

Visiting Monks of Drepung Gomang Institute

THE PROGRAM

TOUR 08

Opening speech: This briefly introduces the monastery, its tour objectives.

WELCOMING HIS HOLINESS THE DALAI LAMA AND OFFERING OF MANDALA.

According to Tibetan custom, if His Holiness is not physically present, his holy portrait is displayed to symbolize that he is nevertheless the Chief Guest at the function or gatherings. At the same time, one offers all that one values in the Universe by reciting prayers and visualizing that one is offering these to the guru or lama.

With this follows, the offering of Mandala--symbolizing the Body, Speech and Mind of the Buddha--a statue, a text, or a stupa. In essence, offering the Mandala of the universe is the ultimate act of giving or surrender to the 'outer' manifestation of the guru or deity, who is inseparable from one's own innate Buddha nature. The motivation is sent forth as an offering for World healing and world Peace, the prayer includes an offering of the purified universe to all beings.

Mandala Prayer

Earth blessed with flowers and incense
 And adorned with the king of mountains,
 The four continents, the sun and moon-
 I offer this envisioned as a Buddha field
 May all sentient beings partake of this pure sphere.

“idam guru ratna mandalam niryata yami”

(I offer this precious mandala to the spiritual masters)

CHANTING OF JAM CHENMA (Madyamikavatara)

This is translated as '*Praise of the great Maitreya*' (the future Buddha) but is in fact verse of Praise composed by the 19th Abbot of Drepung Gomang monastery, Tsondue Gyatso, in honor of 18th Abbot, Jampa Lhundup. After hearing the amazing teachings of Jampa Lhundup, Tsondue Gyatso saw him as an embodiment of Maitreya Buddha, and was inspired to compose these verses. This is a very important regular chant of the monks of Drepung Gomang Monastery for the peace and harmony of the world. They will chant in their unique and special chanting style.

DEBATE (demonstration of debate)

Ignorance is the root cause of suffering, and wisdom is the antidote to ignorance. Through learning, one eventually becomes established in wisdom. Just as a lamp illumines a house so that one can see colors and shapes, so learning and wisdom enable one to see the nature of phenomena.

The practice of debate is the most important way to learn Buddhist Philosophy in the monasteries. The main purpose of monastic debates is to defeat misconceptions in order to establish a correct view and to clear away any objections to that view. An actual session of debate involves two parties, a defender who sits and gives answers to the challengers who stands up and asks question. There is a whole separate vocabulary for debate, each word with a complex meaning that is difficult to translate, but here are a few words you can listen for:

Kor-sum: You are wrong!

Cher...cher... cher...! Hurry up and answer!

Oh... tsa! You have contradicted yourself!

Dhi.....! This is a syllable associated with Jamphelyang (Manjushri) the god of wisdom. By calling this syllable, the questioner calls upon the deity to assist him.

Chee-Cher! What is your reason?

Dho! Yes, I agree!

Dhag-ma-Thub: I disagree with your reason.

Each movement of the debate is also highly symbolic. In brief, the upraised arm represents Jamphelyang's sword of knowledge cutting through ignorance. The left hand represents wisdom--the actual antidote to cyclic existence. The right hand represents method--the altruistic intention to become enlightened, motivated by great love and compassion for all sentient beings. The clap represents a union of method and wisdom. In dependence on the union of method and wisdom, one is able to attain Buddhhood.

CHANTING OF MIKTSEMA (optional)

A special prayer, paying homage to Je Tsong Khapa. The founder of Yellow sect (Gelug Sect) of Tibetan Buddhism. Je Tsong Khapa is seen as an emanation of Avalokiteshvara, Manjushri and Vajrapani. Monks will chant verses from Lama Tsong Khapa Guru Yoga.

Translated version: "Je Tsong Khapa, crown jewel of the holy masters of the Land of Snows, you are Avalokiteshvara, great treasurer of inconceivable compassion untainted by ego's delusion. You are Manjushri, powerful master with stainless wisdom. You are Vajrapani, destroyer of forces of demons. At your feet, famed Lobsang Drakpa, I humbly bow and earnestly request that all sentient beings achieve enlightenment".

CHANTING OF CHÖD (tantric tradition)

It literally means 'to cut off' refers to a practice that is designed to cut off all ego involvement and defilement. This was introduced by *Guru Padma sambava*, the great Indian scholar who visited Tibet five times, on his third visit, he gave this chöd teachings in Tsang Region first to Sonam Lama and Marla Tsenbo, Sonam Lama transmitted the teachings to a woman disciple Machig Labdron (1055-1153), so the chöd teaching was spread by this great woman teacher.

It is a prayer for loving kindness, compassion and the minds of enlightenment and the wisdom of emptiness. This chanting is used when one meditates on selflessness and removes self-cherishing and ego clinging by visualizing the sacrifice of one's body for the benefit of others. Ultimately the purpose of this chant and practice is to realize 'emptiness', which is not 'nothingness', but rather the emptiness of many of our assumptions about our separateness, leading to a deep state of non-duality in which everything is experienced as totally connected.

YAK DANCE

Yak Cham

Tibetan yaks are native to the Himalayan Mountains of Nepal, India and Tibet . They were domesticated in Tibet nearly 5,000 years ago. They can survive in rocky, alpine terrain with meadows for grazing. They are highly adaptable to a variety of habitats.

They are intelligent and fairly easy to train. These yaks are capable of climbing to altitudes of 20, 000 feet. A yak can carry a 220-pound load up terrain too rugged for horses.

Yaks are an important source of meat, milk, fiber, hide, butter, transportation and dung for fuel. Yaks are also important in Tibetan mythology as messengers of the gods living in high places.

The unique animal is the symbolic of the Tibetan spirit of rugged strength and playfulness. Here in this dance, its shows the peaceful co-existence of human being with the animal kingdom.

NYURZEMA: PRAISE OF THE SIX ARM DHARMA PROTECTOR MAHAKALA

A special chant, paying homage to six armed Mahakala (Gonpo), the great black one. Though fierce in his trampling upon the evil spirits of delusion and greed, he is actually considered to be the agent of Avalokiteshvara or Chenrezig, the angelic Bodhisattva of great compassion. Mahakala is frightening in appearance because his responsibility is to protect all beings from evil. These verses were composed by a great Indian yogi Drubchen Shawari who had a vision of Mahakala while meditating, and was inspired to compose these verses of praise during a vision of Mahakala that appeared to him gradually from the feet upwards. This prayer requests Mahakala to protect the Dharma and to remove all obstacles of all sentient beings.

Translated version:

Quick-acting Avalokita, homage to you
 Wearing anklets, you trample Ganesa.
 Mahakala, you wear a tiger-skin loincloth.
 Fully adorned with snake-ornaments on your six arms,
 The first right holds a triku, the middle a mala,
 The last plays violently a damaru
 The left holds a skull-cup, and a three-pronged lance,
 And likewise a noose, which serves for tying up.
 Your wrathful mouth completely bares its fangs
 Your three eyes are fierce. The hair of your head blazes upward.
 Your forehead is properly anointed with red lead.
 On your crown, Aksobhya's royal presence is fixed.
 You wear a great necklace of fifty men's heads, dripping blood.
 On your crown, you are adorned with five dry, jewelled skulls.

You come from your tree and accept our tormas offering
 Glorious Six-Armed - homage and praise to you!
 Sternly protect the Doctrine of the Buddha!
 Sternly praise the height of power of the jewels!
 For us - teachers, disciples and entourage -
 Please quell all bad conditions and obstructions,
 And grant us quickly whatever siddhis we wish

SHEJO (optional)

A short chant for the well being, good health and happiness of the audience. May this prayer bring you all good health, prosperity, long life and peace in this world.

TSEMEYONTEN (optional): a special chant for the remembrance of all the sacrifice of the people of Tibet, for the success and achievement of Tibet's struggle, well being and happiness of all the audience here, well being and prosperity of all sentient beings, peace and happiness in this world. May this prayer bring you all good health, prosperity, and long life.

UMA JUGPA: ROOT VERSES OF THE MIDDLE WAY (optional)
(Madhyamika: Mulamadhyamakakarika)

In the teachings of the Mahayana tradition of Buddhism, there is an account of the Buddha, before he passed into Nirvana, issuing a prophecy that some years following his passing into Nirvana there would appear an extraordinary teacher who would bear the name of the Nagas in his name, and who would re-vivify the teachings of the Prajnaparamita, establish the unsurpassable view of the Perfection of Wisdom, and thus establish circumstances for enormous benefit to the teachings and to beings. This is widely held to be a prophecy of the coming of Nagarjuna, the great Buddhist master who did so much too further spread the teachings of the Prajnaparamita

When Nagarjuna brought this text back to the human realm from Naga Land, he realized that the volume of the material was so great that people would not be able to absorb all of it because they had short lives, little merit, and very little time to study. So he composed his famous commentaries which are more concise and were based upon the Prajnaparamita. Perhaps the most famous of these is the Mulamadhyamakakarika, "Root Verses on the Middle Way Philosophy", which is one of six major commentaries written by Nagarjuna, each of which was famous for its concise presentation of the view of the Madyamika or "Middle Way" philosophy that emptiness is the true nature of reality.

TIBET NATIONAL ANTHEM and

Thank you speech.