Sherab Chamma: At the beginning, I was the youngest student and the only girl

written by Jitka Polanská



Sherab Jamma is 24 years old and has a degree of Kachupa (an equivalent to a bachelor's degree) from the School of Four Medical Science of Early Tradition which belongs to Triten Norbutse monastery. She now continues her studies to become a Menrampa, a fully qualified doctor of traditional medical science, sowa rigpa. This year, Sherab Jamma is visiting Shenten – for the first time – and offering medical advice and assistance to participants of retreats. She will also be holding a practically oriented seminar about the basics of Tibetan medicine.

Sherab la, what is the purpose of your stay at Shenten?

It is our Khenchen´s idea to send some students or graduates from the medical school to share their knowledge and also to get some teaching experience, an experience of how to speak in public. The main thing is to share the knowledge of traditional Tibetan medicine.

What are your main activities here at Shenten?

I give Tibetan massages and examine the state of health of people who come to me, by checking their pulse. Then I can also give them some advice for their lifestyle and offer some herbal

medicine.



Sherab Chamma st Shenten in May 2023

How many people have come to you, till now (May 7)?

Around twenty five. When there are teachings, more people come, sometimes three or four in one day.

It is your first time in Europe, what was your journey like?

It is my first time anywhere outside Nepal. My journey was good and easy because I traveled with Khenchen Rinpoche and Largen la. We traveled via Doha and our flight from Kathmandu was delayed so we did not catch our connecting flight and had to stay overnight in Doha and so we went to see the city. It was interesting. Also, in Paris, we stayed for two days and visited some places and hung around with some Tibetan friends living there.



At the School of Four Medical Science of Early Tradition of Triten Norbutse monastery


And in Paris…

How long will you be staying at Shenten?

Around two months.

Do you like the place?

Yes, I am very lucky to come here, where our root master Yongdzin Rinpoche was staying for long periods. It is very quiet, a good place for people to relax. People are nice and everything is well organized. It is a very good experience for me.

Sherab Jamma, when did you enter medical school at Triten, at what age?

It was in 2008. I was nine years old. I am from a village in Dolpo. My mother died when I was five-

years-old and so my elder sister and brother took care of me and eventually sent me there. Nyima Ozer, a lama from our village, brought me to the school. To get there, it took us four or five days. I visited my family in the mountains only after nine years, in 2017. But my brother and sometimes my sister and my father came to see me in Kathmandu. And also Nyima Ozer Rinpoche.

You were very young! Were there other children of your age?

For one year I was the only girl and the only child of this age but soon after more girls came and we became friends. Now, many girls study at the school.

Did you go to school before, in your village?

Yes, until grade 2. After coming to the medical school, I studied the basics first, Nepali, English and Tibetan. After that, I entered the five years course for Kachupas and a bit later I also went to a college, a governmental school in the city, to complete my higher education up to grade 12, starting from grade 8. I finished my secondary school in 2019.



During one-day seminar held at Shenten on 30th of April 2023

Your English is very good.

It was quite good after college – because we also studied in English – but then I did not practice it much. Now I have a good opportunity to speak English here at Shenten and I hope it will improve.

Are you from a family of *amchis*, doctors of traditional medicine?

My father is not an *amchi* but many older people in the village have some medical knowledge. I think that in every country in the past, people used to be like this.

You are still studying but you also help in the clinic. What do you do, exactly?

As a kachuba, we can examine patients and make and give medicine. I also teach younger students.

What do you want to do in the future?

I want to be a good doctor and help patients. I want to develop my knowledge in this Tibetan medical field. I feel happy that I have already completed one part of my studies and I can work and continue to deepen my knowledge. Also, I could come here, as a result of my studies.

Thank you for the questions.



In front of the medical school and clinic located just bellow Triten Norbutse monastery

Photos: Sherab Chamma, Jitka Polanska, Yana Karamari