Khenchen Tenpa Yungdrung: I am inspired to help those children

written by Jitka Polanská



Many children in remote areas of the Himalayas will get poor or no education if they remain in their villages. Knowing this, Khenchen Tenpa Yungdrung Rinpoche, the abbot of Triten Norbutse Bön monastery in Kathmandu, had worked hard for fifteen years to create favorable conditions for building a school where such children can learn what will support them in their lives. Finally, Tise Himalayan International School (THIS) was born, five years ago. Currently, it hosts around hundred sixty students. "They are enthusiastic to learn and talented in many ways. It gives me strength and motivation to keep on going no matter how difficult it is to finance and run the institution," Khen Rinpoche says.

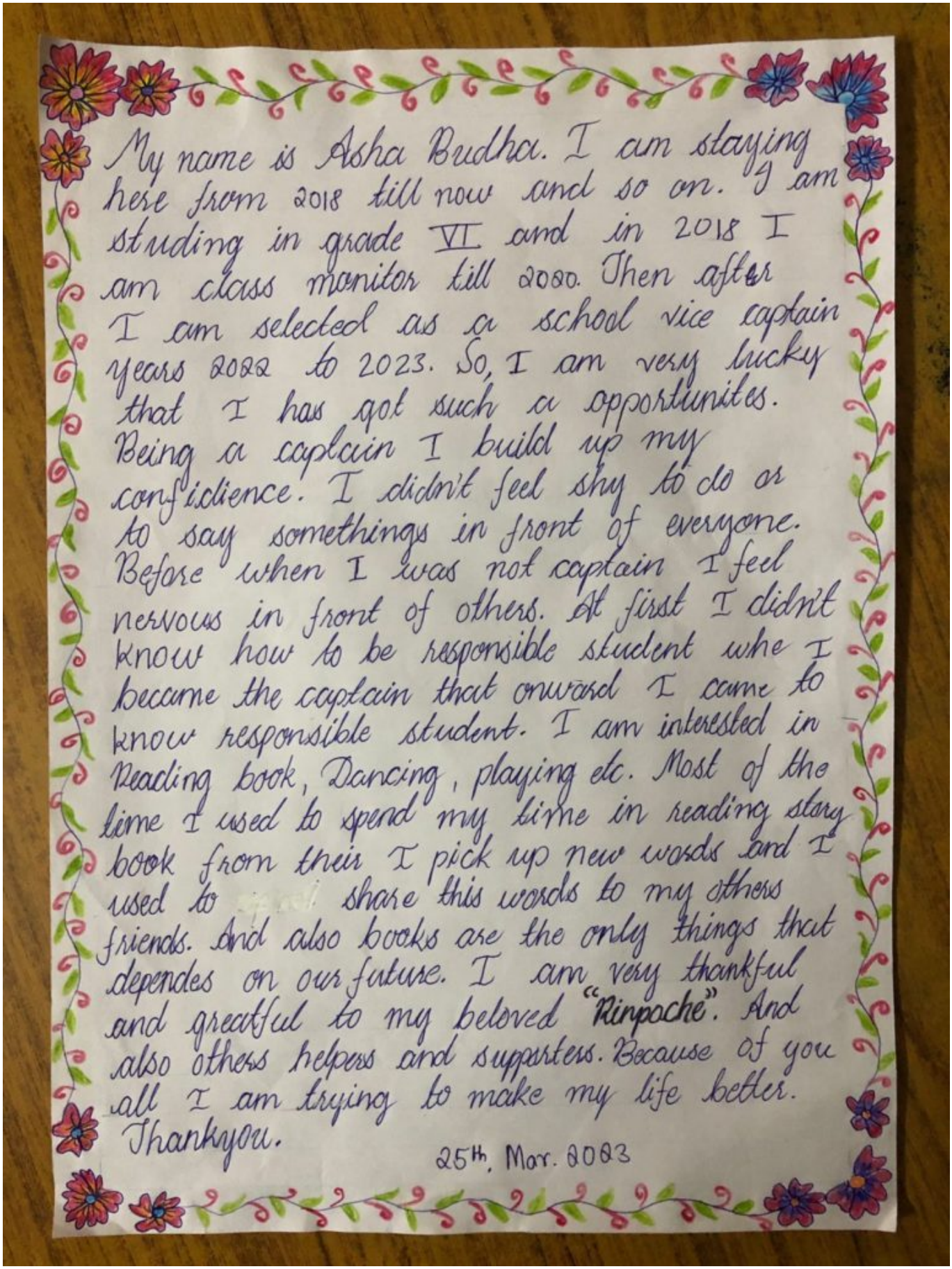
You go often to the school, being the leader of the school's team, and you have a chance to spend time with the children. What would you say about them? What do you see?

When I go there, I see happy, bright and healthy children enjoying themselves and willing to learn.

Older ones can read and write in Tibetan, all of them learn Tibetan and English every day, as well as Nepali. They are inspired to succeed in the school subjects, and they like arts and sports. It is a pleasure to see them playing football or dancing. They are good at it!

How would you describe the material conditions of the school?

We do not have many things. As the children grow, I see more and more needs that are not fulfilled yet. Material conditions are modest. Of course, everything is relative. When a western visitor comes, they may see all poor and run down, but compared to some other “charity” schools we do well I think. And we constantly strive to do better. I wish that those kids had things that all children wish to have.

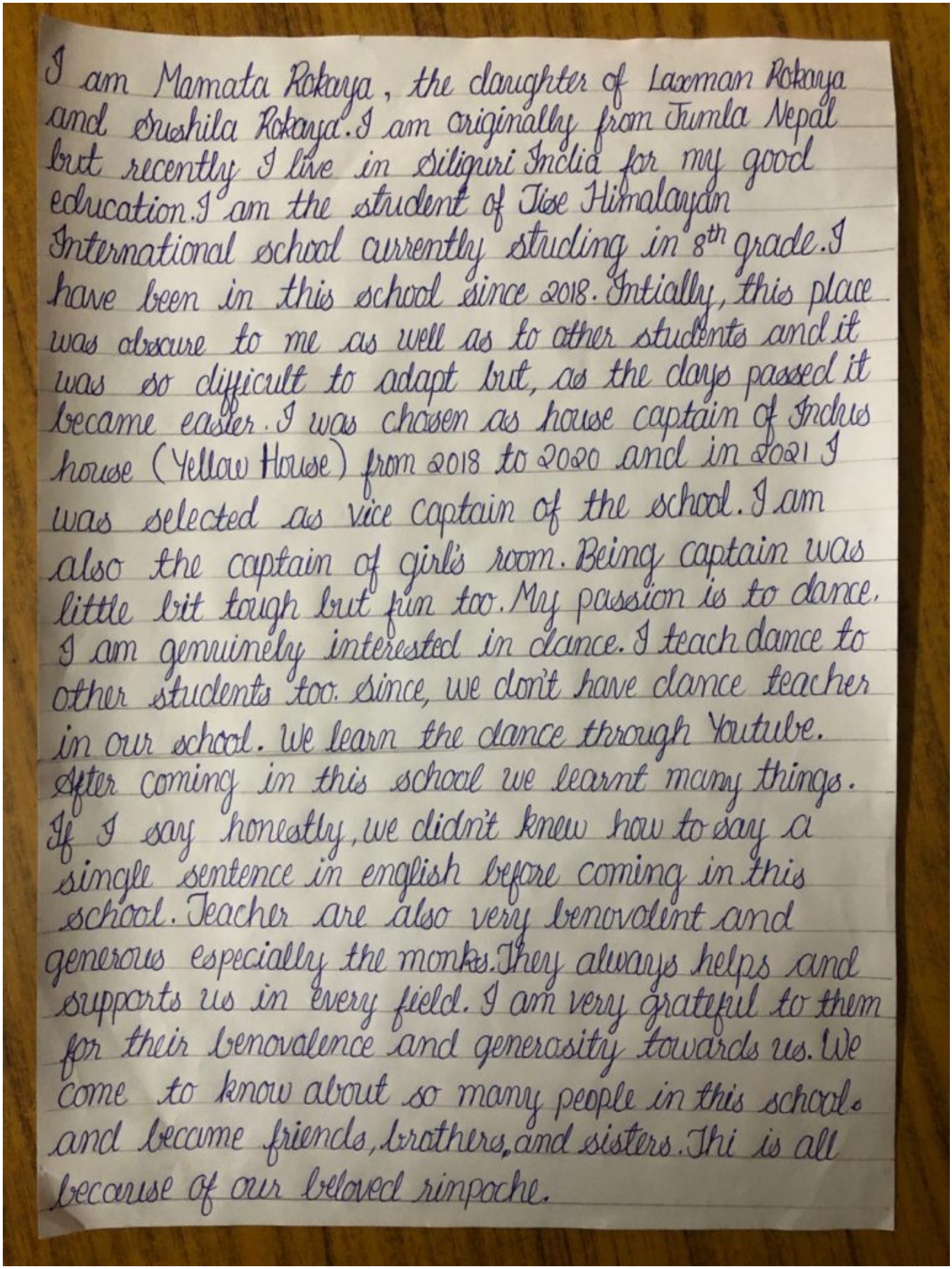

My name is Asha Budha. I am staying here from 2018 till now and so on. I am studing in grade VI and in 2018 I am class monitor till 2020. Then after I am selected as a school vice captain years 2022 to 2023. So, I am very lucky that I has got such a opportunites. Being a caplain I build up my confidience. I didn't feel shy to do or to say somethings in front of everyone. Before when I was not captain I feel nervous in front of others. At first I didn't know how to be responsible student whe I became the captain that onward I came to know responsible student. I am interested in Reading book, Dancing, playing etc. Most of the time I used to spend my time in reading story book from their I pick up new words and I used to share this words to my others friends. And also books are the only things that dependes on our future. I am very thankful and greatful to my beloved "Rinpoche". And also others helpers and supporters. Because of you all I am trying to make my life better. Thankyou.

25th, Mar. 2023

Asha and Mamata were asked by a western visitor to write down their story which they gladly did…



Asha is thirteen and wants to become an English teacher


I am Mamata Rokaya, the daughter of Laxman Rokaya and Sushila Rokaya. I am originally from Jumla Nepal but recently I live in Siliguri India for my good education. I am the student of Tise Himalayan International school currently studing in 8th grade. I have been in this school since 2018. Intially, this place was obscure to me as well as to other students and it was so difficult to adapt but, as the days passed it became easier. I was chosen as house captain of Indus house (Yellow House) from 2018 to 2020 and in 2021 I was selected as vice captain of the school. I am also the captain of girl's room. Being captain was little bit tough but fun too. My passion is to dance. I am genuinely interested in dance. I teach dance to other students too. Since, we don't have dance teacher in our school. We learn the dance through Youtube. After coming in this school we learnt many things. If I say honestly, we didn't knew how to say a single sentence in english before coming in this school. Teacher are also very benovolent and generous especially the monks. They always helps and supports us in every field. I am very grateful to them for their benovalence and generasity towards us. We come to know about so many people in this school and became friends, brothers, and sisters. Thi is all because of our beloved rinpoche.

"Honestly, we did not know a single sentence in English before coming in this school."



Mamata (in the yellow T-shirt). “Our wish? To stay in a room with just three or four people.”

What are the things which are not there yet and would be necessary?

Better shoes and clothing, especially sports shoes, for example. Also, we would need to furnish our library with more books, maybe putting some board games too, we would like to buy a couple of laptops for the library. We do not have these things. We should improve the conditions for doing sports. At the moment there is a playground for football and that’s all. The children are very creative in playing with the little they have, they are very lively, but of course, I would like to give them more and they deserve more.

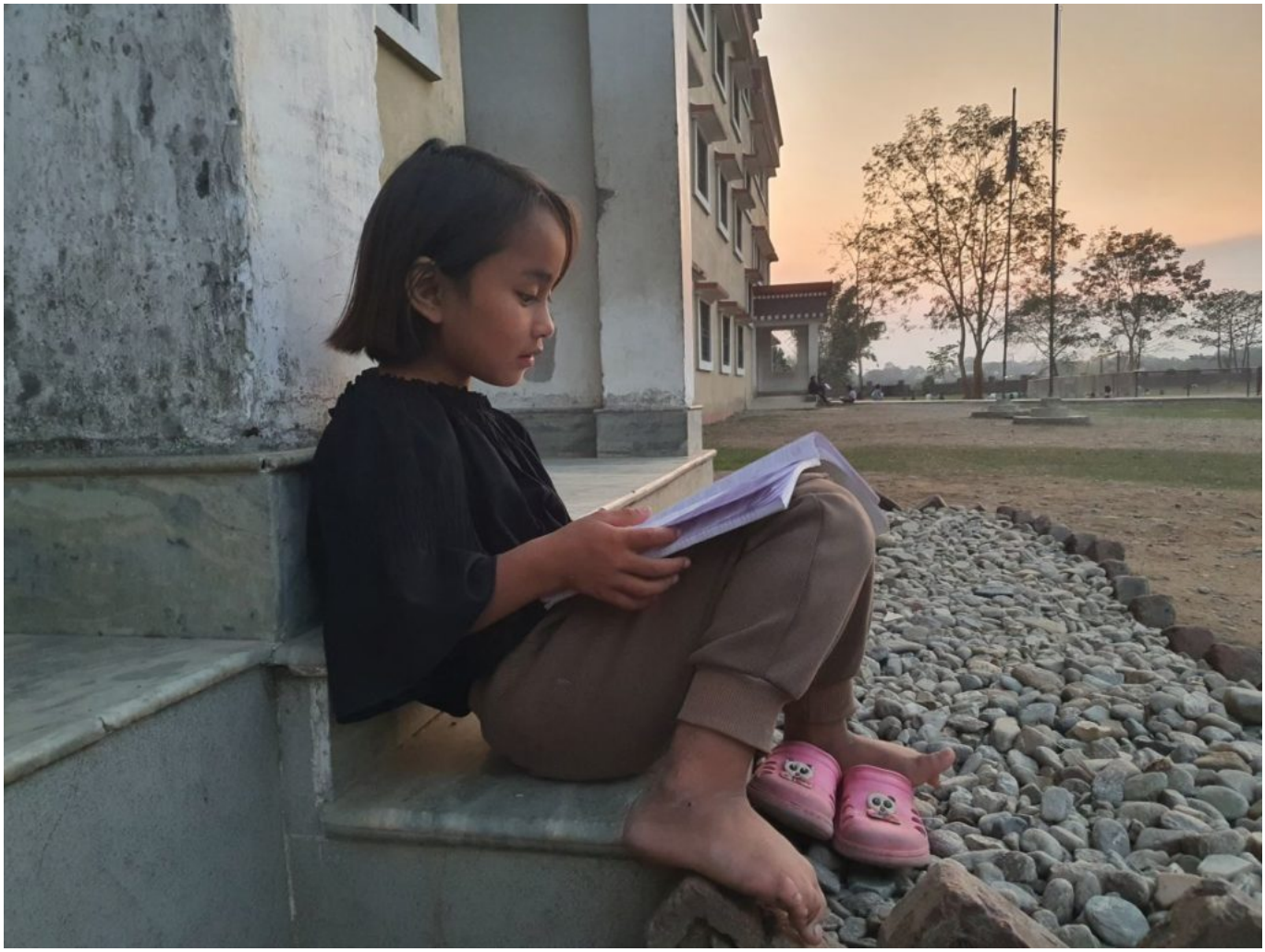


Teenage children also may need more personal space.

Yes, as the number of children grows every year, it becomes more and more urgent to expand the hostel. Our priority is to build a hostel just for girls and offer them a space more in accordance with their needs, with more privacy and comfort, while the current building would be used only by boys.

There is a plan to offer not only primary, but also secondary education at the school, altogether 12 grades. Why is providing good primary education (8 grades) or primary and lower secondary education (10 grades) not enough?

Teenage is a crucial period in education. Children should deepen their knowledge of Tibetan and get longer exposure to value education. If not, they may lose what they learned because it will not be stabilized.



A period of exams…



Boys have dreams of becoming sports champions



Children help to keep the hostel clean



… especially on Sundays when there is no school



Children are agile



and can entertain themselves with all kinds of play


Many boys love football, they follow news about it in newspaper and they play it passionately

What would you say about the teachers? Is it difficult to find and keep them?

Some of our teachers are there from the very beginning, which we appreciate a lot, continuity and stability are very important. As for now, we cannot pay high salaries but still, we receive applications from valuable candidates. Recently, we hired a science teacher, a math teacher and an additional Nepali teacher.


Rakuten




Date-07/03/2023.
B. Garbhagriha.





Teachers…

This year you admitted twenty eight new children, aged 5 to 9. They may seem quite many to be integrated at once. Many things will be completely new for them. Is it difficult for the school to manage that?

We received more than fifty applications from parents or guardians, our plan was to take in twenty, maximum twenty-five children, then we added three more children because they were weak and vulnerable and we did not want to leave them out. I think we need to go on this way, and I believe that the school can manage. We have a very good system of self-organization of children in the hostel, older children help younger ones, also two nannies and other staff are there for everyone. I think we can manage, but of course, I do not say it is an easy thing to do. And there are plenty of things we have to improve.

Now in April there is the fifth year´s anniversary of the school. What would you say looking back and what are your next steps and goals?

When I look back, I see lots of accomplishments done in those five years, children are growing and responding well to the teachings, they are compassionate and respectful, along with good progress of other subjects including English, they can read and write Tibetan quite well, of which they had zero knowledge when they arrived; they progress. In April we opened the eighth grade and so now we have all eight grades of primary education. If we want to go further and offer secondary education, we need to apply for affiliation with the Central Board of Secondary Education (SBSE). We need to meet many requirements for the infrastructure of the school including the classrooms´

size and equipment for a science lab, a library, we need to have prescribed teaching materials, and the necessary number of teachers with proper qualification.



“There are many things to be done ahead of me, but I do not feel discouraged.”

You are responsible for a monastery and also teach the western students which makes you travel a lot. Besides that, you have put an enormous effort in founding the school and you have a big burden of sustaining it on your shoulders. Why has it become one of your priorities?

Lots of people of my generation, including myself, did not have an opportunity of getting a good education when they were children. People could not study, not because they were not able to, they are smart, but an opportunity was not there for them. I finally obtained a good monastic education, but many others have been left with their potential unfulfilled. This is somehow sad to see. And this is still true for many children nowadays. In today’s world, without education they become very vulnerable. Many problems in our communities are rooted in the fact that people could not study and remain underprivileged.

Village primary schools in the remote mountains are generally poor and limited, so children cannot learn much. Life is difficult there and schools lack teachers, good teachers. Often lessons do not even take place, teachers do not come. When parents have a possibility, they send children to private boarding schools as soon as children can go there, in nearby or even more distant towns; there, education is better. But many families cannot do that, they do not have any financial means to pay the fees. Our school is there for the families who cannot pay and wish for their children education including traditional values and language. But we do not admit children on the basis of

ethnicity. What matters is that families appreciate the curriculum and the opportunity that such a school gives to their children.

The school offers cultural and value education and teaching of the Tibetan language. Is it rare to get elsewhere?

Most schools in Nepal do not provide education in Tibetan which means that children of the mountainous regions, who are mostly ethnically Tibetan, lose the cultural background of their parents. Even if a family speaks a Tibetan (or Bhote) dialect, children are more fluent in Nepali and lack understanding of traditions which are all connected to the language. Our culture and values are less and less transmitted to the younger generation.

In the world which is changing dramatically in many aspects, it is a matter of urgency to save and preserve our language, culture and traditional values that have served humanity for thousands of years. They are still relevant.

Schools like the one we founded are very necessary to preserve the Himalayan cultural heritage. The formula is combining secular education with values and culture education, based on the knowledge of Tibetan language.

But the aim is not just to continue the ancient tradition. Such education will equip children well for their adult life. It will help them to find their identity and grow into knowledgeable and self-confident human beings. I can see it is happening, children at the school have blossomed wonderfully. It inspires me, it makes me see we have done the right thing.



Distributing new tracksuits, bought to children by a donor



Informal moments with children…



— show there is heart to heart connection



Selecting teachers, together with Norbu Lama, President of Shering Phunstok Ling (founding society) and Geshe Monlam Tharchin, Educational Director of the school.

Your monastery is in Kathmandu, but you built the school in West Bengal, in India. People may wonder why.

When we were deciding about the location of the school, Nepal was unstable politically and India seemed a more secure place. The city of Siliguri is well connected to Himalayan regions of India, Nepal and Bhutan, and is equipped with good infrastructure and modern facilities that are very important for education and health care.

It took fifteen years before the idea of building a school came to realization. Why so long?

Obviously, what has held us back mostly was lack of money. The school is financed with donations only.

We had to find a good location and purchase a piece of land for it, you do not do such a thing overnight.

Also, it took us quite some time before we got clearer ideas about how the school should be. Among other things, we created teaching materials in Tibetan language, reading books in Tibetan which contain stories related to the areas from where children come and explain various traditions of the people living there.

Then, when we had got some more money, we started building the school´s infrastructure. It is a boarding school, so we need facilities for both a hostel and classrooms. If we succeed in opening secondary education and have twenty five children per class, we would need a place for three hundred children.

There are many things to be done ahead of me, but I do not feel discouraged. It is worth all the effort.

Khenchen Tenpa Yungdrung Rinpoche was born in Dhorpatan, a very remote area of western Nepal. At the age of 11, he entered the local monastery, Tashi Gegye Thaten Ling. After completing an initial course of study in Bön ritual texts and Tibetan calligraphy, he moved to Dolanji, India for further studies at the Dialectics School of Menri Monastery. In 1994, after successfully passing his exams and being awarded the Geshe degree, he went to Kathmandu, Nepal to continue his studies of Tantra and Dzogchen under the guidance of Yongdzin Tenzin Namdak Rinpoche at Triten Norbutse Monastery. In 1996, he was appointed as its Ponlop (Head Teacher) and in 2001 he became abbot.

Photos: Jitka Polanská, Celina Mejia

Read more about the school in this article:

> Education, values, dignity! A school where modernity blends with tradition

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Triten Norbutse monastery in daily life, edition 2023

written by Jitka Polanská



In March 2023 the editor of this magazine went to Triten Norbutse monastery and took some photos there, randomly. They show moments of daily life of the monastery which is the seat of H.E. Yongdzin Tenzin Namdak Rinpoche and the home monastery for lamas of Shenten Dargye Ling.









Monks of Triten Norbutse, randomly

OOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO



The abbot Khenchen Tenpa Yungdrung Rinpoche



An initiation given by Ponlop Tsangpa Tenzin Rinpoche



The manager of the monastery Geshe Chogleg and the secretary Dawa Norbu


Ponlop Tsangpa Tenzin Rinpoche

Read an interview with Ponlop Tsangpa Tenzin Rinpoche …

> The key to Dzogchen is the Ngondro, Ponlob Tsangpa Tenzin says

And an interview with Khenchen TenpaYungdrung Rinpoche about the organization of studies at the monastery…

> Khenchen Tenpa Yungdrung: We should value our wonderful life





New students of TISE Himalayan International School came to the monastery with their parents…

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Students of the medical school af the monastery



A break in the medical school. A student volunteers…



Sherab Chamma, bachelor in the traditional medical science, is coming to Shenten, this year

OOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO









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Photos: Jitka Polanská

Aurore: I did not think I could find the precious teaching of Dzogchen in my country

written by Jitka Polanská



Aurore Lombard is French, and has pursued a spiritual path since a teenager, but she did not know of the existence of Shenten Dargye Ling until 2017. She met Yongdzin Rinpoche in Nepal. "In him, I had found my root master, finally, someone who would offer me the high, precious teachings and instructions of Dzogchen, after many years of searching," she says.

You live in Bali, Aurore. How did it happen?

I have mostly lived outside of France, since the age of eighteen, for both studies and work. I am a marine biologist by education and profession, specialized in pearls, and it was my job that brought me to Bali, about fifteen years ago. I started working in Thailand in this field twenty five years ago. I was twenty-four years old. Then, after five years I went to Tahiti for work, always in the pearls, and stayed there for five years. Then, I went to Bali and the place has kept me longer, already for fifteen years. When we arrived there, my daughter was five years old. We live here with her and my husband. Now I am not working anymore and dedicate my time to practice and dharma, trying to make pearls of wisdom.

What is the spiritual culture of people in Bali like?

The majority of Balinese join the Hindu religion although it is more a kind of syncretism between Buddhism and Hinduism, mixed with the local ancestral traditions. People of Bali see the world vertically structured in three dimensions. The highest is the abode of gods, the lowest is the home of

nagas, and in between there is the human realm who is supposed to keep the balance between the two.

Balinese live with invisible beings of the natural world, always trying to establish harmonious coexistence with them, similarly to what traditionally Tibetans do. Every rock, every tree, every river is inhabited by a spirit and people pay them respect, make offerings to them. You can find small shrines and temples in many places in nature, beside a river, for example, you will find a small shrine where you can put some flowers and incense in order to ask for permission to share the place for a while or use the water.

Balinese religion is also known to be the religion of consecrated water. They use mantric water in all ceremonies and believe in its power of purification and healing. They make many offerings to nature and the universe on special days, actually they live with the moon. Offerings are made of natural ingredients such as fruits, flowers, leaves, nuts and water. Each item has a spiritual significance and symbolism. Usually, women are in charge of preparing the offerings. Each family has a small temple in their home for the ancestors, they also make offerings daily to the gods, the protectors and the demons.

You focus on spiritual practice in your life. When did you start developing an interest in spirituality?

Already as a little child. I was born in France, but France always seemed to me a bit sterile, as for religion and spirituality, lacking the right balance between the material and spiritual, between the brain and the heart.

My grandmother was different though. She had lots of faith and she was my hero. She had a very generous heart, lots of love, many spiritual qualities, always praying for all family members. She was a role model for me.

When I was a teenager I started traveling to India. As soon as I touched its ground with my foot, I felt at home. I felt the energy of spirituality was still there. And that is where I met Tibetan Buddhism. It was a discovery that there was something meaningful in life, something higher and beyond the material aspect.

Where exactly did you meet with Tibetan Buddhism?

I went to Dharamsala instinctively knowing that I would be able to see His Holiness the XIV Dalai Lama of Tibet there. Already in France, during my childhood, I had enjoyed following news about him and collecting pictures of him in magazines.

In Dharamsala I attended a course called ‘Introduction to Tibetan Buddhism’ which literally changed my life. After that I continued to travel to India and Nepal every year whenever I had vacation from my job, to attend teachings and do retreats. This gave me good foundations in bodhicitta and emptiness. Teachings on compassion really deeply touched me. I thought at that time that I could not find anything higher, better, or more beautiful than this in the whole planet.

However, deeper inside I was searching for Dzogchen. The way of meditation which I had encountered during my journeys was very conceptual and didn’t really suit me, as I realized.


Aurore with Khenchen Tenpa Yungdrung Rinpoche during the “summer retreat” in 2022.

So I traveled everywhere searching for a qualified master. I loved reading Dilgo Kyentse Rinpoche, Dudjom Rinpoche and Tulku Urgyen Rinpoche´s teachings, and Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche.

One day I heard about meditation in the dark and I wanted to spend some time in a dark retreat. At some point, someone told me that among Bonpos it is very common to do dark retreats. It was the first time that I heard this word: Bonpo. By that time I also read some books by Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche and went to meet him in Virginia. There, I started to follow his cycle of teachings on Zhang Zhung Nyen Gyud. It was in 2014.

But then I felt I needed something more conservative. I went to Menri monastery in India, and after that, to Triten Norbutse, in Nepal. For some reason, in my mind there was a conviction that I could not find authentic teaching anywhere in the West, neither in the US nor in Europe. Strangely enough, I did not know about the existence of Shenten Dargye Ling in France even though I am French.

How did you know, finally?

From Yongdzin Rinpoche, whom I met in his monastery, at Triten Norbutse, and not in France, even though he used to spend many months each year in my country. I would never have imagined that such high teachings and such a high precious master would be there in France all that time.

When I saw him for the first time, he started to speak some words in French with me, saying *Bonjour, ca va*… I had a strong feeling that my prayers were finally fulfilled, they had brought me to the one who was going to offer me the highest, most precious teachings and instructions of

Dzogchen, after all those years of searching in the whole world.

During this first encounter, Yongdzin Rinpoche advised me to go for teachings at Shenten and I did. I took refuge there with him when he last traveled to Europe, in 2018. Since then, I now follow the Yungdrung Bon tradition of Dzogchen under the guidance of Khenpo Tenpa Yungdrung Rinpoche, Khenpo Gelek Jinpa and other lamas who teach at Shenten.

Pictures: Aurore Lombard, Jitka Polanská

TISE Himalayan International School: End of year exams are over

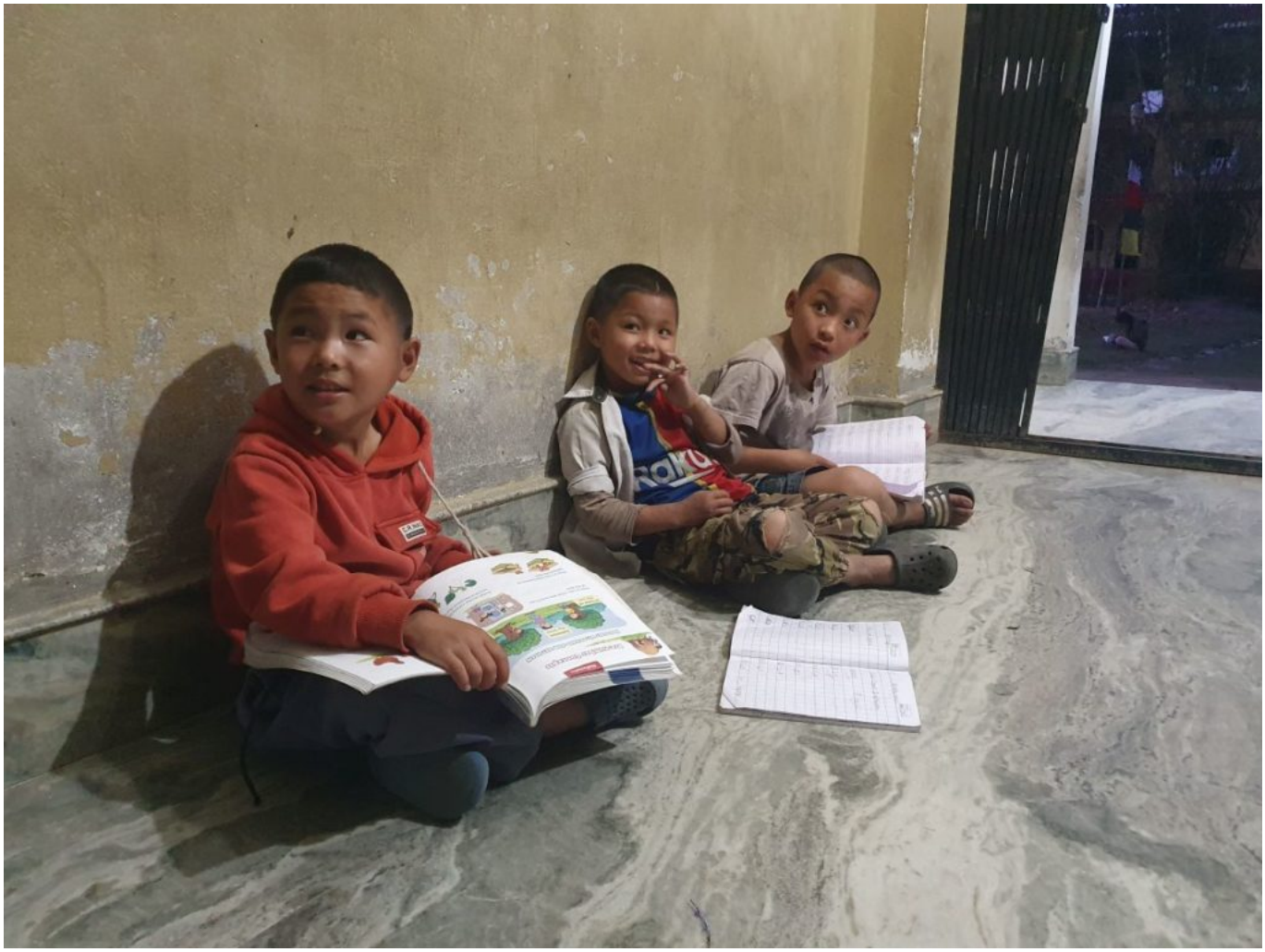
written by Jitka Polanská



March 6 to 14 students of TISE Himalayan International School were going through examinations in all the main study subjects. March 18 they were given school reports and a few days of holiday can start. A new academic year will begin in April. Have a look to some moments of the life in the school in the "exam" period.


THE ROOTS OF EDUCATION ARE BITTER,


Date-07/03/2023.
B. Garbhagriha.









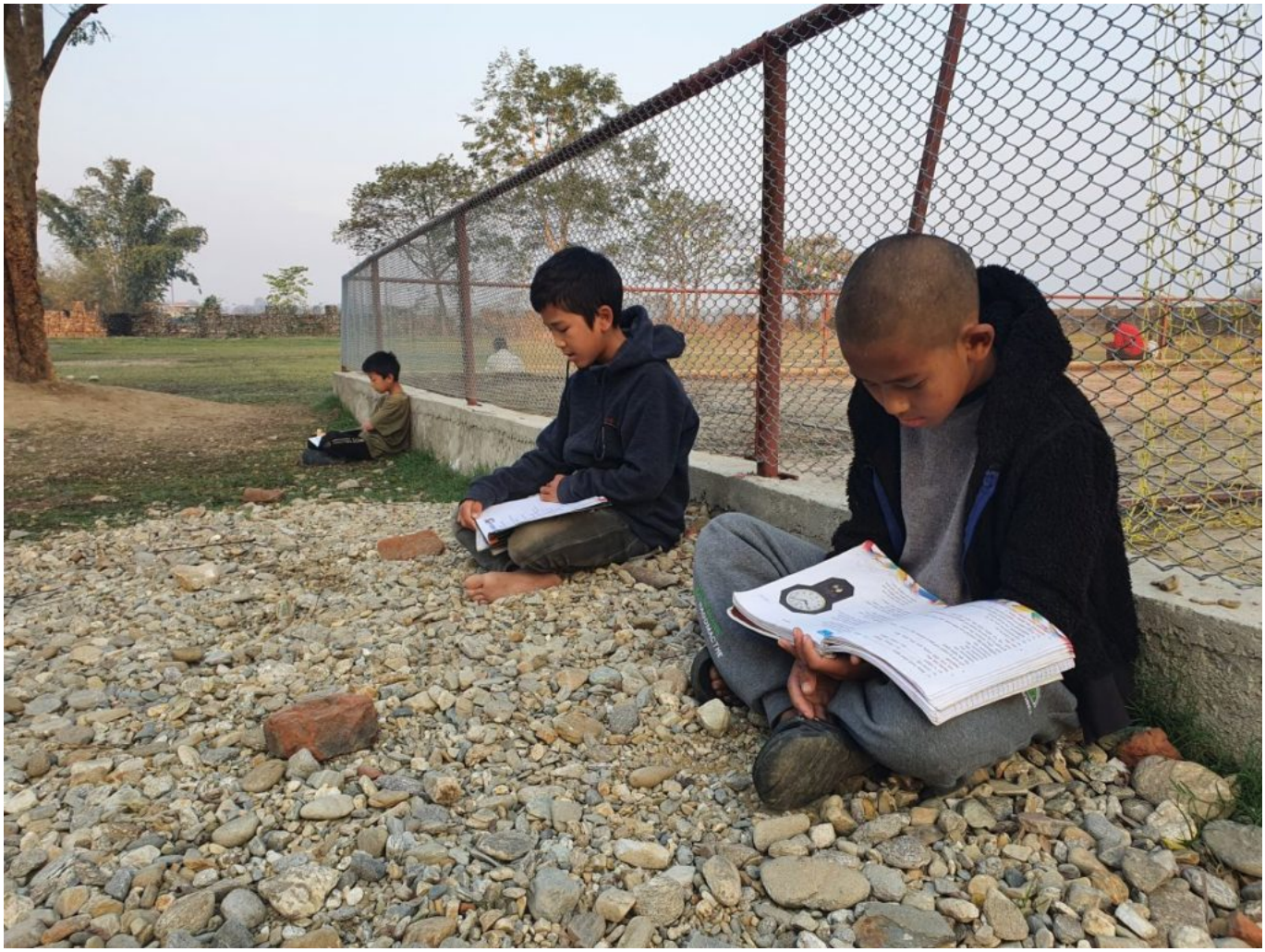










Photo: Jitka Polanská

The Longère: a top retreat place to become. Update on renovation

written by Shenten



The Longère is a long building adjacent to the Château of Shenten Dargye Ling. As you may know, it has been undergoing a profound transformation since the autumn of 2021. Once a woodcrafter atelier, built in the 17th century, Longère is currently being transformed into an attractive retreat place which would serve the community of practitioners connected to ShentenDargye Ling. Demanding and challenging work has already been completed on the building, but plenty of other things are still needed to be done.

To begin with…

The initial condition of the building was characterized by cracked walls with unsuitable interior coating, severely damaged exterior stones, an inappropriate and archaic drainage system which exposed the building and its chalk stone base to constant humidity and lastly a courtyard of soil interwoven with invasive liana roots. Much work, especially in the interior, has already been accomplished, thanks to many volunteers whereas most parts of the exterior repairs we needed to hire professionals.

Gutters from the scratch

Replacing the existing drainage system was a complex process. It started with a several-day strenuous removal of the liana roots to enable the drainage pipelines to be installed underground. Complete gutter replacement followed. Old zinc pipes around the roof were changed respecting the original material; rain gutters and pipelines were extended underground and proper water reservoirs built. New pipeline system channeling the rainwater runoff to the nearby lake was installed underground. A half meter thick layer of gravel bed was installed around the exterior base of the building to stop excess moisture. Damaged eaves were repaired and heavily damaged cornerstones replaced.

As the cherry on the top, Khenpo Gelek reshaped the outside area and created a base for a future garden and terrace. All was done in three days.

Even though we are still far from the final accomplishment, the retreat room in the Longère already has had many interested prospective occupants. Drubdra Khenpo Tenzin Tsultrim being among them. Named by Yongdzin Rinpoche as the Treasure of the Instruction, this new retreat room, without a doubt, will be an excellent place for practice.

Inside out, upside down: Transformation of the interior

While many of the exterior reparations are mostly hidden from view, changes in the interior structure are striking at first glance. Some walls were removed and some new were built. There are now two separate rooms, each with separate entrances along with a shared kitchen, bathroom and toilet. Old cement isolation of the walls was removed. New natural hemp lime isolation, allowing the walls to properly breathe, will be installed by professionals this summer.



Electricity and water systems will be installed and the ceilings lowered to create needed space. Measurements for new windows and doors have been taken and we are awaiting the price estimates.

One big project on its own is the extension of the window door leading to the lakeside. The height of the door will be increased and the top frame ornamented by stones crafted and engraved with the Five Warrior syllables mantra – the beautiful artwork is done as an offering by Les Compagnons.



“If everything goes smoothly, as we hope, all work should be completed during this year. Please keep your fingers crossed!” says Shenten team led by Khenpo Gelek.

And to contribute towards the Longère project, please visit this link.

pictures and text: Yana Karamari

Geshe Sonam Gurung: I returned to my Mustang to help children there

written by Jitka Polanská



Geshe Sonam Gurung comes from Mustang where Bonpo communities have lived since ancient times. He studied at Menri monstery in Dolanji, India, and then returned to his native land. There, he takes care of children from poor families who are gradually losing their own culture, with the aim of reversing the trend.

Geshe Sonam, can you tell us something about your own journey into education?

My parents wanted me to become a monk. Monks are held in high esteem in our country and have the opportunity to get an education, so I did not oppose the idea. In 1981, when I was nine years old, I went from Nepal to Menri monastery in India where I could get full monastic education and training. I arrived there, accompanied by adults, after five days of walking and another three days of travelling by bus. The late abbot of the monastery, 33rd Menri Trizin His Holiness LungtokTenpai Nyima sent me to a regular school that the monastery had set up for children from the Tibetan community. After graduating from the school, at the age of nineteen, I took my monastic vows and began studying at the monastery's Dialectic School.

In 2011, Geshe Sonam was the main character in the documentary Bön: From Mustang to Menri.

How many years did it take you to complete your studies?

Fourteen years. I graduated in 2014.

Were the studies difficult?

Yes, the daily schedule was very intense. The core of the curriculum is Buddhist philosophy, but

besides that, we studied classical Tibetan language, Tibetan medicine, astrology…

Did everyone in your class graduate?

No. There were about twelve or thirteen of us starting out, but, for various reasons only four finished. Some got sick, some had to go back to their home villages.



Nine year old Geshe Sonam. An image from the documentary *Bön: From Mustang to Menri.*

You eventually returned to Mustang too. Did you plan that?

Many graduated monks return to their home monastery if there is any, in their area. But this is not my case, there is only a small temple in my village, not a monastery. Other monks stay at Menri monastery and work there, after receiving their geshe degrees. They become teachers or engage in the administration of the monastery. I had the advantage of being able to speak English which I learned at school, and I ran the guesthouse in the monastery for a while. I also started teaching, both monks and Western students. Then, His Holiness came up with the idea to revive the local bonpo community in Mustang. Yungdrung Bon used to have important centres there, many sacred texts were preserved in the area. But now the people in the mountains are losing their culture and traditions.

So you went back home….

Yes. We have set up a cultural and educational centre for children from poor families and orphans here in Jomson. I am responsible for forty children approximately. We take care of their education but also their psychological well-being, we try to offer them a second home. In poor families there is sometimes alcoholism or difficult family relations.

> The migration of children from Nepal's mountain valleys in search of education (to schools and monasteries) is a unique phenomenon. 75% of Mustang children aged 10-19 have left their home villages and live in monasteries and boarding schools located at least a few days' walk away. Their parents also send them straight to Nepal's capital, Kathmandu, or from Mustang to the next big city, Pokhara. Over the last twenty years, these numbers have more than doubled for boys, and for girls, who have traditionally stayed more at home, the increase in outmigration for education has even multiplied (from the study Depopulating the Himalayan Highlands: Education and Outmigration From Ethnically Tibetan Communities of Nepal, 2014).

What do you teach to the children?

The local schools teach them Nepali and sometimes English, which is fine, we're in Nepal, Nepali is important, as it is English, for communication with foreigners. In addition to it, I teach the children reading and writing in their mother tongue and some elements of their ancestral culture. I also teach them the basics of meditation. This is the best way to keep our tradition alive: to encourage children and young people to develop into harmonious beings.

I plan to build a monastery so that we can receive visitors and help from other learned monks. At the moment they have no place to stay.

What is life like for you in the mountains?

It's quite hard, just like for the rest of the people in this region. But I was prepared for it. What I learned at the monastery helps.

Geshe Sonam Gurung's "Mustang Culture and Education Centre" is based in Jomsom, a small town at 2,743 metres above sea level where many trekking routes start, including the popular Annapurna circuit.



Geshe Sonam with "his" children

As a monk I have a great freedom, Dominique

Troulay alias Yungdrung Tenzin says

written by Jitka Polanská



This is a second part of an interview Yungdrung Tenzin gave us during the last summer retreat at Shenten Dargye Ling. After talking about his experiences as a translator of the teachings which take place at Shenten and online, we asked him what it is like to be a monk, about his connection with His Holiness 33rd Menri Trizin and whether he has anything to regret.

Dominique, how long have you been a monk in Yungdrung Bon tradition, with the name of Yungdrung Tenzin?

Since October 1999. It has been 23 years. My previous life seems to me a bit like a dream now, very different from the way I live now. And I am quite happy to be a monk because I have a great freedom.

In which sense? People usually associate the monkhood with the opposite, with less freedom.

Yes, it is true, but I feel more freedom. As a monk, I am free from all kinds of mundane engagements, which can be quite heavy, including a regular job.

How do you sustain yourself?

When I worked, I put aside some money and now I use my savings to maintain myself. This allows me to do activities that entirely support my practice. It also makes it possible for me to offer myself as a translator when Shenten needs me and I am happy to be of benefit. This is great freedom.



Also, I do not have children, so I do not need to work in order to maintain them. Being single also means that I take decisions individually and do not have to negotiate with anybody. This all simplifies my life and I can focus to develop my spirituality, I can practice. It is easier, as a monk, to live every moment as spiritual. A lay person has to deal with many worldly, distractive conditions and can easily forget about spirituality, pursuing mundane goals.

I know of at least two western men who became monks in this tradition and then disrobed. What in your opinion can lead to it and what has been instead the cause for your stability?

I had experienced all things of life before becoming a monk, I had my emotional life fulfilled, with my relationships, and I had exhausted a need or desire to have more of it. Perhaps some others took vows before being really ready, they were not fully satisfied, and this dragged them back. I also had had an interesting work, I went many times to the movies, discotheques and restaurants, so I could leave this all behind me with no regrets. I was satiated. When the monastic life was offered to me by His Holiness 33rd Menri Trizin, I was already forty one. If I had been twenty-five, I think I would not have accepted.

Now, I am really happy to be a monk. But who knows what will be. It can happen to anyone that he or she cannot or does not want to keep their vows anymore so I cannot guarantee that I will be a monk for my whole life, but for now, it is a condition that I really appreciate.

For many years, you were an assistant of His Holiness 33rd Menri Trizin and spent a part of every year at Menri Monastery. When did you start going there?

Well, I stayed there five months right after my ordination. Then my visa expired, and I had to return to France. After that I was coming every year, for seventeen years, until His Holiness passed away, and always for several months.



Was it necessary to spend some time in the monastery, in order to be ordained?

It was not. You can request the ordination to the abbot at any time, and he may or may not grant it, depending on the answers you give to his questions. If he feels that you are a proper candidate and you want to join the monastic life for correct reasons, he can ordain you the next day. But usually it is done on the occasion of an auspicious day, like a full moon or an anniversary connected with Tonpa Shenrab Miwo or some other important figure in Yungdrung Bon, such as Nyame Sherab Gyaltsen.

How many years did you follow Bon before deciding to become a monk?

Two years, not very long. You know, I would use a metaphor, it was like passing the narrow point of a sand watch. By different circumstances I was brought there, as a grain of sand, and I happened to arrive at a completely new life. My life´s circumstances converged to bring me there. And when His Holiness suggested to me to become a monk, I reflected about it for a few days and said yes, because it made sense to me.

You were close to His Holiness, being his assistant, didn't you?

Yes, he was my spiritual teacher, he introduced me to some prayers, into meditation. But he was also very busy and so sometimes I did not see him for a month, even while being in the monastery. When I became his secretary, for English and French. I helped him write letters to westerners, and for that, we were almost in daily contact. We would sit next to each other, I would take notes on what to write. Sometimes he just sat next to me while I was typing the letter, without saying anything, reciting mantras. It was very special, the life I had with His Holiness.

A few months after I became a monk, he started to work on founding the nunnery at Menri. I went to see the site with him and other monks, and then I helped him with drawings of various buildings for the nunnery: the temple, the sleeping quarters, a medical school… I had been an industrial designer in my previous life and so I was able to make all the technical drawings he needed. I also looked after the construction work when the complex was being built. I became a monk at the moment when it was useful for Menri, I think. There was an amazing amount of building activity going on after 2000. When His Holiness passed away in 2017, all that he needed to build was finished. He had completed his mission.

When was the last time you saw him before he passed away?

I met with him in April and he passed away in September. I was at Shenten when I knew that he was not feeling well. I was told that he was in the hospital and then that he was out of the hospital and so I thought he was getting better. I should really have rushed to see him. I was waiting for a few days instead and then I applied for the visa but it took longer to obtain it and it delayed me furtherly… When I finally arrived, it was too late. This is karma.

On the other hand, your karmic connection made you spend so much time with him…

Yes, that´s true. His Holiness was my only contact at the monastery, in the beginning, and in general, he was my main connection there. I remember him every day. And we will see what happens. At the time of dying His Holiness may have connected with me…

His English was good enough, so that you two spoke together only in English?

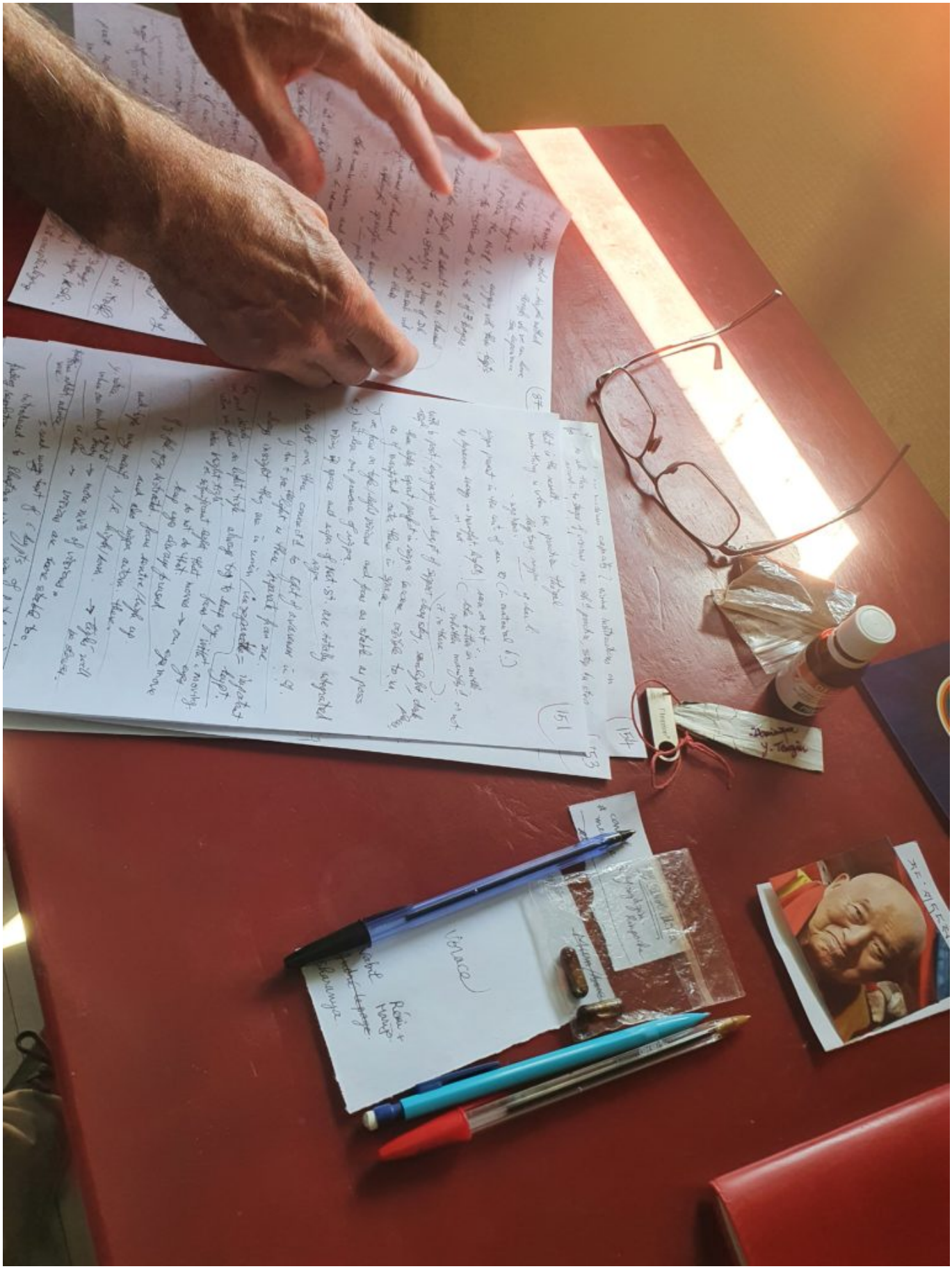
Yes, he was able to express himself and that was not so good for my learning Tibetan. I did not have many contacts with other monks, very few of them spoke English. I did not make an effort to have a social life in the monastery. It seemed to me a bit like a contradiction to leave a social life in Paris and replace it with another kind of a social life in the monastery. For me, being a monk meant leaving behind that part of my life and staying more on my own. I did not make an effort to make friends with other monks.

Being on one's own in the middle of a community is not the same as being somewhere in seclusion. Didn´t it make your life in the monastery a bit complicated?

It was frustrating at times, because I did not know what was happening. Sometimes I was very surprised that there was a ritual or something and I did not know about it. Or we had a holiday, and I did not know about it. Sometimes there was no food in the kitchen when I arrived to take it, and I did not know the reason. Many things like this. But this was my decision.

Do you regret not having learned Tibetan?

Yes, a bit. His Holiness did not push me in this direction and I had no real desire at that time to do so. If I really had worked hard when I was at Menri, building my language skills, I could have joined the dialectic school and I could have become a geshe. I could have explained to others rituals and teachings much better than I can do now. It did not happen and I have a different life now because of it. But this is not so important in the end. The most important thing is to realize the teachings. If I can embody the teaching, this would be the best.



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.*
>
> From the first part of the interview. You can read it HERE.

What is the embodiment of the teaching, for you?

I am a dzogchen practitioner and, at the same time, I have to keep my vows. Which means to lead a very modest life, but from the highest perspective.

You are also very connected to Shenten Dargye Ling and to Yongdzin Rinpoche, you have come and stayed for teachings for many years...

Yes, I met His Holiness Menri Trizin in 1997 and Yongdzin Rinpoche one year later, in 1998. There was a bit of discomfort within me about who I should consider my root master, as if I had to choose between one of them. But maybe I did not have to. Anyway, Yongdzin Rinpoche introduced me to the natural state, and so I probably consider him my root master, and His Holiness is my other great master. I also have a very strong connection with Khenchen Tenpa Yungdrung Rinpoche. He is very kind to me.

Now I hope to make the best out of all those favorable circumstances, of being close to these great masters, listening to their teachings, translating them and putting them into practice.

Pictures: Jitka Polanská

"Fire puja", a ritual unique to Yungdrung Bon was documented at Triten Norbutse. Watch the video

written by Jitka Polanská



A year ago the monastic community of Triten Norbutse monastery in Kathmandu performed an extensive ritual, Kunrig Lezhi Gyunnga. In this "fire puja", various kinds of offerings are burnt in fire and with this, obstacles of people, the dead and the living, are liberated. Esther Pérez de Eulate attended the ritual and documented it. Her video is now available on Speech of Delight´s YouTube channel and published here. We asked Esther about the making of the video.

Usha, my friend and the practitioner who commissioned the ritual, asked me to come to the monastery with her as a support and for company. I had not been there before and so it was a precious opportunity for me to see the monastery, Yongdzin Tenzin Namdak Rinpoche, my root master, and to witness such a remarkable event. I took my camera with me, this is a habit of an ex-documentarist.

Originally, there was a film-maker from Kathmandu hired by Usha to make a video of the puja but he was very busy and could not do the work, and so I offered to do it. My proposal was accepted and my camera came in very handy (although I did shoot some images with my smartphone). I was happy to bring some benefit to the tradition of Yungdrung Bon, to which I feel very grateful to belong, as a follower.



Usha: I have trust that this will come helpful at the point of the death…

It was not always easy to understand what was going on during the ritual, as there were many things happening at the same time. The event was extensive and complex, but I did my best to collect as much information and video material as possible.

The abbot of the monastery, Khenchen Tenpa Yungdrung Rinpoche, who was the key figure in the ritual, explains the general meaning of it in an interview shown in the video.

> Khenchen Tenpa Yungdrung Rinpoche: “The ritual is very popular, especially in the eastern part of Tibet. People usually make an effort to organize it when someone of their family passes away.”

Khenpo Gelek Jinpa, the head of Shenten Dargye Ling, who took part in the puja, explained together with the chant master of the puja, Yungdrung Tharching, the structure and the procedures of the puja offering.

> “Yongdzin Rinpoche told me that the puja is unique to Yungdrung Bon Tradition,” Esther says.



The ritual applies many symbols…

I made my first cut of the video by April of this year Then, I had to wait until autumn to meet Khenpo Gelek at Shenten to work on the second cut together. Khenpo Gelek leads the meditation program of Gomdra at Shenten, from September till November, and I attend the Gomdra. Its schedule is very intense but we still found time and worked on editing the film. A great fortune was having Lowell Britson and Ada Bird Wolfe at the Gomdra as well. Khenpo Gelek and Lowell edited the narrative of the video and made sure that it fits with the images, and the narrating voice of the documentary is Ada´s. After that, I took the material to Madrid, where I live, and finalized it.



All will be burnt, finally…

The ritual is amazing, incredibly impressive, especially in the second, culminating part with the open fire. Even if I see imperfections of the video, it still conveys the power of the ritual with its beauty, I think, and I am happy that I can offer it to the viewers.





At the end the complex texts of the ritual must be packed carefully and it takes time…

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=atdhOTVWJVs

Geshe Dennyi Shedrup: We go to the mountains and practice the generosity of healing

written by Jitka Polanská



Geshe Dennyi Shedrup is the director of the Triten Norbutse´s Medical Institute (School of Four Medical Science of Early Tradition) in Kathmandu and an experienced practitioner of traditional Tibetan medicine. In the summer of 2022, he visited Shenten Dargye Ling for the first time and taught Westerners about *Lung* (wind) energy. Soon after, Geshe la and his students went to the Himalayas, to collect medical plants and practice *man-jin*…

Were there doctors of Tibetan medicine in your family, Geshe la?

My uncle is an *amchi*. I am not sure if he is fully qualified in all the four sciences of Tibetan medicine, but he does help people with their health issues. Being a nomad, he stays in the countryside for long periods and knows medicinal plants and their healing effects. When I was a child, together we collected various herbs and plants and I learned from him how to distinguish them. We spent lots of time together and were very close. My uncle also gave me some basic education, he taught me how to read…

Later, you continued your studies in a monastery?

I entered a monastery when I was sixteen years old. At the beginning, I focused on the preliminary practices, ngondro, I learned some traditional rituals and also learned and practiced *tummo.* In 1992, I was a part of a group of monks who went to India to pursue studies at the Dialectic school of Menri monastery – *shedra*. Tibetan medicine is a part of the curriculum of *shedra*. Besides that, I received teaching of medical science from His Holiness the 33rd Menri Trizin. He taught just me and another monk, my friend. Looking back to it now, I think that maybe he already saw that *sowa rigpa*, the science of healing, was in my future, that I was going to become a medical doctor. I cherish that memory of him teaching us, it was very special.



Geshe Dennyi with Tulku Ponse Yigme Tenzin and students of the School of Four Medical Science of Early Tradition, during the festivities at Triten Norbutse, in January 2020.

Which path took you finally to lead the medical school of Triten Norbutse monastery?

During my studies I went to Triten Norbutse in Nepal to receive some Dzogchen teachings from Yongdzin Rinpoche. I completed my studies and received my geshe degree there, as well as furtherly deepened my knowledge of Tibetan medical science with Geshe Kunsang Gyaltsen.

As a geshe, I started teaching grammar and poetry at the medical school of the monastery. In 2012, the head of the medical school, Amchi Tsultrim Sangye passed away and Khenpo Tenpa Yungdrung Rinpoche appointed me to take his place.

How are the studies at the school structured?

Some students come from families which hold a lineage of *amchis*, doctors of traditional medicine, in Dolpo, Mustang and Humla, the mountainous regions of Nepal. Some of them did not have an opportunity to complete a higher education and they also come in different age, some at twelve, others at seventeen. We teach them therefore not only medical science including the history, but also Tibetan language, Tibetan astrology and subjects of general education like biology or chemistry.

After a five-year medical course and passing exams the students obtain the degree of *Kachupa*, which can be compared to a bachelor´s level of education. It take up to ten years though to become a *Menrampa*, a fully qualified doctor of Tibetan traditional medicine.

> From the study Medicinal Plants of Dolpo: Amchi's Knowledge and Conservation
>
> "Amchis usually begin their studies when they are in their early teens. They learn to identify the medicinal plants of the highlands in the summer and of the lowlands in the winter. They begin to treat patients after four to five years of study and practice."
>
> "In the modern world, people choose the medical profession for a variety of reasons, ranging from the motivation to serve others to that of gaining fame and prestige. The most important motivating factor for an amchi should be the desire to benefit other beings and to relieve them from the suffering of disease. Theamchis-in-training are constantly reminded of the six qualities (gyu duk) of intelligence, kindness, trustworthiness, practical experience, diligence and social awareness that they are expected to possess."

How many students are currently studying at the school?

Around thirty students, at different levels.

I noticed there are many girls among them. Why is it so, do you know?

Yes, more than half are female students. Well, nowadays, in many schools, even at the universities, girls outnumber boys. And we have the same situation in our school. There is a general tendency and interest of girls to study. Young people may look for an education and choose traditional medicine because they see it can bring benefit to people and to society. Also, some parents think about what profession could be good for their children and come to see the school, and when they like it, they send a son or a daughter to be enrolled.

What do the graduates of the school do, after completing their studies?

As much as we can, we support them to go to the mountains and help people there. There is a lack of medical care in the Himalayas and their work is very beneficial for the local communities. Some go there for a period of time, while others return to their native villages and remain permanently.

Even before becoming *amchis*, students and teachers of the school go every year for three months – from August to October – into the high mountains of Dolpo or Mustang. We spend weeks in high altitudes, sometimes even at 5000 meters above the sea level. It is a part of the regular school´s program.

Teachers and students together collect medical plants and offer medical help for free to the villagers. It is called *man-jin*, the generosity of medicine.



Where do you sleep, in the mountains? In tents?

There are not enough tents for everyone. We stay in caves, or under an overhang of a large rock or in shepherds´ shelters.




T90



Collecting medicinal plants in the high mountains, cooking in the countryside, sleeping in shepherds´shelters…

> From the study Medicinal Plants of Dolpo: Amchi's Knowledge and Conservation
>
> "Although harvesting periods of medicinal plants differ with species, amchis generally follow specific cultural or religious processes prior to harvesting. Inauspicious period for harvesting pasture resources, in general, is determined in advance by the head lama of the area based upon the Tibetan calendar and medical texts. Amchis usually propitiate the menlha or medicine deity prior to collecting the plants.Moreover, fodder grass as well as medicinal plants from the pasture, particularly whose underground parts are used, are harvested during a specific auspicious period known as dangsong rikhi. It is a period of seven days determined by the head lama according to the Tibetan calendar when most of the perennial herbs complete their life cycle duringSeptember/October. During this period, 'nutritional showers' are said to occur which enriches medicinal plants including grasses, and thus increases their medicinal efficacy."

Your medical institute serves also as a clinic. Who are the people who seek help from you? Do they all belong to the Bon tradition?

Not really, besides Bonpos also Nepali and Buddhists come. Usually they are people from remote areas of the Himalayas. They know about us from other villagers to whom we helped during our trips

to the mountains.

How many patients do you have in average, in a day?

Around 10 – 15.

Do they have to pay for your service?

Yes, but compared to other clinics in Kathmandu we are cheaper.

Are students of the school allowed to deal with patients?

Yes, our senior students, supervised by teachers, can examine them and in this way, they master their knowledge.



Geshe Dennyi and his student Karma Drolma, at Triten Norbutse in Kathmandu. Drolma is a student of the medical school and helped with the communication in English when the interview was finalized.

What do you think about Western medicine, Geshe la?

I always tell my students: you have to learn traditional Tibetan medicine, but you also have to learn Western medicine, both are very important. Western medical doctors know many things that traditional Tibetan doctors do not know, and there is some traditional medical knowledge that can enrich the practice of western medicine.

We invite medical doctors trained in Western medicine to the school and share our mutual knowledge. Students from senior classes also attend lectures and seminars of some scientific subjects at the university.

> From the study Medicinal Plants of Dolpo: Amchi's Knowledge and Conservation
>
> "After collection, the plant parts are washed properly,and then dried either in sun or in

shade, depending upon the type of disease for which the plants are used.The plants used to treat cold diseases (dangwa) aredried directly in sunlight, whereas the plants used to treat hot diseases (tsawa) are dried in shade. Besides these two categories, for other uses, the herbs are dried both in sunlight as well as in shade. The herbs are stored in leather or cloth bags and wooden boxes."

Do you have any general advice for people on how to keep healthy?

A healthy body and healthy mind are connected. Meditators think that with the power of their mind they can make their bodies healthy. Traditional medical practitioners believe, on the contrary, that if the body is healthy, the mind will be healthy too. Both points of view make sense. Anyway, meditation is very good to keep a person healthy. I heard about many cases of people who improved their health by meditating regularly.



Geshe Dennyi at Shenten Dargye Ling, in the summer of 2022.

I heard an *amchi* saying that too many thoughts can bring health problems. In the West, we do not believe that if we think too much it can affect our health.

There is a connection between a *lung* – a wind energy – and thoughts. There are four main categories of diseases, they can be connected with wind, bile, phlegm and a combination of these three. One of the diagnostic methods is examining the pulse of a person. The pulse can reveal the state of the mind of the patient, a doctor can feel when there is an imbalance caused by the wind –

lung.

> From the study Medicinal Plants of Dolpo: Amchi's Knowledge and Conservation
>
> "The most important diagnosis is to identify whether the nature of a disease is 'hot' (tsa) or 'cold' (dang)because an amchi may do more harm than good if he cannot differentiate between the two. When examining patients, the amchis of Dolpo employ the techniques of seeing, touching and questioning to diagnose an illness. Seeing involves examining the tongue, eyes, complexion, and urine. Touching Involves feeling the pulse and areas where pain is felt by the patient. Questioning involves asking the patient the causes and nature of the illness. Byskillfully utilizing these three techniques, an amchi is usually able to diagnose an illness without sophisticated equipment. But as amchis have repeatedly pointed out, in the absence of a skillful integration of the three techniques, an illness can alsobe misdiagnosed if one merely "fingers the pulse and stirs the urine."

You gave a teaching to the Western public about the *lung* at Shenten Dargye Ling, last summer. What was exactly the subject of your seminar?

I gave a basic introduction to *sowa rigpa*, the traditional science of healing, and to the principal corpus of medical texts called *Bum Zhi*. Then, I focused on explaining how to harmonize the *lung* – wind energy – in our organism.

You can read the study Medicinal Plants of Dolpo: Amchi's Knowledge and Conservation HERE.

Pictures: Geshe Dennyi, Jitka Polanská

We thank Khenpo Gelek Jinpa for translating the conversation with Geshe Dennyi and to Karma Drolma for assisting with the check of the interview.

Teachers and students of Triten Norbutse´s medical school on a trip, 2022. Source: Triten Norbutse

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Anne: We published the "Heart Drops" in Finnish and think what will come next

written by Jitka Polanská



One of the fundamental texts in Yungdrung Bon, the Heart Drops of Dharmakaya, was translated in Finnish and published by Anne Brunila and her friends. Anne does not speak Tibetan and the only option that she saw was to translate the text from English. Then, she received a suggestion from Khenpo Tenpa Yungdrung Rinpoche…

Five or six years ago we asked Khenchen Tenpa Yungdrung Rinpoche to start teaching us the Heart Drops of Dharmakaya in Finland, and he has been doing so since. I asked specifically for this text, after having read the book of Yongdzin Rinpoche with this name, which is basically his exposition of Shardza´s text that he gave in a teaching. It had a big impact on me. I thought that having a teaching in Finland based on this text would be wonderful. Khenpo Gelek Jinpa had been teaching us from Gyalway Chatri for quite some years and so I thought that the Finnish sangha was ready to receive the teaching contained in Sharzda Rinpoche´s book.

There was another nexus leading in that direction. When we established the formal association of our sangha in Finland, we asked Yongdzin Rinpoche to give it a name. It took some time before I got a piece of paper from him. Khenchen Rinpoche handed it to me, I opened it and the name written there was Dechen Ritro, the name of Shardza Rinpoche´s retreat place in Tibet!

We had not had any text of Yungdrung Bon translated in our language, except for Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche´s books. It seemed to me worth investing my energy into translating Shardza´s book. Again, I asked Khenpo Rinpoche what he thought about it. My idea was to translate Yongdzin Rinpoche´s book which is written in English, because I cannot translate from Tibetan, but Khenpo la asked me: “Why don´t you use Philip Cornu´s translation into French?”

I agreed but I did not want to give up translating Yongdzin Rinpoche´s book as well. Sharzda´s text is beautiful, poetic, symbolic, full of metaphors, but it uses expressions of which it might be hard to grasp the meaning if you did not receive an explanation on it before. I thought that people would understand it better if they had a possibility to read Yongdzin Rinpoche´s book first, because it contains lots of commentaries.

And we did this way, together with my friend who is also a long-time practitioner. My French is good, but hers is perfect, she is bilingual. Each of us came with own translation and then we compared them sentence by sentence, to get the most accurate final version. She brought in her linguistic excellency, I contributed with some insight into the teaching. We needed to consult some parts of the text with Khen Rinpoche, of course, because even if we understood the French, sometimes we did not get the meaning. He kindly met us on zoom, and we went through all the unclear parts.

Besides that, I translated Yongdzin Rinpoche´s book as well. This I did very fast – in one month. The text was very engaging and inspiring, I could not detach from it from the morning till the evening, it absorbed me. The whole project (including the translation from French) took a couple of months.



Shardza Tashi Gyaltsen

DHARMAKAYAN SYDÄNOLEMUS

DZOGCHEN MEDITAATION YDINHARJOITUKSET

Toimittanut Anne Brunila

The Finnish edition of Heart Drops contains therefore both translations, but it is not too thick, it has two hundred thirty pages. Although some publishers who are specialized in Buddhist and spiritual literature were interested in it and would release it happily, I decided to publish it myself, starting a small publishing company for that purpose. The book went out in December of 2021. It is for sale in several bookshops and also online bookshops in Finland. We also set up our own e-shop where the book can be bought.

And I am already thinking, what would be our next titles. For sure I will prepare to print the transcripts of Khenpo Tenpa Rinpoche´s teaching of the Heart Drops, but that would be in English. I think it can benefit many more people in that way. When we organized his teaching online, in 2021, there was more than four hundred people attending.

Pictures: Jitka Polanská, Anne Brunila

Geshe Samten Tsukphud: We wish Melong Yeshe have qualities of mirror-like wisdom

written by Jitka Polanská



Geshe Samten Tsukphud is tightly connected with Shenten Dargye Ling. He stays there for

long periods of time during the year and is a member of the managing body of Shenten´s Congregation. He is also the chief editor of Melong Yeshe, an online magazine in Tibetan language reporting mainly on events and activities taking place at Triten Norbutse Monastery but publishing also complex texts about various topics of the teachings of Yungdrung Bon.

When did you start the magazine and what is its content about, geshe la?

It was in 2015. Yongdzin Rinpoche and Khenpo Rinpoche blessed it with a small ceremony, lighting a butter lamp as a symbol of wisdom to be spread everywhere.
I was thinking about a name and finally decided for *Melong Yeshe.* It means mirror-like wisdom, it is a concept important in the religious context, as one of the five principal wisdoms. A mirror can reflect our face and all things that we put in front of it; similarly, we want to reflect all events and activities that are happening in the monastery throughout the year: rituals, ceremonies, examinations…

Who else besides you is involved?

Khenchen Tenpa Yungdrung Rinpoche and Ponlop Tsangpa Tenzin Rinpoche are members of the editorial board of the magazine. My best friend, geshe Woser Gyaltsen who lives in Germany, created the website for it, in wordpress, and he became its webmaster. Before that, I started something on a smaller scale, it was a kind of blog, and I was helped with that by Tom, one of Rinpoche´s students from Hungary. I used it for one year and then I switched to the current site which is supported by my friend, who also pays for the domain and all the service costs. Also, some friends from the monastery help me to get information and photos. And I have a friend, Khritsuk Tenpa, who is a teacher at the school in Siliguri, the school founded by Khenpo Rinpoche for the children from the Himalayas. He sends me information and pictures and we publish texts about the school too.

How many articles have you published?

Around seven hundred. Some texts like news are easier and do not take much time, but we also publish biographies, articles about history, or research of ancient texts. Those articles take quite a long time to write. But we always try to keep texts as short as possible, for internet reading it is better to keep it brief. We also have a section where we answer questions from our readers.

Who are your readers?

Different people, mainly Tibetans, monks and lay people too. Anybody who is interested in Yungdrung Bon and can also read Tibetan. Mostly they are Tibetans who live in Nepal, but also in Tibet.


Melong Yeshe´s home page

Your activities as an editor are larger than that. For example, you were involved in the new edition of Kangyur, the complete canonical collection of Bon texts, published in China, right?

Yes, I helped with it. At Triten Norbutse I work in the monastery´s library and I have connections with other scholarly oriented Bonpo monks outside the monastery, and also in Tibet. One of them invited me to be a part of the project of publishing the new Kangyur. It was mainly editorial work. Before, I had worked with them on publishing Yongdzin Tenzin Namdak Rinpoche´s collected works and so we got to know and trust each other.

You are one of the resident lamas of Shenten, geshe la, and you stay there for large periods of the year. When did you come to Europe for the first time?

It was in 2002, twenty years ago. Yongdzin Rinpoche was very sick at that time and he came to France to get medical help. Khenpo Rinpoche and I accompanied him to a hospital in Paris. He stayed there for one week and then we went to Normandy, to Lord Lowel Guiness´s place where Rinpoche was staying for around one month, recovering. Fortunately, he felt better and started traveling again to different places in the West, giving teaching. We stayed in Europe around three months at that time with him. After that, I came almost every year, again together with Khenpo Tenpa Yungdrung Rinpoche and Yongdzin Rinpoche.

Do you remember your first impression from this continent?

Yes, I remember that the Charles de Gaulle airport in Paris impressed me, so big and nice and full of things. It was so huge that I could not understand how to get out of it (he laughs). But Jean-Luis Massoubre, a student of Rinpoche, was waiting for us and helped us. He organized everything. When we went to the streets of Paris, I was very surprised, I was wondering how all those huge, historical buildings could be made, in ancient times, by humans (he laughs). The city looked very big, compared to Kathmandu. Which is big too, but it is different from western cities with large roads and high buildings.

In 2005 Shenten Dargye Ling was established. Did you come to stay at the very beginning?

I went to visit Shenten before it was purchased but I was not there in the first period. I do not remember when I started staying regularly, maybe from 2006. I went to Shenten more and more and stayed for four, five, six months, and sometimes even in the winter when Yongdzin Rinpoche left for Kathmandu and when only a very few people were at Shenten. One year I remember I was here almost alone for a whole month. It was a bit scary (he laughs).



Geshe Samten at Shenten Dargye Ling, summer 2022

What do you like about Shenten?

Conditions are very good here, especially for meditation, the best place for meditation, I would say. No noise from the neighborhood, then there is a SuperU, the large supermarket, very close, you can get whatever you need very easily.

Can you share with others about what effect of the practice you feel personally?

Yes, we do lots of practice at Shenten, especially the practices of Four generosities, but also lots of meditation. All this leads the mind to be more peaceful and to release attachments. Fortunately, a monk's life is very simple, I have no business to take care of, so my attachments are not very strong (he laughs). We have heard so many times that life is short and illusory, changing and impermanent, nothing is trustable in the condition of the relative truth. But hearing it is not enough, we need to integrate this view within our life. This is what I keep in my mind and try to do all the time.

You give teachings to western students, sometimes at Shenten, also in Germany, jointly with Khenpo Tenpa Yungdrung Rinpoche. You might teach more but it looks like there is a linguistic barrier…

Yes, my English is not good. I did not get an opportunity to learn other languages when I was a child, only my native tongue. That’s why my English is so poor. When I got my geshe degree I was already an adult and not so flexible to learn a foreign language. It is not easy for me. I learned it to some degree, but it is difficult to make it better. I have attended language courses in England and also in the US, in Los Angeles, but I have not progressed much. Especially in the US it seemed to me that it was not very effective, we had little chance to practice the language, so I did not continue. Anyway, I can speak and I understand other people when they speak. I learned most by listening to Yongdzin Rinpoche´s and Khenpo Rinpoche´s teaching in English and being with them when they speak with others.



Melong Yeshe

Photos: Jitka Polanska

Stéphane: “Speech of Delight” was named by Yongdzin Rinpoche, in those fresh and anarchic times

written by Jitka Polanská



Stéphane Arguillère met Yongdzin Tenzin Namdak Rinpoche in 1992, as a twenty-two year old young man. Later, he became involved in the sangha as it gathered around Shenten and started the Shenten´s newsletter *Speech of Delight* which has transformed into the current magazine. He has translated Yongdzin Rinpoche´s and other lamas´ teachings in past years and now pursues a career as an academic. As Stéphane says in his account, his life has encompassed many challenges but the direction is from dark places to the light, and not vice versa.

First of all, let us speak about the *Speech of Delight*, Stéphane. You and some others started it, right? I have some old issues with me, we can take a look at them together, on the screen. The first one is from 2006, the last one from 2010.

That first one I made myself. I can see some typos (*he laughs*). I do not remember who brought up the idea, but I remember that Yongdzin Rinpoche was very enthusiastic about it. I think we copied a bit of the customs from the Dzogchen community, as there were some people in our sangha who were students of Namhkai Norbu. They had a newsletter in France, how was it called? *Le Chant du coucou – The Song of the Cuckoo*. I think the idea may have been from them. It was a time when there were no websites, I mean dharma centers did not have websites, so some vehicle was needed to distribute information. The frequency, I think, was twice a year.

Speech of Delight

Shenten Dargye Ling Newsletter N°1 May 2006

Introduction by Yongdzin Tenzin Namdak Rinpoche

« First of all, both the personal and spiritual sides are important in keeping our tradition alive and in running this place over a long period of time. This requires a lot, but there is also great benefit in supporting a peaceful, happy atmosphere in such things. »

At the end of the last summer retreat, Khenpo Tenpa Yungdrung designated certain people to oversee the various aspects of life at Shenten: Florens Van Canstein (general co-ordinator) ; Jean-Louis Massoubre (advisor) ; Isabelle Catona (secretary) ; Aicha Charmi (treasurer) ; Philippe Renucci (works overseeer) ; Carol and Dima Ermakovi (caretakers, recently replaced by Guillaume Lassalle) Romain Morin (groundsman); Stéphane Arguillère (texts translator) ; Martha Daams (contact for the Netherlands) ; Wolfgang Schmid (contact for Germany) ; Pierre Combraux (tasked with public relations with the press).

Staying at Shenten Dargye Ling

If you'd like to stay at Shenten, it is imperative to contact **Isabelle (0616041682)** and **Guillaume (0241594956)** in advance. Please bring your own bedding (eg sheets and a sleeping bag). **Accommodation** is 10€ per night; or 5€ for those on low income. **Meals :** when the centre provides meals, breakfast will be 1€, lunch 3€ and diner 3€. If you provide some of your food yourself, we would still ask for a minimum contribution of 2€ per day **Transport :** from Saumur: 7€ ; from Longué : 2€.

Works : balance and projects

Responsable : Philippe Renucci

Many large jobs have already been completed: Rinpoche's appartment (bedroom, bathroom, living room and kitchen), the Gompa, 'Khenpo's house', plus the painting of many rooms and the caretaker's flat. External wooden window frames have been repainted and the airy study room has received a new door.

One of the most costly jobs has been renonvating the heating in the château (14000€ approx.). and it has also been necesssary to bring the water purifying system back into good working order (7000€) ; cleaning the rainwater drainage pipes is underway (1800€), as well as the construction of a bathroom for our monks in the West Wing (3000€).

In the near future we hope to repair the roof in the East Wing (12000€) and the installation of a kitchen in line with all legal norms plus a dining hall in the 'Garden Pavillion' are under consideration.

We are also planning to build a dark retreat cabin with two cells. The façade of the West Wing needs to be restored as do the roof supports (80 000€).

Geshés and Teachings

Geshé Gelek and **Geshé Samten** have been resident here in Shenten since the beginning of the year and our first Christmas Retreat was led by Geshe Gelek who gave detailed instructions on Tummo. The last weekend of every month is dedicated to Ngöndro practice and we look forward to more retreats and teaching weekends to be led by our Geshes over the coming months. For up-to-date information, visit our website **www.yungdrung-bon.net**.

Grounds

Responsable : Romain Morin

Various jobs have already been done, a small hedge and other trees have been planted, the courtyard in front of the château has been weeded and some new flower beds created.

Last summer our first vegetable garden was created and this year we have planted up almost the whole of the plot. We've tried to concentrate on 'easy-to grow' vegetables with a high, on-going yield but have also branched out with herbs to enhance our meals and with varieties to try to ensure an abundant supply during retreat times so we can all enjoy organic vegetables at a low cost. We are experimenting with organic gardening techniques.

Guillaume has set up a system of notebooks for logs, advice and memos to enable Anne and other garden helpers to coordinate our efforts. The initial job of getting the garden underway is virtually finished, now it's just a case of weeding, watering and looking forward to a good harvest ! All volounteers welcome.

Contacts : Romain : +33 689122338 ; Anne : **anne-castagne@wanadoo.fr** (+33 621727732) ;
Guillaume : **gf1lassalle@yahoo.fr**.

Karma Yoga

OUR CENTRE CAN ONLY CONTINUE WITH YOUR ACTIVE INVOLVEMENT ! Those coming to work full-time at Shenten (that is, 6 hours a day) will be **housed free of charge** plus part of their meals will be provided by the centre.

Even when Philippe Renucci is not here, volunteers are welcome, particularly for painting and plastering. **Guillaume** can fill you in on the details and all necessary materials will be waiting for you !

Tools and Furniture

Shenten Dargye Ling gladly accepts donations of chairs, tables, bedside tables, chests of drawers, wardrobes, carpets, hoovers and all kinds of tools… …

Shenten Accounts

Responsable : Aicha Charmi

From March 2005 to March 2006, expenditure on **works** amounted to **24 500**€. Outlay for furniture and tools (mattresses, beds etc.) over the same period was **9 200**€. The annual total for **taxes** is around **4 000**€; **1 800**€ was spent on **transport** while **bills** (heating, electricity, telephone, insurance, general maintenence…), came to **22 000**€.

We also spent **1400**€, on **daily expenses and fees**. This brings us to total of around **62 900**€. Current information allows us to estimate that the monthly sum from regular donations is around 1 200€ or 14 400€ per annum. With one-off donations amounting to around **22 000**€ per year plus contributions amounting to **30 000**€ by the Yungdrung Bon Association from retreat incomes we have been able to balance accounts so far. However, this present system does not easily facilitate the establishment of long-term book-keeping forecasts.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE ASSOCIATION YUNGDRUNG BÖN : 5th of AUGUST, 2H30 PM IN SHENTEN.

You also told me that Yongdzin Rinpoche gave it the name.



Yes, it was him and he also made a drawing which was meant to be the logo of the bulletin. His style is quite recognizable in it. It is a vase, you see, a symbol of wealth, like an empowerment vase but without a spout and there was a jewel at the top.

You can also notice a small poem of Rinpoche written in the second issue of the newsletter.

I see, and I see also a shift in the image, a development. Somebody took over the graphical design?

Yes, Christophe got involved. It made the newsletter much nicer, but complicated its edition quite a lot, as new typos and spelling mistakes would pop up as he was managing the text in the layout. He absolutely wanted it to be beautiful, no matter what (*he laughs*).

This is a usual conflict between the graphic designers and content creators, I would say. Who was in the core team of the newsletter, at the beginning?

I think I was responsible for it, but I didn’t do it alone. It was written in English, and I am not a native English speaker. If I remember well, Carol Ermakova helped with it. And we published content that other people prepared. We were asking all the people who were responsible for something to write down a report, a small summary of activities. It was organized like in the Dzogchen community: a group of people was formed and each of them was assigned with different responsibilities. Not much hierarchy. The purpose of the newsletter was to show the people in the community what was happening at Shenten to raise funds and to make them feel Shenten is a common thing. As you see, there is also a call for help in karma yoga.



Speech of Delight

Shenten Dargye Ling's Newsletter N°2 Nov. 2006



Good news and a few words regarding Shenten Dargye Ling



Greetings from Blou! I want to share good news and a few words regarding Shenten Dargye Ling with you. The good news is that Shenten Dargye Ling has now been legally recognized as a religious congregation by the government of the Republic of France. This took place on 30th June, 2006 and marks a new and historical development for the Yungdrung Bön tradition.

Receiving the status of congregation from the French government is a very special opportunity for us. This will surely also be very important for all Bönpos, both inside and outside Tibet. Wherever Bönpos are, they will know about this positive development and feel supported.

The congregation was initiated and established by H.E. Yongdzin Lopön Tenzin Namdak Rinpoche with the inspiration of furthering the critically needed preservation of Yungdrung Bön, the indigenous religious culture of Tibet and one of the most ancient religions still alive in the world today. The support of Mr. Guinness of the Kalpa Group has been great help to us. He supports the preservation of our tradition in many ways and it was thanks to his generous donation that this project was able to get off the ground. I also appreciate our Sangha members for their participation and tremendous supports.

This is a very critical time for the Tibetan religion and culture as regards its future safety, so the new establishment of Shenten Dargye Ling in Blou, a nice French country village with its friendly and courteous people, will be extremely significant for the future of our tradition. Here we expect to develop a hub which will be a vital presence in preserving our religion and culture, a center of education but also a home where practitioners



As for the fundamental root of originating all spiritual and temporal well-being for everyone, There is no means other than to perform virtuous actions. Engaging oneself in supporting and contributing to the development and stability of others' welfare - What good fortune this is!

can enrich their spiritual knowledge and a place where practical aspects of Yungdrung Bön can flourish – medicine, art, and language and so on – alongside major academic and religious activities.

Against this background on behalf of Shenten Dargye Ling, I would like to extend my welcome to all the friends and practitioners of Yungdrung Bön who wish to participate in its endeavors and advancement. At the same time, I also would like to let you know that as a new organization with no financial resources, our Congregation is in need of financial aid to sustain it and to enable us to carry on our programs smoothly.

As for the current program of the Congregation, I would present it in following ways:

1. We have already started a Library consisting of a complete set of the Bönpo Kajur and Katen together with some other collected works. More printed and rare manuscript texts will be gathered and saved here.
2. The main assembly hall (tib. 'du 'khang) with Buddha's statue has been inaugurated and we hope to install a wooden carved traditional altar and a Stupa next year.
3. To create and maintain a Digital and Book archive of teachings given by H.E. Yongdzin Rinpoche in Europe and the U.S. over the last 17 years and other Bön Lamas.
4. Projects regarding Transcription of teachings and Translation of Tibetan texts have also been initiated.
5. Spring, summer, autumn and winter Teaching and practice programs along with additional and weekend programs have already been started in Shenten. As one of the most important instruments of the preservation, this program is to be develop more efficiently in the near future:
   - intensive meditation training program with a view idea to developing a traditional meditation training program
   - to set up programs on Tibetan language and literature
   - Tibetan arts, medicine and healing programs.
6. To conduct scientific, experimental research on specific fields related to this tradition.
7. To convene Academic conferences on the Bön tradition.

These are our current on-going projects. For more information on the events of Shenten Dargye Ling this newsletter, Speech of Delight, will be issued from time to time and additionally, there will a website of Shenten Dargye Ling in the near future. I conclude this message here with my warmest regards and prayers for all of you.

Les responsables désignés par Khenpo Tenpa Yungdrung demeurent : Florens Van Canstein (coordinateur) ; Jean-Louis Massoubre (conseiller) ; Isabelle Catona (secrétaire) ; Aïcha Charni (trésorière) ; Martha Daams (correspondante pour les Pays-Bas) ; Wolfgang Schmid (correspondant pour l'Allemagne) ; Philippe Renucci (responsable des travaux) ; Carol et Dima Ermakovi (transcripts anglais) Guillaume Lassalle (gardien) ; Romain Morin (jardin); Stéphane Arguillère (traductions de textes, communications internes) ; Pierre Combroux (relations avec la presse).

Now there is a more cautious approach to call people to stay as volunteers. Help can come with troubles sometimes…

This contradiction was there from the very beginning. And it is something that I saw in many Dharma centers. But there was a great need for help and money just to keep things running. When I was in the administration of Shenten, on the management board, I saw how much money was needed just for regular maintenance, merely to ensure that the structure does not collapse. My idea at that time was to get regular donations from people rather than financing the center through the

teaching fees. I thought that if we made people pay just for teaching sessions, it would not make them feel responsible, they would feel more like consumers. And I also imagined that generosity would come with transparency of our intentions and results.

The first issue was very sober and succinct but then the newsletter started to contain longer articles and stories with pictures, also quite detailed reports of Khenpo Tenpa Yungdrung Rinpoche.

As for Khenpo´s letters, yes, we asked him to write one, as we did not want to bother Rinpoche with that, and he was very much willing to do it. Maybe he was less busy than he is now. At the beginning, I made the newsletter very cheap, intentionally, because it was meant to be distributed in paper; but gradually we started to send it through emails and costs decreased, and we could afford to use colors and pictures.

As you can see, in the second issue there is a report about a project of translating chosen Bon texts – which was a project which I initiated. We wanted to raise funds which would enable translators to work on it. But, unfortunately, it did not work.

Do you remember until when you were involved in the newsletter?

Not really. At some point I passed it to someone else, I do not recall when and to whom. You know, the years 2008-2010 were very difficult for me, in many aspects. I faced lots of obstacles and maybe that's why I forgot lots of things from that period. My relationship with the Tibetan things, my professional life, everything went a bit upside down, and also the connection with Shenten loosened. At the beginning, things were very fresh, a bit anarchic and funny in Shenten, and we all were very enchanted with it, and a bit naïve about it. One of the first times when we were sitting with Rinpoche on the bench in the courtyard outside, I told him: "Oh, Rinpoche, I have been through so many Buddhist centers and it was always hell on earth, while here, it is so nice and people are so relaxed and there is such a practice atmosphere!" And Rinpoche laughed at me, saying: "Just wait a little bit and you will see" (*he laughs*). And he was right, of course. With time, it wore me out somehow and finally, I used to come only to translate. I think that the last time I came, as an interpreter, it was for His Holiness the 33rd Menri Trizin, when he visited Shenten in 2010. Khenpo Rinpoche asked me, he needed someone who could translate directly from Tibetan into both French and English.



You were already so good in Tibetan?

I started learning Tibetan when I was eighteen, in 1988, and I was forty at that time. I was already good enough in Tibetan when I met Yongdzin Rinpoche in 1992 to discuss in Tibetan with him. Actually, my spoken Tibetan was better when I was thirty than now, because I do not use it very much. My classical Tibetan is good, I can read texts fluently and my understanding of Tibetan lamas when they are teaching is ok, but I do not get much practice these days in talking. Speaking about modern life is especially difficult. I would not be able to say something like: "Go to the website and download that file", I have no clue about some of these modern words.

Maybe they say "website" and "download", I would not be surprised.

Yes, my colleague at the Institute of Eastern Languages (Inalco) in Paris keeps correcting Tibetans. She has an amazing vocabulary in modern spoken Tibetan, and she teaches them all the neologisms that are used in Lhasa.

When lamas speak Tibetan, do you understand some of them more easily than others?

Definitely, Khenpo Rinpoche is very easy to understand, he speaks the common language of the Tibetans in exile, with much less regional accent than, let us say, Khenpo Gelek or Geshe Samten – geshe la has a really strong accent from Rinpoche´s native region, Khyungpo. I also translated for the latter lamas, but I had to make an effort. Translating Khenchen Rinpoche is very easy, instead.

You said you met Yongdzin Rinpoche in 1992. Was it at Triten Norbutse?

Yes. And then, I returned to Triten only in 1998. And it had already grown a lot.

How was the monastery in 1992?

It is a bit difficult to describe, because the few old buildings are still there, but they are sort of completely taken into the extended structure. It was already a busy place and very much in the process of building. But below the monastery there were only rice fields, no city, only a few houses around the Swayambhu hill. The flat part between the Swayambhu stupa and Triten, which is now filled with houses, was just open countryside. I remember that when I was visiting, the taxi dropped me at the Swayambhu hill and I had to walk through all those rice fields for more than half an hour. There were little walls made of ground between the fields and I remember myself walking on them to the monastery.



You were a student of Tibetan language and culture at the university at that time?

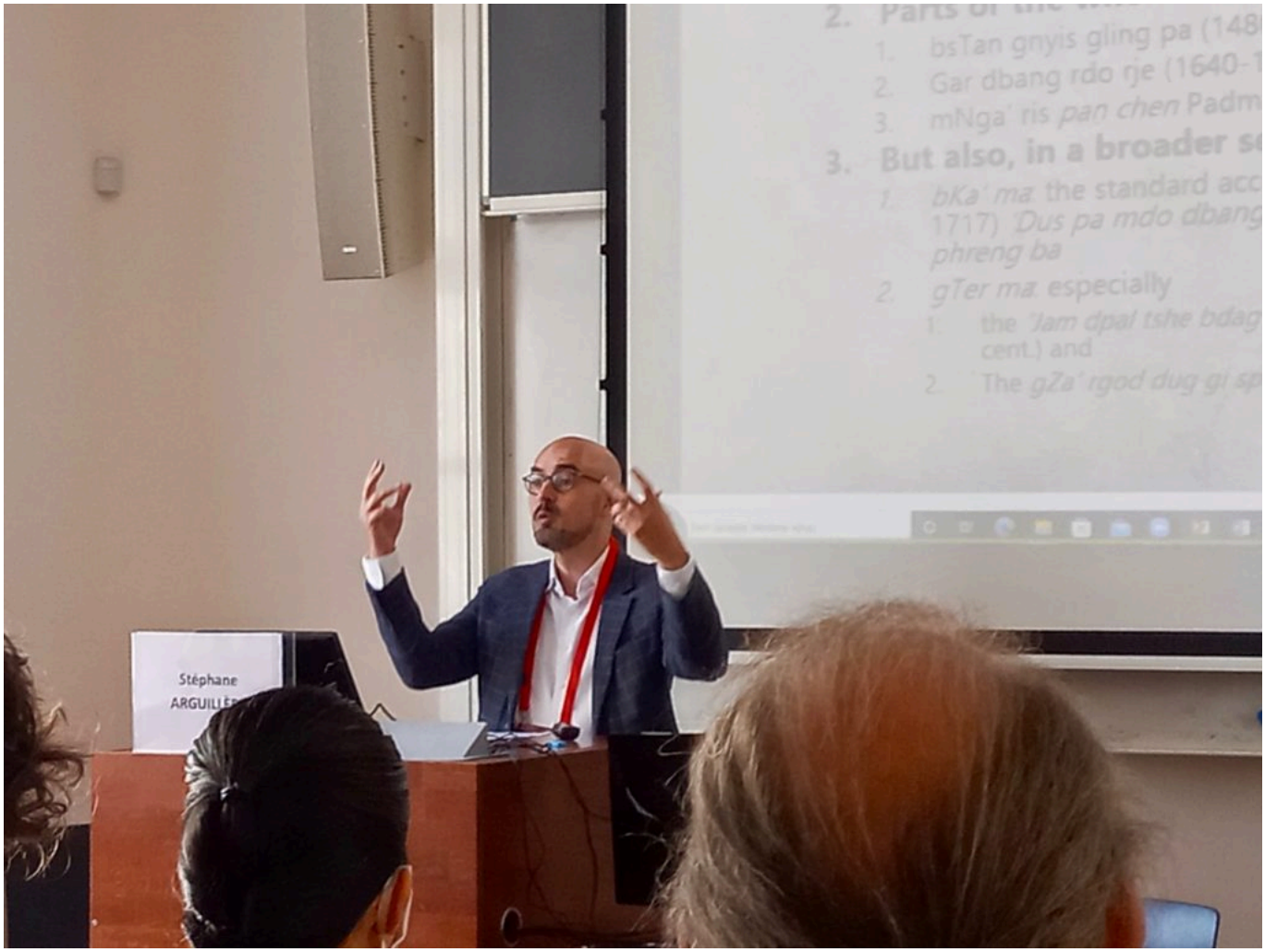
Yes, in 1992 I basically completed my studies in both Western philosophy and Tibetan language and civilization. I learned Tibetan very quickly because my first master, Nyoshül Khenpo (a Nyingma lama) told me, when I was seventeen: “You cannot speak Tibetan, I do not speak English, if you do not learn Tibetan, I will not teach you.” So I learned as you can do when you are only eighteen, it becomes your only obsession. After five years, I got the French highest teaching degree (“agrégation”) in philosophy, which granted me to get a civil servant position as a highschool teacher automatically. But in those days I was not interested in any such thing. I wanted to become a

monk and practice under the guidance of my masters. So, in 1992, I went to Nepal, waiting to get an invitation for Bhutan where my teacher, Nyoshül Khenpo, lived, but it did not work as I expected, and actually, that trip was a failure – or rather, things occurred in a completely different way than what I had imagined. For example, this was the first time in my life that I came in contact with Bon masters and monks, which was then just a mere curiosity for me.

You mentioned obstacles and crises several times, but my impression is that you are a very happy person now. Is this correct?

Yes, it has gotten better and better. I was one of those young men who thought that if they do not achieve things by the time they are thirty, they will never achieve anything at all. I went through very bitter things, and at some point I must admit I lost hope. I got a very clear prophecy from another of my Nyingma masters, Chimed Rigdzin Rinpoche, that I would become "a big professor", as he said in his weird English – he even specified it very precisely, and it would be a quite strong position on Tibetan religions in France. But my own desire was only to receive the instructions and then to put them into practice, and I had no serious appetite for an academic career at that time; and later on, I resigned myself to this prophecy, as it has been so long in coming, I thought it would never come true. I was never properly supported in French tibetology and even ended up facing many serious obstacles, hostilities, in my thirties and early forties. At some point, I told Yongdzin Rinpoche that I was so fed up with all that, as it was so depressing, that I wanted to drop it all and focus on practice. But he told me: "No no, don´t. If you don't get the title you deserve," he said, "however interesting the things you are saying or writing may be, people will not take them seriously."

Then, I somehow persevered, as I could. Now, at last, my career has become more successful, as I am an associate professor in Tibetan language and civilization, expecting to be promoted to a full professor soon, plus, for example, I run a collective research project on the history of the "Northern Treasures" branch of the Nyingma school, financed by a generous grant from the French National Research Agency. I am also responsible for the training of the French high school philosophy teachers so as to enable them to teach non-Western philosophers, including the Buddhist author Nāgārjuna. Now, I can let go of all the bitter things of the past. I enjoy the present because it is so unusual for me that everything goes so smoothly (*he laughs*). The only thing I could complain about is that I am working little bit too much – but, basically, it is my fault.



Do you still feel a part of Shenten´s community, or any other community, for that sake?

These days, I am making stronger and stronger connections with the branch of Nyingma school called the "Northern treasures", which is also my research topic. But I still feel at home in Shenten, even if I am not coming that often anymore. I have a very good relationship with Khenpo Tenpa Yungdrung Rinpoche – I would say it is a friendship. We get along very well, anyway. I think he was a bit disappointed that I left suddenly, at some point. I surely did too much for a long time, and then suddenly dropped everything because I was mentally exhausted. Khenpo la does not surely blame me, but I think it saddened him, with the idea that I was abandoning Yongdzin Rinpoche. But, when it happened, my overall situation was really too heavy for me. Yongdzin Rinpoche somehow perceived it himself. Just before everything collapsed on my head, I met him in Paris to interpret for one of his teachings, and then he gave me, very discreetly, as a monk, a bottle of Polish vodka with golden leaves in it, saying with a smile: "Maybe you will need it". I actually made lots of offerings to the Protectors with that alcohol, and even drank a part of it, but, though it was a bit of a consolation, it was not enough to cope with all the obstacles at that time. A very sweet attention anyway.

Maybe, after all, those moments when everything falls apart and you lose hope and orientation are also part of the path, especially for us Westerners, who come to the Tibetan teachings with quite a lot of unrealistic expectations. Maybe it starts becoming serious only when you have got rid of all these expectations and still get back to it, with a fresher mind, "devoid of both hope and fear," as it is said in the Chö teachings as well as in Dzogchen.

Photo credit: *Stéphane Arguillère*