his last year at Shenten. I spent several months in Shenten in his presence, and it was a blessing. I saw him every day when he went out in the afternoon. When he passed by the laundry, going back, he would say "goodbye" to me. I was very lucky. I knew that his room was just above the laundry and I worked with joy in my heart.

In October of that year, Shenten organized a big ceremony of DUTRISU. I took part, and since then reciting A KAR A ME Du TRI SU is my constant practice. I clean and recite the mantra. I still have some health problems and I have to be careful. When my body tells me to stop, I have to take a rest. But my illness is in remission, and I am confident in my practice. In general, I have lots of energy and I like moving, working. I am very focused on what I do and I recite the mantra with it. This is meditation for me. While I am cleaning a room or doing laundry I purify myself.





Cristela: "In general, I have lots of energy and I like moving, working." Shenten, August 2022.

Photos: Jitka Polanská