









Plants and nature: touching people in an unconscious way

Peter Webb (Australia/Brazil)

It is a great pleasure to be here beside Lama Gangchen and Lama Michel to talk to you.

Firstly I would like to talk to you about the work that I do together with Bel. I work with ecology and teach permaculture. It is a philosophy that works with design and strategies to develop ecologies for people, using the same networks of interdependence which nature uses.

Together with Bel, who is a psychologist, we do activities that are referred to as eco-psychology. This work is based upon the historical facts of how evolution has modelled the environment and we humans as a part of our planet. Many times we do not remember that before we human beings arrived on the planet, many things were already happening.

Here in Borobudur, we are in a very fortunate place as this a place where new energy is being born; where the earth is born. There is a very vital energy here. It has to do with the energy of fire and earth being born from the volcanoes. These things are from the ancient past. For a long time, many many years, there were only rocks on the planet; they were here by themselves. There were no plants or animals. But those who made Borobudur, knew very well these energies and how to harmonise or empathise with them.

The rocks have a type of communication. They communicate with us principally via their geometry and a type of electricity that they have. They have a way of speaking to us. We see here in Borobudur the way that the sculpture is made; the forms are all composed of straight lines and the curves; this is what talking with rocks is all about. The artists have composed together with the power of the rocks.

Lama Michel has talked to us a lot about straight lines and the problems we have to deal with in straight lines; that they have a way of training or dominating our minds. Our mind connects into a rational way of thinking when we use a straight line too much. We could see the straight line as being masculine and the curve as feminine. So rocks for some people can have a great effect. It depends if the rocks are mountains or if they are cut rocks like we find in many buildings; square and not really too interesting for us; not so easy for us to relate to. So the rocks have a history of their own, where they are communicating between themselves via the chemicals in their make up: The positive and negative charges. They are very simple beings, but that is the way they are. They relate to our simple nature.

It is very interesting in Tibet too. You can get close to the rocks, because there are no trees, and you cannot see so much water. They are such a strong presence and they are such a strong element. You do not just pick up a rock. Any of the rocks that are on Borobudur, just pick up 2 of them and you would get a backache. The rocks have a very strong energy that affects some people more than others. They came before us as human beings, and because of that to some people they are greatly touching in an unconscious way. Others find them inanimate and non-expressive. That is where the artist comes in to use their combined power to touch us.

When you bring water together with rocks, then it becomes possible to have plants. So then we have a historic period on the earth when the plants start to arrive and they diversify and multiply over all the environments of the whole planet. And there is a constant process of renewing; the cycle of life and death. The plants 'kill' the rocks and they become soil for the plants. The plants are doing this constantly to the rocks. Then the plants die too and the soil made from the rocks and the plants becomes richer so that different plants can now be born.

The rocks die naturally; which can take a long time, but they do die. The rocks suffer from gravity, so they always go down hill; Part of the history of Borobudur tells these stories too. Because water and rocks have the same type of quality or nature of being heavy; they both follow gravity and go downhill. Different from air and fire, which are always going up; that too is their nature.

So these are some of the simple things that have been trained in nature before the human beings arrive. Before any animal arrives. And in nature, these communities or as we call them, ecosystems, are self-generating; There is no plant that is more important than any other plant nor any animal that is more important than a plant or other animal. There are some regulators within the system, but the whole system is working together. So we are always working with communion rather than with competition: A constant dance of the elements coming into forms, dying and being reborn in different forms.

Within the ecosystems there are short moments of competition, but they are like many short straight lines that make up a round contour, like the round mouth of a glass that we can see as being made up of various straight lines which define the curve.

So in nature, we have evolution that works with short periods of straight lines, which make up a curve. With the Lamas and in Buddhism, we use them in the symbols for wind and the symbol for water.

For me, learning self-healing and the practice of healing the environment is a very deep thing as the symbols teach us many things; they are writing a history. They were the language before people could think, write or read.

Many times, because of our thinking in straight lines, we do not manage to connect. Connect to rocks or plants or animals and now it is starting to become a problem in communicating with human beings too. We now have words for everything and we are automatically organising and rationalising things into nice compartments, but they are not actually like that as they do not stay the same; we do not stay the same. Impermanence is one of the biggest laws that we have. That's what we study in Buddhism, that nothing stays the same. If we have a word or a concept for something, then soon we stop to experience it.

So in eco-psychology we work together with nature, as nature is never the same. In the morning the sun comes up, it rises on up then it comes down again. It starts to get hotter; the birds and insects and animals are coming and going and the plants, little by little they are growing. Plants always grow in spirals; they do not grow in straight lines. They follow influences from the planets and from inside the earth.

The plants live basically on light, which is an amazing thing. We live eating plants, so in a way we are living on light that has been transformed by plants into nutrients and fibers. So again we can see that there are many things going on that maybe we do not see, but they do affect us.

Bel was talking about the importance of self-regulation and about empathy with people. When we have the chance to spend time within nature, we are touched by some of the many types of relationships that are going on. Here at Borobudur, nature is represented in an incredibly rich way in the sculptures. There are scenes amid many types of plants, fruit trees, flowers and all types of animals; all very harmonious together with the male and female buddhas. Happy families where much is communicated in a non-verbal manner: Gestures, ways of being; a very ancient language.

It is important to remember that at the time that Borobudur was made, nobody could read or write. So people would look at the sculptures and see; be touched and affected by the curved forms and proportions they could recognise. The proportion in Buddhism is very important. What is on peoples heads, their clothes, their feet...The proportion, which is geometry, the language of the rocks and also a language our 'ancient' brain can understand things in symbolic terms. These can speak to us in a simple way if we can be calm, meditating as we walk amongst the sculptures. When we are doing mantras, but particularly when we are together with Lama Gangchen Rinpoche and Lama Michel; everything can become very alive if we can open ourselves to this experience.



We work with plants and animals and the environment to touch people. To invite them to enter into empathy with colours, forms and designs (geometry). We work on a mountaintop and in a valley where the qualities are totally different. Inside the forest it is dark and humid while out on the grass it is hot and the light is very bright. We work contrasting the differences in the environments and between shapes and forms, so as to help people to relax a little; to start to notice, not just to analyse and name things; to start to feel.

We have many different types of plants and many different types of environments. We work in a very indirect way. Bel and I have talked beforehand and we know what type of experience we want the people to have; we go to these different environments and let them 'touch' the people in a type of non-formal education. It is here we go to work together with people.

It is really no surprise that the plants that grow on the mountaintops grow there. That is what they like to do. And the plants that grow in the valleys or that grow in the sea, that is where they choose to live. If they were anywhere else, they would die! So they are basically happy where they are. So this is a very simple and interesting thing. When we talk about self-regulation and empathy with other people; about regulating our chakras and being together in a sangha with people that we feel comfortable with. Here our happiness can come and we are generous, loving, patient, intuitive, in a natural way. So when we work with the environment, it is important to have happy and pleasant places to work in, because they can affect us in positive ways. Relaxed with others around us, it happens in a natural way where each can see and feel what is right for them at that moment.

We have been doing this work for 10 years now and you can see some videos on the following website: www.videodeclaraluz.com.br

We are guided by Lama Gangchen Rinpoche and Lama Michel. They always come to visit us and ask about our work. They constantly encourage us to keep up the good work. They visit our gardens and energise the stupa, the male and female buddhas and mandalas we have there from Borobudur.

The people who come to plant, are not gardeners. They meet each other generally only once a month. We built a space to work as a hospice, but in Brasil this is illegal and so we use the space for people to come and stay. We spent a lot of time in making it beautiful and comfortable, so that people could feel that way inside themselves when they stay there. They relax in a natural way.

We start our weekend work in the kitchen with everyone preparing a meal together: Chopping, talking, mixing and starting to relax. If we are too direct, then people tend to know what is happening and they become mechanical; they turn off. So again we work indirectly. Then a talk by Bel or I about the subject we want to work with: Something to organise the mind. Then we watch a film that has something to do with our topic; but again in a very indirect way. If somebody starts to show that they 'know' what is going on and try to organise the other people, we need to give them a task like going to the refrigerator to get some water or "pick up these rocks here and take them over there". We are all trained to be organised and to organise others too. But we tend to do it too much. Nature doesn't work that way. If we can work in a non-organised way, then everyone can participate. So it is a bit different from the way that we learn things in school. Everyone is sharing something, learning something, teaching something, being touched in some way in this form of non-formal education. People slowly regain confidence in others and in themselves: In their ability to deal with the unexpected aspects of life. We also work with the cycles of life and death in nature which helps us to see death as part of a natural process of abundance in nature.

It may seem that for many people it is easier these days to relate to flowers or animals, as human beings may be too complicated. But in losing this contact with others, we lose our empathy and the richness of human relationships; our ability to be with each other and learn together.

The planting we do is not a strict and regimented thing. We do not say "today we will plant 200 trees" or things like that. If everything is too strict then people start to suffer and get preoccupied. When people are happy, they work and they do not even notice that they are working. So we offer the work and people choose for themselves what they want to do and always much more gets done than you could ever imagine.

On our land we have a small stupa from Borobudur and around it the form of the mandala of Borobudur cut into the grass. When the Lamas come to visit, we put up coloured flags to indicate



the Buddha families and in our imagination, follow the stages of going through the mandala until we come to the central stupa.

So in all the years that I have known Lama Gangchen Rinpoche, he knows my mind and recently he said to me that now I should write a book: "How Plants are Born". He suggested that I record some things while out working and then write them down, so that I would not try to get it all perfect in words first. I thought, that is ok, I studied these things at university, that should be ok. But it is quite a complex subject when we take into account interdependency and all it involves.

So I am now writing this book and in coming to Borobudur, I asked that I might reflect in a deeper way about this topic. About the male and female coming together.

Historically, the plants come before us; everything that is green outside was here on the planet before any human being was born. They already have some practice then. For them, they have male and female together in the flower ready to make seeds; the result of the union of male and female. Lama Gangchen Rinpoche and Lama Michel teach us and we read about Tantra. Inside the plants there are things going on that are basically invisible; the genetic workings of the plant: Attraction as an ancient form of desire. And now because of modern research we start to get some idea of what is happening. We do not understand very much, but the whole time, things in the genes are changing and the elements are really dancing. Nothing stays the same and things are changing the whole time.

(Even transgenic plants are very unstable; that is part of our problem now).

Inside the plant, the whole time cells are dividing. But then, in one moment, when the plant flowers things change. In the flower male and female are very close to each other, but they are separated. Most times when a seed is made, it is the result of an insect passing by. A sentient being does the physical work of pollination. They do not have an idea of what they are doing; they do not have brains, but they do it out of happiness in what they do. So it is basically the same as what happens in human beings. A sperm and an egg come together, in the plants it is the same thing. In plants the ovary is the seed casing. It is there already in the flower waiting for fertilisation to take place. In Self-Healing much of this process is represented very clearly and beautifully.

Plants produce oxygen, they are full of water and they give us food. I think that the least we can do is respect them and have them around us so that we can learn from their ancient wisdom in the way that it touches us individually. Basically the plants and the animals that are very important to us, are 'folded up' inside us where we can discover and listen to them by way of the feelings in our body and mind.

One of the things that the Buddha taught was about going to the forest to meditate and finding yourself. Here at Borobudur we see represented in the sculptures, plants and animals everywhere; male buddhas everywhere; female buddhas everywhere. They can touch our imagination on another level so that we can work with it. In the future and in the past; maybe we can bring some movement as it is all very alive.

This is just a little story about plants and nature and how we use this to touch people in an unconscious way. We do not need to know names; just allow ourselves to be touched by them, to feel happiness and work together.

Thank you very much.

Religious or scientific attitude?

Eduardo Gonzales (Spain)

I ask myself, how do we explain, for instance, the problem of omniscience. What attitude should we assume when explaining the big or small problem - or perhaps it is no problem at all - of how to match Buddhist teachings with modern science? This has been a big problem for religions throughout history and so we need to find some kind of solution.

I want to share with you the solution, my personal solution, to this kind of issue. This is not exactly a personal problem, it is a cultural problem, because in the West we have two kinds of attitudes according to how we are educated, and these are, in fact, more or less contradictory. One is the religious attitude, the other the synthesis attitude.

I understand that the Western mind is disassociated. In school we learn religion and have to accept through faith certain dogmatic principles. In our synthesis education we have to think and analyse before accepting anything. Religious attitude is based on feeling, whereas the synthesis attitude is based on thought and thinking. The best thing would be to join these two energies together when facing the collective problem of our Western culture. But the question then arises of how to connect them, because the energy of thought is more or less male, and the energy of feeling is more or less female. Therefore, the inner world is dominated by feeling, the female energy, while the connection to the powerful world is dominated by the other energy, the male energy. In Western culture we have linked the female energy to the inner world, and connected the male energy to the outer world, the result being that in the inner world we have feeling but no understanding, whereas in the outer world, the material world, we have a need to conquer matter with technology to dominate it by using the primitive power of male energy.

Would it be possible to direct the energy of thought to the inner world, and the female energy to the outer world? My understanding is that in Buddhism there is space to do this and that this is the main difference between Buddhism and religion. So, the solution to the first question: What to do with the problem of the omniscience? The omniscience of Buddha needs to be considered with a scientific attitude towards the inner world, in that way the inner world can develop an energy that will respond to the outer world? I don't see Buddhism as a religion. It is an inner science, in other words it offers the possibility of developing a scientific attitude to spirituality. I have followed this for several years now and have tried to study the matching of Buddhist principles with modern physics and mathematics, using the energy of thought to see if I can or cannot accept Buddhist principles and the teachings of Buddhism.

I want to share with you the outcome of my research, and very briefly show you my results, as I am truly very surprised by them, especially when I understand the teachings of Lama Michel on Madhyamika Cittamatra philosophies. I find it very curious that the evolution of our understanding of the nature of reality in physics more or less runs in parallel with the manner in which philosophies have been taught in monasteries. Over the past hundred years the understanding of the nature of reality, the extent of reality in physics, has been the Vaibashika philosophy. He was a man who really went deep into research, resulting in Newton mechanics, for instance. At the beginning of the last century, with the general relativity theory of Albert Einstein, quantum mechanics appeared to come close to the Cittamatra philosophy, and nowadays we tend to think that the modern discoveries of physics and the modern term theories - such as string theory, quantum field theories - are congruent to the Madhyamika philosophy. It is very, very important, and very wonderful, to join, so to speak, the understanding of the nature of reality in modern physics to that of Buddhism. Therefore, we can have faith in Buddhism in the same way that we can have faith in science. We can be assured that there is no problem with an astronomical interpretation of Kalachakra, there is no problem because our faith in Buddha is the same as our



faith in Albert Einstein; we have no problem with that. Our attitude is very similar to the attitudes of those in religions who struggle with similar kinds of problems concerning omniscience and such. The main question is, what will our attitude be within the new Western Buddhism? Will it be a religious attitude, or will it be a scientific attitude? This is a problem for religion if there is no space for scientific attitude, whereas in Buddhism there is this space. In the future, I think we can simply copy the religious attitude, and apply it to Western Buddhism, which will become a religion in practice, perhaps a better religion in some aspects. We carry the great burden of an atypical image of religion. Not only this, I think there is the opportunity now to harmonise the two energies, male and female, and direct the male energy towards the inner world, and the female energy towards the outer world. Buddhism has the space to do this. I have nothing else to say for now, thank you very much."



How healing works scientifically

Bernard Gesch (England)

"There is an irony in that I was employed as a neuro-scientist and my presentation is going to be focusing on the arts, specifically on the ancient art of dowsing, whereas the previous speakers are artists and have been focusing on neuro-science; I think Rinpoche likes role reversal.

When I first met Rinpoche, I was a scientist who wanted to make positive changes and still do. Some of the things Rinpoche and myself have discussed suggest that there are areas where modern science and Buddhism could combine very effectively to give us strategies for global problems which the Buddha prophesised, such as the period of degeneration facing us in Kali Yuga. I became fascinated with the ideas of combining inner-looking Buddhism and the quantifiable outward-looking modern science. I agree, there are limits to modern science, it is a method very much like Buddhism. And as a method it is only useful when applied with wisdom. However, one of the things that Rinpoche was particularly keen to try and do at the time, was to try and demonstrate what he called 'scientifically how healing works.' That is not so easy to do.

About twenty years ago, we came up with what Rinpoche calls 'the machine': holding up dowsing rods. Rinpoche had not seen dowsing before and he tested it carefully. It is an old shamanic art that has been traditionally used to find water and even by the Military to find hidden booby-traps. We adapted it to show for instance how a microwave cooker can alter the perceived energy in food. It was a bit of fun with a more serious meaning. The good thing is that you can see something happen. We have tried this blind in the past where i could not see what I was testing and the results seem to be similar. We also tried using more 'objective' tests by seeing if the mind could influence the readings from Geiger counter but that is a story for another day.

I haven't dowsed for many years, but with Rinpoche's blessing, and hopefully my mind being sufficiently clear, I would like to give a demonstration. The machine (dowsing rods) is a very special device, it was put together from exotic material, with great skill, in my garage, using a pair of pliers and some coat-hangers. I think the important thing is what it allows us to see what is happening in a hopefully interesting and engaging way why we feel so special around Rinpoche, as well as see the healing process. Rinpoche, was asked to bless the machine to avoid making any mistakes. Rinpoche, then invited a healthy volunteer from the audience.

Pict 1, 2 , 3. What I hoped to do with the dowsing rods was tune in to the chakras of our lovely friend. As I walked towards her it was possible to see the dowsing rods begin to move. The further away from the person the rods begin to move - the more the energy. In effect, you could say this is where the person really starts. I dowsed our friend's chakras starting with the Crown Chakra and moving down to the secret so that people can see the difference in energy. Our friend had a nicely even energy. Rinpoche explains in his books that this balance results in good health. Pict 4. This next demonstration was to show the difference when Rinpoche held the hand of our volunteer. What was immediately clear from dowsing was the range at which the rods moved roughly doubled. She said she felt good when Rinpoche held her hand and the dowsing seemed to confirm this.

Pict 5. This final demonstration was to try to show the difference that healing can make. One of our group had unfortunately injured his neck. So we repeated the dowsing process. It seemed to show a weakness in energy where our friend had been injured. Pict 6. Then we dowsed again while Rinpoche held our friends hand. Again the energy of the chakra seemed to grow. However, when Rinpoche let go the energy slowly returned to where it was. Rinpoche was then asked to apply healing to our friend's neck. The dowsing appeared to show a change in Rinpoche's Heart Chakra. The energy at the site of the injury again improved but this time when Rinpoche let go of his hand the energy seemed to remain. This suggested that what we could see was Rinpoche projecting his energy when he gave healing.



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I thanked our volunteers and Rinpoche and hoped that the demonstration of the 'machine' was interesting but also fun.





Being in peace program

Daniel Calmanovitz (Brazil)

"In 2006, Lama Gangchen Rinpoche created a foundation in Brazil called Lama Gangchen Foundation for a Peace Culture. This foundation was created to bring peace culture to people in a way that is not necessarily Buddhist, although based on Buddhist teachings, based on Rinpoche's teachings, Lama Michel's teachings, and our lineage teachings. We have been working a lot on the project, and it hasn't been easy to give the teachings that we receive in such a way that people can understand easily. We in fact have to also understand how to develop this. Finally, one of the projects I would like to talk about with you is a project in a particular school, actually a public school with one thousand students. We have been working with this school for one and half years, working first with the teachers, so they can teach meditation to their students, and we have also worked with the students of two classes. The point is the following: of course, as a foundation, we have our expenses, and we also have to maintain the Foundation. The Foundation was approved on an international fund-raising site called Global Giving, so that, when you go to this site, you will see hundreds of projects from all over the world. It is a crowd-funding site, so anybody can chose one project and contribute to this project.

Many of you probably have heard about, seen or already contributed on one of those sites. This is an international site, and the reason we are talking about this now is to tell you that we need your support. We need the sangha support. Why? Because when you have your first project on this site (and this is our first project) you have to pass a kind of test, which they call Open Challenge [test]. The Open Challenge will run from March 1st to 31st, therefore will begin now, in the next few days. There are two ways to pass the challenge: we can raise \$5000 minimum from a minimum of 40+ donors, which means that the \$5000 cannot come from one person only. Of course, the Brazilian sangha is supporting a lot, and yet, when we were preparing this, we thought that many of our volunteers and supporters are here, therefore, we thought of bringing this to Borobudur, to share this idea and project with you and ask you to contribute to the Brazilian Foundation. This means that we are sangha, an international sangha, remember, the challenge runs from the 1st March to the 31st March. The results of this project are pretty amazing, because teachers are really changing their behavior in the school. Our Brazilian schools are very violent. We have a huge drug problem all over Brazil, in all the big cities. This particular school is quite poor, located in a violent neighborhood; its teachers are actually changing their mentality, they are addressing their students in a peaceful way, as a result, they are [experiencing] less provocation from the students and things have been changing for the better. You will see, we will show you a two minute video, where you can see teachers and students meditating, giving their feedback.

Therefore, we are going to pass a list, and we ask you to please write your name and your email so that you will receive our email from the Foundation telling you about the challenge from the 1st to 31st March. We are really counting on you, and truly thank you for your support. The work we are doing is quite a challenge for us, it is not easy to do, but the project is actually working. It is incredible, everyone can do it in their own place, bringing peace culture to people who are not even Buddhists, might never be Buddhists, although that is not the point, as Rinpoche was just explaining to us. So, if you like to watch the video, it is right there, this same video will be shown in the Global Giving site. Please share this information with your friends, with the sangha, everywhere you go. Imagine this: we are 150-200 people here, we all have families, and we also have other sangha members and friends, so, how many people could also share this opportunity? In the name of all the Brazilian sangha, the people working there, our few friends who are also here and work hard, we really thank you, we thank you very much, and we also thank you for this opportunity. Thank you Rinpoche for giving us this opportunity".

Summary

BEING IN PEACE Program works with teachers and students at a public high school since 2012. Teachers are trained as Peace Culture mentors, applying inner peace and non-violence concepts, breathing and concentration mindfulness meditation techniques, providing students with greater ease in learning, non-violent conflict resolution capacity, relaxation and emotional balance. Thus, the program creates a sustainable and peaceful inner and outer environment for each individual and school as a whole.

What is the issue, problem, or challenge?

In this low-income community, where violence and crime are the norm, the youth must cope with high stress levels from difficult homes and environments. As a result, teachers struggle to instruct students who are, in general, unable to concentrate and are prone to violent behavior, such as fighting, sexual violence, use of weapons or depredation. This jeopardizes learning, teaching quality, and social relations; teachers work without motivation, feelings of angst and have difficulty concentrating

How will this project solve this problem?

Applying the BEING IN PEACE program for 80 teachers and 1000 students. Neuroscience studies have shown that when mind and body are calm and when there is greater breath awareness, learning is made easier, there is greater emotional balance, concentration, attention, skill and better collaborative working relationships. School stress, in-school violence, and absenteeism are reduced, therefore improving students' graduation rates and test scores, enlivening their creativity and readiness to learn.

Potential Long Term Impact

It is our goal to offer students an easy and efficient method to access the calm, intelligent, kind and creative person present within themselves, in order to cultivate inner peace; to foster the end of violence as a commonplace means for conflict resolution; collaborative and supportive teachers and students and healthy social relationships; students more willing to study, higher concentration and physical and emotional balance; to promote a peace school, peace family and peace community.

- <http://www.globalgiving.org/projects/peace-education-meditation-eduacao-de-paz-meditacao/>
- <http://www.napaz.org>
- Facebook Fanpage





Mission

"Inner Peace is Most Solid Foundation for World Peace." T.Y.S. Lama Gangchen

The FLGCP mission is to promote the culture of peace, to develop and apply methods and practices that foster and cultivate inner peace as a precondition for world peace. The Foundation aims to create, promote, support and encourage actions in educational, philosophical, social, environmental and cultural fields, thus promoting a culture of peace. They will take place at the FLGCP headquarters or wherever else in the country its services are required. For this the Foundation proposes the following:

- promote the development of human consciousness and self-awareness through its teaching and practice centers, methods and practices to foster and cultivate inner peace
- support and develop social projects
- promote both the use of Eastern and Western mind and body therapies, and the interchange of methods and concepts within traditional and complementary medical systems
- promote the development of citizenship
- promote environmental protection, preservation, conservation and sustainable development through environmental awareness.
- research and develop projects for harmonious integration of human beings with their environment
- develop and support educational projects
- organize workshops, forums, cultural events, conferences, workshops, consultations and courses
- develop and finance the publication of books, articles, CDs, DVDs and other media
- promote and conduct exchanges with similar organizations, on a national and international basis
- promote universal ethical values.

Education for Peace Programs

Education for peace is an education for life, which proposes to develop physically and emotionally well-balanced human beings, able to deal in a more peaceful, harmonious and happy way with the various aspects and areas of life. The FLGCP develops education for peace programs within the non-formal education field, aiming to contribute to the transformation of a culture of violence into a culture of non-violence, a culture of peace. We understand the need for a paradigm shift in the way one relates to the world in which one lives. This new paradigm could be established in two stages. The first is the stage of awareness, a process that begins with an earnest look into oneself and the type of impact that one's habits have on society and on the environment. The second is a transformation stage, a process of developing and practicing creative solutions to minimize one's own negative impact, and work towards generating a positive impact. The Education for Peace Programs distinctive feature is that the individual is directly responsible for the development of the culture of peace. As expected outcomes, depending on the way the program develops and the disposition and nature of the individuals involved and of the group as a whole, participants should develop greater resilience, well-being and concentration, better ways to relate, increased clarity of thought, creativity, confidence and efficiency. The program will be an opportunity to engage with the purposes of a culture of peace and to engage in a joint effort towards the development of non-violent values such as social cooperation, mutual respect, friendship and harmony. The program's main pillars are breathing, concentration, mindfulness and relaxation practices. Recent neuroscience studies prove the effectiveness of these techniques for stress management and trauma recovery situations. Brain imaging studies indicate that mindfulness meditation can deeply and safely change the structure and function of the brain, producing increased blood flow and thickening the cerebral cortex in areas associated with attention and emotional integration. Neuroscience thus shows that



the changes experienced by individuals are also physical alterations. The programs will be adapted and implemented according to the specific needs of each partner, for schools, NGOs, pre-university courses, business companies, hospitals, amongst others.

Innovation Elements and Distinct Benefits of the FLGCP Programs:

1. The understanding that human beings have the potential for developing inner peace, and inner peace as the guideline for peace culture actions.
2. Meditation as a tool for life, for the continued development of one's own self-knowledge, based on the benefits of mindfulness practice. It is scientifically proven that these practices, considering they promote the enhancement of the brain cortex regions that involve learning, memory, emotional control, body awareness; improve the person's performance in all these areas.
3. Promoting inner empowerment and extending participants' connection with the universe in which they are positioned, allowing them to perceive themselves as a part of an interdependent whole; the participant begins to see the world in a systemic way, promoting increased awareness of emotions, abilities, potential and qualities.



BEING IN PEACE - School of Peace Program

Within schools, violence amongst students and between students and teachers seems to be an everyday issue. Well-prepared teachers have many setbacks when trying to work to the best of their ability. Students' families expect schools to help, as they often spend less quality time with their own children due to routine problems in major cities like Sao Paulo. The school has trouble dealing with everyday violence and conflict situations, and finding new solutions to deal with them. Teachers need to rethink their postures, for in attempting to eliminate violence, problems are exacerbated. The School of Peace Program, for students, faculty, staff, their families and the community, aims to develop Inner Peace Culture to guide actions and relationships between people, hierarchies and behaviors, both educational and personal. The overall goal is to promote the transformation of the culture of violence into a culture of peace by mobilizing individuals, families and communities to develop inner peace and non-violence. Teachers and students are trained to be peace culture mentors and educators.

The program aims to achieve: (1) students and teachers who are less subject to reactive and violent personal attitudes (2) greater awareness and ability to deal non-violently with both internal and external conflicts, and to develop the ability to find creative solutions to deal with these conflicts in a positive and peaceful way (3) reducing violence and improving interpersonal relationships between teachers, management and employees, between teachers and students, and among students (4) awareness of peace culture values of the families of both teachers and students as well as school's local community

BEING IN PEACE - NGO of Peace Program

To promote the development of Inner Peace as a guideline for actions and relationships between people, hierarchies and behaviors. Staff - The goal is to enable the NGO staff to become Peace Education mentors, in order for their work to become more effective, especially considering the conflict resolution issues and daily violent situations that many NGOs experience alongside the population living in the low-income areas of major cities. Community - to involve NGO's local community, so that people become aware of the NGO peace culture project, become program partners, and are sensitized to the need to transform the culture of violence into the culture of peace, through the development of inner peace.

BEING IN PEACE - Agents of Peace Youth Program

In low-income neighborhoods, with high or very high social vulnerability, there are serious problems such as domestic violence; the use of force as a means to ensure child compliance, which is parents' difficulty in discriminating authority of authoritarianism; verbal and psychological violence, and sexual abuse. The program aims to minimize domestic violence, build an understanding of the causes of violence and its effects, and teach meditation techniques that will help participants to



tackle and overcome traumatic situations and recover necessary resources to ensure resilience. Thus violence is no longer perceived as the only way to deal with conflicts. Youngsters will develop and practice creative solutions in order to generate a positive impact within the community, i.e. he or she will become a peace culture mentor and will have the ability to articulate and promote non-violent solutions to conflicts.

BEING IN PEACE - College Admission Course Peace Program

Main goals - To transmit and share peace culture non-formal education within the formal educational environment of college admission courses. To practice concentration, mindfulness and relaxation meditation with the students, as means to help them both emotionally and physically to enhance their academic performance and pass college admission exams. To help students develop inner skills in order to cope better with the stressful situations typical of this period, and to make better use of their academic potential and ability.

Environment of Peace Program

Amazon peace water program development and implementation of adapted basic sanitation technologies, in particular community microsystem water treatment and supply, together with education and health care campaigns (health and environment) and infrastructure self-management training.

Action Area - three villages of the indigenous territory TI Maro, Cachoeira do Maro, Sao Jose III and Novo Lugar, in the rural area of Santarem, Lower Amazon region - west of Para State. Beneficiaries - more than 300 indigenous people including about 60 families.

Brief Description - Implementation of three community microsystems of piped water supply for the three villages, as a priority pointed out by local leaders, represented by the Conselho Indigena Intercomunitario do Arapiuns-Borari (COIAB) (Arapiuns-Borari Intercommunity Indigenous Council), partner and co-producer of this project. In addition to the sanitary infrastructure, the program will take environmental, hygiene and health care educational actions; it will raise awareness about water treatment and conscientious water use, as well as community empowerment for the self-management and sustainability of the projects to be implemented. In this way the program hopes to significantly reduce the incidence of waterborne diseases arising, particularly infant mortality resulting from diarrhea; to enhance social organization levels, and the quality of life of these people.

Peace Culture Training Program - Held at the FLGCP premises for the training of both Foundation volunteers and the general public.





Written Contributions

Prof. Nirmala Sharma, India

Goddesses at Borobudur and Yogic concentration

The Borobudur awakens in the thundering evocation of His Holiness Gangchen Rinpoche, as he leads us in the circumambulation of the five galleries of this Sumeru. He enshrines in himself the myriad pure suns of silent centuries and enraptures the present with scintillating light to illumine the world with the soft power of compassion, wisdom, joy and the pervasive timeless nature, hills and trees that surround the Borobudur. He kindles in us reverence and veneration so that we ourselves become true shrines to radiate sanctity and beauty of being.

His Holiness Gangchen Rinpoche need not expound, but envision in us the bodiless essence of the open horizons of Dharmadhatu. On the summit of Mount Menoreh is the silhouette of Gunadharmas who watches over our pilgrimage to the warm and comforting presence of the worshipful mind that flourishes wands to drive away all negations. As an incarnation of the poet architect Gunadharmas who created the supernal Borobudur, H.H Gangchen Rinpoche awakens in us the mandala of our being that is full of innumerable mind-states, to turn demons of evil into dust. From the Rinpoche flow regenerative divine energies, and intrepid forces to end all obstacles to enlightenment.

The Borobudur is the interweaving of scriptures, meditation and principles of the golden age of the Avatamsaka system ascending into the Vajradhatu cosmogram. It is the multifaceted array of the gradual evolution of the ethics and philosophy of Buddhism. Borobudur is the magnificent symbol of cultivating the Way to weed out error and enter into Truth. The pilgrimage of Sudhana to 54 teachers, both male and female, is a dazzling net of jewels, an Indrajala of holistic perspective of interactive relations between mentality and environment, between the individual and group, between forms and appearances. In heightened consciousness, the feminine is wisdom (prajna), learning (vidya), brilliance (devi) and the esoteric (mudra). Women are perfection of wisdom (prajnaparamita) embodied in the phenomenal realm. The Cakrasamvara-tantra says:

My female messengers are everywhere
They bestow all the spiritual attainments.

The feminine divine has been central to Buddhism and not peripheral. The divinization of wisdom as Prajnaparamita led to a diverse pantheon of goddesses who functioned as secular deities, as well as helped and instructed practitioners in the pursuit of purification and spiritual awakening. The Gandavyuha of Avatamsaka scriptures has a galaxy of Goddesses who guide the young Sudhana in his spiritual odyssey by instructing him in the sojourn into realms transcendent. The first goddess is the Earth goddess who ratifies Sakyamuni's attainment of Enlightenment. As the Lalitavistara has it:

The Goddess of the Earth
Surrounded by a retinue of a million earth goddesses.....
Spoke thus to the Bodhisattva:
"Just so, Great Being,
In truth you are the purest of all beings

The Earth Goddess interceded to drive away the demonic forces of Mara. The earth- touching gesture is one of the most popular renderings of Sakyamuni. The thundering sound of the goddess forced Mara to the ground, unconscious and powerless. The Sthavara 'steadfast' of the Gandavyuha assures Sudhana that he will reach his goal. She is the assurance of the progressive success of his meditational journey as she meets him as the thirtieth of the kalyanamitras, half way among fiftyfour teachers.



Sudhana visits a long series of nine night goddesses, a tribute to the calm of the night sky, the silence of the stars and planets (as silence or mauna is the core of a sage or muni), or lunar phases often feminine in gender. The first night goddess Vasanti 'Lady of Spring time' lives in Kapilavastu the capital of Sakyas the clan of Sakyamuni. As Sudhana gazed at the night sky, Vasanti revealed herself in a tower of incomparable jewels and her body had reflections of the stars and constellations. In her pores were all sentient beings liberated by her from the calamities of circumstances. Vasanti was illuminating the nocturnal darkness as well as the darkness of the seeker's mind. The 'grove goddess' (vana-devata) of Lumbini where Sakyamuni was born, is symbolic of the officiant being born into the lineage of Buddhas. The goddesses are the phenomenal arising, where all are born of emptiness, shimmer in space and dissolve into the cosmic source. In the Gandavyuha the universe is a womb of infinite possibilities, and the goddesses enliven the divine mindscape. They infuse the rising stream of devotion with their spiritual presence.

The eastern gate of the Borobudur symbolizes the Prajnaparamita, the cosmic glory of the enlightened wisdom. The Astasahasrika Prajnaparamita says:

She is the Perfect Wisdom that never comes into being
And therefore never goes out of being.
She is known as the Great Mother...
She is the Perfect Wisdom who gives 'birthless' birth to all Buddhas.
And through these sublimely Awakened Ones,
It is Mother Prajnaparamita alone
Who turns the wheel of true teaching.

(Translation by Lex Hizon, Mother of the Buddhas, p.96).

Ascending the Borobudur from the eastern gate dedicated to Prajnaparamita the radiant wisdom mother, one ascends to the higher galleries in his spiritual quest that consumes all negativity and illusion, to arrive at the springs of the harmony of the "middle path" unfolding the heart essence of supreme aura of the divine. The goddesses of the Gandavyuha in the panels of Borobudur are metaphorical resonances of motherhood as the matrix of wisdom. They are 'Queens of Philosophy', the luminous mystic mother light.

Panels depicting Goddesses

The main wall of the second gallery, the main wall and balustrade of the third gallery, and the balustrade of the fourth gallery depict the visit of Sudhana to fifty-four adepts, who represent seven stages of enlightenment. They are the substratum of the spiritual journey to the Vajradhatu mandala on top in the kutagara. The pilgrimage is represented twice: first series on panels II.1-72 and the second series on panels II.73-128. The seven stages of visualization in the Gandavyuha are:

Ten degrees of sraddha(faith) represented by adept 1

Ten viharas	2-11
Ten degrees of carya(action)	12-21
Ten degrees of parinama(diversion)	22-31
Ten bhumis(stages)	32-41
Ten vimoksas	42-53
Ultimate samadhi	54 (Samantabhadra)

Among the 54 adepts, 21 are goddesses, lay ladies (upasika), maidens (kanya), queens, and nuns (bhiksuni).

8. The first female kalyanamitra is the queen of King Suprabha Asa who lives in a Forest of Universal Splendor, seeing which suffering ends. She instructs Sudhana in the seventh avivartya vihara, wherein Bodhisattva rids himself of the errors of thought on three levels of the Tridhatu, and is assured that he will not return to Tridhatu. Panel no. II.23, repeated on II.77-80.

11. Maitrayani instructs Sudhana in the abhiseka-dharma-paryaya, the final tenth vihara, so that the Bodhisattva becomes master of sunyata and feels himself to be the King of Dharma. In this vihara, he suppresses the vestiges of supramundane attachment. Panel no. II.25, repeated on II.82.

14. Sudhana visits lay Prabhuta who instructs him in the third carya of ksanti-paramita. She teaches beings according to their needs. Panel no. II.28, repeated on II.83.

20. Sudhana visits lay maiden Acala who guides him to the ninth carya of sadhu-dharma 'good model'. The good deeds of a Bodhisattva become a model of all beings. Panel no. II.38.

25. Sudhana visits nun (bhiksuni) Simha-vijrmbhita who instructs him in the fourth parinamana of Sarvatranugata 'going to all places'. The Bodhisattva vows to serve all Buddhas in the universe, wherever they may be. Panel no. II.43, repeated on II.90.

26. Bhagavati Vasumitra instructs Sudhana in the fifth parinamana of aksaya-guna-garbha 'inexhaustible storehouse of merit'. The Bodhisattva perfects himself and beings at the same time which is the inexhaustible storehouse of good. Panel no. II.91-95.

31. Sudhana visits Sthavara 'Earth Goddess' who instructs him in the tenth and final parinamana of "entry into the infinity of Dharma-spheres (apramana-dharmadhatu-avatara). This enables the Bodhisattva to encompass the infinite manifestations of "suchness" (tathata). Panel no. II.49, repeated on II.105.

32. Sudhana visits the night goddess Vasanti who instructs him in the first bhumi of pramudita 'joyfulness'. The Bodhisattva is overjoyed at having mastered the middle truth for which he has been aspiring for so long. Panel no. II. 50.

33. Sudhana visits the second night goddess Samanta-gambhira-sri-vimala-prabha who teaches him the second bhumi of vimala 'purity'. The Bodhisattva becomes utterly free of the defilements of ordinary mortals. Panel no. II.51.

34. Sudhana visits the third night goddess Pramudita-nayana-jagad-virocana who instructs him in the third bhumi of prabhakari 'light- giving'. Different clouds appear from her body. In this bhumi, the Bodhisattva gives light to all beings. Panel no. II.52, repeated on II.68.

35. Sudhana visits the fourth night goddess Samanta-sattva-tranojah-sri who instructs him in the fourth Bhumi of arcismati 'radiant'. The Bodhisattva understands the middle truth clearer. Panel no. II.53.

36. Sudhana visits the fifth night goddess Prasanta-ruta-sagaravati who expounds the fifth bhumi of sudurjaya 'invincible'. The Bodhisattva rids himself of avidya which is very difficult to subdue. Panel no. II.55.

37. Sudhana visits the sixth night goddess Sarva-nagara-raksa-sambhava-tejah-sri who expounds the sixth bhumi abhimukhi 'face to face'. The truth of tathata becomes obvious as if standing face to face. Panel no. II.56.

38. Sudhana visits the seventh night goddess Sarva-vrksa-praphullana-sukha-samvasa who expounds the seventh bhumi of durangama 'far-going', so that the Bodhisattva can go about anywhere free from error. Panel no. II.57.

39. Sudhana visits the eighth night goddess sarva-jagad-raksa-pranidhana-virya-prabha who expounds the eighth bhumi of acala 'immovable' so that the mind of the Bodhisattva is steadfast in the vision of 'middleness' Panel no. II.59.



40. Sudhana visits the Goddess of Lumbini forest Sutejo-mandala-rati-sri who expounds the ninth bhumi of sadhumati. She narrates the miracles at Siddhartha's birth. The Bodhisattva becomes endowed with the wisdom to keep the 'middle' truth in constant view. Panel no. II.60.

41. Sudhana visits the Sakya maiden Gopa who expounds the last and tenth bhumi dharma-megha 'dharma-cloud' so that everything is enveloped with the 'dharma-cloud' of transcendental truth. Panel no. II.62.

The ten night goddesses have been repeated on eight Panels II.106-112.

42. Sudhana visits Maya who expounds the first vimoksa of mahapranidhana-jnana-maya-gata-vyuha. Panel no.II.63, repeated on II.113.

43. Sudhana visits princess Surendrabha who expounds the second vimoksa of asanga-smrti-visuddha-vyuha. Panel no. II.65, repeated on II.116.

46. Sudhana visits lay lady Bhadrattama who expounds the fifth vimoksa of analaya-mandala-dharma-paryaya-jnana. Panel no. II.66 (uncertain), repeated on II.120.

52. Sudhana visits the lady Srimati who imparts him the tenth vimoksa of maya-gata-bodhisattva. Panel no. II.72, repeated on II.125.

Poised in our hearts, these goddesses are saturated with higher awareness and command of us enlightened transformation through ritual and meditation.



Swami Nityamuktananda Saraswati, England

It takes two to dance the eternal Dance

There are two powers at the base of creation, recognized in all parts of the known world, in most traditions one is called female the other male.

We call these two powers by these names, because of the working mechanism of our human brain. The thinking, naming part of the brain (Sanskrit:manas), housed in the neo-cortex, works similar to a computer; certain in-put determines the language it talks. One of the most powerful first impressions of the child-mind is that of its parents. The "in-put" is: one is male and one is female.

The two powers that make/rule/influence our lives are expressed using these same terms, yet really these two powers have very little to do with biological gender; they are powers with very distinct characteristics which might express as gender, which however are more appropriately called principles.

Language shaped by personal or cultural imprints often distorts.

It's the same with another keyword: power. The word evokes in us a sense of domination and force (even violence); "power" for us is connected to fear - yet that is not the original meaning of the word.

The English word is actually related to words such as potent and potential, it means "bringing forth something that did not exist before, i.e. creating something new. Power in its original meaning (and in some cultures till today-) is associated with birthing, creating and wisdom (the 'know- how'; the skill, the intelligence to do so right) thus is a feminine attribute par excellence; POWER is a female quality. Something completely lost in the western influenced cultures.

Tantra in the Indian influenced countries and Taoism in China have a much looser, less biological fix on these terms.

What in India is encapsulate in the image of "Shakti" (the female force) and in Kashmir Shaivism and (other) tantric traditions, is understood more as vibration of the universe, the pulse of life, vibration of energy; Spanda (the heart-beat of the universe, for Native Americans). This then is termed the feminine principle.

So, the feminine principle for many Asian and other indigenous people is understood as "knowing" (wise) energy that brings into being i.e. the "power" of creation. By contrast, the male principle has to do with "throwing light on that which exist"; it illuminates this power of permanent creation and change, it "sees-it" ; becomes conscious of it. We could say, the latter is the principle of intelligence or consciousness.

On the subtlest level, in the most abstract these two principles are in fact cosmic realities that run through heaven and earth, microcosm and macrocosm.

SHE , the feminine Principle is the power of creation and dissolution (energy/Spanda/Vibration.)

HE is the Light of Consciousness.

THEY are ONE., together they dance the dance of intelligent creation; they dance between the right and left hemispheres in our own brain, as well as between the neo-cortex and the frontal lobe (the rational logical mind and the wisdom mind, that is based on intuition and insight).

This in many sacred scriptures is portrait as DIVINE MARRIAGE, two PURE Principles interacting as ONE. In modern physics it is referred to as a unified field of existence.

When creative, ever changing energy and wisdom are as ONE - it is talked about in the sacred Texts of Asia, especially in Budhist texts as the Ultimate Divine Mother Prajnaparamitra, She that embodies transcendent, perfect wisdom .



(Please note: SHE is still Goddess... is feminine principle - subtlest, highest energy beyond the mental capacity of ordinary human understanding. To "see" her, one needs to be a Pratyeka- Buddha, an enlightened being.)

But lets us go back, to the feminine principle itself, as the very "power of creation". The human understanding is modelled on human experience, so behind this convenient phrase, hide some important aspects. Within the human experience creation itself has two phases; the phase of gestation; where development and growth happens within a protected, supported, sheltered environment. Mother gives totally/life gives totally of itself; the greatest gift -there is total love and compassion (com-passion, Latin; acting with - acting according to the needs of the other/which is herself). There is only Oneness.

Then comes phase two, which is not so cosy, but is equally necessary as an expression of life and love. This second phase of creation is a gathering of all strength to thrust the new life out into the world, to be free, to be "exposed to the light, to be seen"; an act of great strength as well as surrender (letting go). Both these two phases belong to the feminine principle, the nurturing caring, supporting, inner (yin feminine) and the more energetic pushing outwards (yang feminine). You find this where ever there is life; think of a seed, where the germ pushes from inside so as to break, the protective but limiting husk.

The feminine Principal thus has two sides, both equally valid; (such as: the palm and the back of a hand make one hand) there is a quality which we associate with caring and nurturing, and one which has to do with the strength, the force of what could be called "tough love".

We have been culturally programmed to associate this latter part with masculine energy.

Now what has happened in the world in the last thousand years is, that the male principle has claimed for himself that strength and used it to dominated the female, be it in principle or in real human terms; be it in terms of society, religions or what have you. For thousands of years gradually more and more - the Yang aspect of the female principle has been denied with the consequence of her being looked down upon, debased and dis-empowered; the female of the species has been looked upo one-sided. Strong women are a threat to men. It is easier to debase the feminine principle and consider her weak and limited to the aspect of breeding; or more politely said, the gestation period. Meaning, the female principle has been denied its "birthing power!" and instead become an object of the male.

Man has focussed on woman as weak, that way he could dominate her, own her. True, BUT it is much too complex a topic to vent here fully, let's just take two serious consequences.

Firstly, we need to realize woman have let it happen, i.e. they have denied their own power. She needs to find her way back to herself - without guilt!!! She needs to acknowledge that this "giving up , even herself" is essentially in her nature (any mother knows that ultimately in the birthing process, it's the child that must live. Mother is willing to give up her life, for the child to survive, that is the strength of her ability to give, to surrender.) She is born to give freely for the good of life, the good of others. Yet this has been misunderstood and misused.

Secondly, the male of the species failed to recognize the negative effect of the denial of feminine, the "power of bringing force ". He has in himself the feminine principle; denying its power of bringing force, denies his own inherent qualities. He not only denied it in woman (so he can oppress her, govern her) but also in himself. Its like throwing the baby out with the bath-water. Without acknowledging the Yin side of the feminine principal in himself, his own power of creation lost its potency; it becomes empty, there is nothing to bring forth, even one has the strength to do so. By denying the feminine principal in both aspects, there is nothing that can come forth. Meaning what appears as "power" (remember potential) turned to empty aggression and violence, without the qualities of growth, nurturing, compassion and wisdom.

Once the Feminine Principle is denied, only destruction remains. And that is what we see in today's world. This state of affairs cannot go on; life rests on the dance of both principles, just as human life is created from men and women, just like each human has both aspects within (male

and female principle), just as the human body has a right and left side, and the brain has right and left hemispheres as well as a neo-cortex (processing seeing) and a frontal lobe (receiving intuition and insight on a wider plane) - Power without creativity, nurturing, compassionate qualities (all necessary and part of the creative process) becomes violence, empty domination and exploitation governed by fear. What is wrong with the world of today is - in general, as global societies - we have lost the awareness and ability to dance with both principles of life, have forgotten that life is a dialogue between these two forces (the Seer and the Seen); the illuminating mind, the mirror-like wisdom and the creative manifesting power and its permanently changing forms)

Life cannot exist; world cannot exist with one side only, nor with just an "empty - masculine principle that has lost its "power" of bringing force with love and compassion; it cannot exist without the force/ power of the creative Feminine principle that enables to "bring into light of existence" what has been ripened. We live a life of speed!

In other words, we live in a time, where the feminine principle has been thoroughly dis-empowered.

As supreme power, beyond limited human existence the female Principle is called DIVINE (meaning beyond human) and because it gives expression to our essence, i.e. is at the core of our very existence, we call that, Mother. Losing the connection to that energy, disempowering the DIVINE Mother is disturbing the balance within life, existence and the universe; meaning we are heading towards self-destruction! And as we, within a materialistic society live in a global community (interdependence rising) - we take all other with us!

Thus to return to the feminine principle and to recall its "Power" in all its aspect is vital for the survival of "the species", and more! Yes, we are at a crossroad; we can continue to deny the female principle (which will inevitably lead to extinction of life as we know it)

OR

We can rekindle, re-awake the feminine principle in men and women. How?

By guiding people to find that power within themselves; by awakening the prefrontal lobe (the newest part of the brain) where insight and intuition, wisdom (response-ability) lies .

We can each look inside ourselves, and find the Feminine Principle as it expresses in the Water - energy , through the Great Mother Lochana and honour and worship her.

We can each look inside ourselves, and find the Feminine Principle as it expresses in the Earth - energy , through the Great Mother Mamaki and honour and worship her.

We can each look inside ourselves, and find the Feminine Principle as it expresses in the Fire - energy , through the Great Mother Pandaravasini and honour and worship her.

We can each look inside ourselves, and find the Feminine Principle as it expresses in the Air -energy , through the Great Mother Samaya Tara and honour and worship her.

We can each look inside ourselves, and find the Feminine Principle as it expresses in the Space - energy , through the Great Mother Vrajavaharini and honour and worship her.

How? Through focus on the frontal lobe, the third eye, the pineal gland - no matter with which tradition or understanding you work. Be focussed on awakening the Feminine Principle, be it through meditation or ceremony, through mantra or yantra.

The Great Goddess will understand you; as long as you invite her to bring back into human awareness, the neglected qualities of nurturing, compassion, sharing, understanding and finding creative new solutions aware of the consequences of our actions.

All this is the power embedded in HER; let HER dance again the creative dance of the two original "Powers" that exist ultimately in HER, because we are

One Family,

One Humanity,

One Life

One Existence.



Lama Dechen Losang Chöma, Germany

The Female Principle of Tibetan Buddhism?

When talking about female appearances in Tibetan Buddhism we usually think of representations of a Dakini or a celestial dancer, otherwise a rather wrathful female that is supposed to reveal herself to us during visions, dreams and the meditative experience. Western scholars and interpreters of Buddhism, that are likely to be influenced by theological and psychological studies have formed an image of the Dakini and alongside the female appearance in Buddhism as a kind of shadow figure of deities, a feminine savior or simply a product of patriarchic fantasy.

However, in reality this shadow existence does not only apply to a mystified representation of female deities, but extended also to the female teacher of Buddhism to on a larger scale. This concealment, or misunderstanding, permeates many high forms of religion, even Christianity, Catholicism with its secretive female popes and Tibetan Buddhism. Here, many of the thousands of female spiritual teachers are somewhat mentioned and therefore not entirely disowned. However their true significance, in reference to the patriarchic and monastic system, drastically downplayed.

So if we get out on the spiritual journey and with that the actual process of mental development, we will as a user, or rather meditator, realize soon that the symbols and levels of understanding depend on the personal realization or the actualization of the mind. We discover the secrets of body, speech and mind, both the female and the male that is, we meet the subtle profound reaches of body and mind through profound practices of meditation and so enter the visionary realms of ritualistic practices, the bliss of emptiness or the vast space of our own unlimited qualities of body and mind that are free from description such as him or her, male or female, mysticism and reality.

I have to admit that my understanding of gender differences was for the most time based on the considerably superficial worldly level. The argumentation as indicated above was unbeknown to me and I had not even made up my thoughts about those far expansive issues. And why would I? Obviously I was a girl, and that for good, good enough.

When I started traveling Asia in the 1980's, more precisely various regions of India, Nepal, Southeast-Asia, and later Tibet, I was confronted with the feminist principle of male / female issues, even if in disguise, was something new to me. Specific sections of monasteries were prohibited for women. Why!? I do not know until present day. Women we supposed to not sit next to particular religious persons. Hmmm? Women were lead into separate rooms for meals, and so on and so forth.

Freshly arrived for the first time in Delhi, out of the protected home in Germany, breathing in smoke, urine and feces, spoiled fruits and holy incense I still knew: I have arrived! And this thought had me realize that within the extensive misery brilliant saris in gleaming colors, flowers in water containers, street music that sounded strange to my ears and even the pungent smell of chili I had returned to a familiar past. Yet in the faces of leprous beggars, bony rickshaw drivers and the fragrant oiled hair of rich women I never felt shocked or disgusted.

Nevertheless over time I learned the differences within castes and especially the "caste of women". Eventually I progressively came to the realization that I actually am a woman and should elaborate in more profound thoughts on that fact.

Later, when I entered the congregation as a Buddhist nun, I was repeatedly asked if it were not preferable to be called "monk-ress", since with the term nun people would associate something else. Now I was not only a woman, but also a "monk-ress". These absurd titles took their course of action when Lama Dechen seemingly turned into "Lami". No, that's no joke.

During my career as a teacher of the Dharma I eventually mostly got into contact with “male” teachers and sitting in the front row at large pujas and ceremonies it soon became apparent that I actually am a woman. In this way I rediscovered feminism anew.

One can choose to view the term womanhood academically or spiritually. Academically seen it certainly turns out worth your while to looking at female teachers in various religions, respectively Buddhism, in depth. To our surprise we are confronted not only with female deities and mystified celestial dancers, but also well educated, skillful and largely successful wise female teachers. And why wouldn't we?

Globally we witness a process of equal acceptance that seems to increasingly gain predominance. Regarding Germany, for years there has been a fairly successful woman chancellor and recently not only in the United States, but also in Germany a woman secretary of defense has been sworn into oath. In fact she is considered the next chancellor candidate. This natural contemporary development of the role of woman in the conventional world naturally leads to a breakdown of radical feminist movements that are simply trying to point to their womanhood and by that fight for and demonstrate an equal stand in society.

Now, when I mention this term the reason for it is that naturally there are both men and women and we as humans should not overly dramatize that fact.

Gladly I will quote from the tantras of the Buddhist deity Arya Tara, the great woman savior, the great guardian, or put into modern western terms, the great sacred mother of Dharma: “In reality there is neither man nor woman.”





Anne A. Vogt, Switzerland

Borobudur-Mandala: Embracing Cosmology beyond Concepts A unique Indonesian culture gift for humanity

This inner and outer Borobudur journey developed so far into five steps:

1. First Contact
2. Lama Gangchen's NgalSo Key
3. Touching the Mandala
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First Contact

I first came into contact with a Borobudur-Buddha on my 11th birthday, when my great aunt Elli invited me to the Rietberg Museum in Zürich. Later in my young life, I visited the Borobudur-UNESCO-exhibition in Kunsthaus Zürich with my father, where we encountered the Dyani-Buddha concept and a first overview of the mandala of Borobudur.

Lama Gangchen's NgalSo Key

The special key part began in 1994, meeting Lama Gangchen in Zürich when he shared the Borobudur NgalSo Self-Healing practice with us and I began to practise and follow his teachings, as I observed good results through practice.

In my art classes at high school I began soon to experiment with Borobudur NgalSo oriented art didactic, in order to try and include non-formal education into the school programme. In 1996, I joined Lama Gangchen and the Lama Gangchen World Peace Foundation for the UN NGO 'HABITAT II' conference in Istanbul, to present 'Non Formal Education through Art' at the Technical University.

In 1997, I experienced Borobudur's influences in Tibet/China, as well as when joining a Lama Gangchen World Peace Foundation study group in Brazil on a riverboat on the Amazon to practice 'Self-Healing for the Environment' in 1998.

Touching the Mandala

A more active third part began with the millennium change, when I learned to practise within the original Borobudur-Mandala in Java/Indonesia and was lead to discover, that Candi-Borobudur simultaneously embraced different NgalSo Self-Healing systems, as well as all Buddhist branches (Yanas). Here I began to formalize my research about the didactical application of NgalSo systems in art teachings, for my thesis. In 2004 'Friedenserziehung durch kosmologisch ausgerichtete Kunstdidaktik, ausgehend vom Mandala von Borobudur' was accepted by Bern University, owing to the precious advice of my Mentor Professor Dr Buser (astro-physician and doctor in philosophy, head of the Astronomic Faculty of Basel University). To my great joy, my father Ernst Vogt, Lama Gangchen and Prof Buser met on the occasion of the Diploma presentation held in April 2005 in Bern.

Indonesian Call

Somehow I abused the strength given by NgalSo exercises to cope with my extensive daily life and work accumulation, and suffered a burn out which brought about my being pensioned off early in 2005.

Through the Borobudur healing journeys with Lama Gangchen in 2005 and 2007, coupled with constant Borobudur NgalSo practice, and Self-Healing through artwork with my students, I nevertheless once again found balance and strength in daily life.

In January 2009 I went to Borobudur following the steps of Atisha for a one month single retreat, hoping to develop health further with the help of the mandala. The planned month extended to two, because I missed my flight home!

As a result, in April I was then invited to 'The roots of Javanese Culture' - a national Indonesian event in Borobudur 'Eloprogo Art Space' of Sony Santosa, who had invited me to stay in one of his guesthouses, when I was somehow stranded in the Mandala. I made a 'Good Wishes for the World Flag display' for the event with over 100 painted wishes by children from Borobudur. This with the tireless support of the dream painter Yoyo Shantie, who painted together with the children to help me as he liked the wishful flag painting idea, and himself regularly gave non formal art-teachings to local children in 'Eloprogo Art Space'.

At this event I was the only Westener, buddhist and woman speaker. I offered the NgalSo Didactic application thesis to the Indonesian Minister for the Interior as well as to different religious and cultural personalities. Owing to the exchange in this gathering, my perception of Candi-Borobudur was opened up further, meeting aspects of Candi Borobudur as a Shaman cult worship monument, as a Hindu temple, as well as a respected cultural healing art monument in local Islamic traditions: A cosmology with a timeless 1000 year old message of coexistence and peace for today's world.

Hugging Mudra

And as a side effect to get known with Indonesian friends, whom I visited again in February and July/August 2010. Thus it became possible to organise immediate help (carrying food, medicine and doctors) with Lama Ganchen's followers and our Borobudur friends, following the Mt Merapi eruption at the end of October 2010.

I managed to come again in February 2011 and was devastated to witness the emergency situation in Borobudur and surroundings. Luckily I was invited 'ZOOM IN ON' UNESCO children t r a u m a healing event in Lumbini park in Borobudur, through Peace flag painting as NgalSo art therapy. This helped me to coop with the situation. With 30 girls from a Borobudur girl orphanage, we prepared the beginning of a 'Good Wishes for the World Flag Installation' from tree to tree, together with the help of many Lama Gangchen friends and local volunteers, including five local high school students.. From here the wind spread the children's heart wishes ...

With our local volunteer friends, we decided to continue to support the distressed area. The food prices rising some 20%, due to lost harvest, obliged parents to take their children out of school, as they could not find the money to pay their school fees. On the street I meet an old man, who fell in the dust and died there from deprivation, so we tried to do something for elderly people as well. Together we gave birth to the small non formal organisation 'Help in Borobudur' with the help and blessings of Lama Gangchen. I returned once again in October/November when we made flag painting as trauma healing with children in the temporary primary school in the destroyed village of Jumoyo near Borobudur.

In September 2012, we opened an Indonesian - Swiss friendship atelier exhibition 'Borobudur oder der andere Ort' as a fundraising exhibition for our 'Help in Borobudur' in my Freudwil Atelier in Switzerland. And on the 27th of September, Freudwil Atelier had the honour to welcome a delegation from the Indonesian embassy in Bern, Switzerland, accompanied by its First Secretary Mrs Octavia Maludin.

In March 2013 I was invited to speak at the Lama Gangchen World Peace Foundation Conference in Borobudur. On this occasion, with the help of Lama Gangchen's Tibetan monks and friends, we produce a Borobudur clay TsaTsa, offered by Lama Gangchen to each participant., and the Borobudur children painted 'Good Wishes for the World Flags' to offer for all participants.

In my presentation, I showed, how this Flag painting corresponds to the dissolution of blockages, in the Borobudur NgalSo System: the opening of the Lotus. That a traumatized child who connects to



paint, a wish for itself and for others, consists in an opening to heal the soul. I feel always grateful to witness how such a relaxing creative process is regenerating strength in a subtle way.

To my great joy I could offer the NgalSo application paper of art didactics both to professor Lokesh Chandra as well as to the Indonesian Minister for Culture Mr Mohammed Nuh.

Conclusions

As a most shining conclusion to this five first steps of connecting with the Borobudur Mandala, I would like to thank Lama Gangchen and all, who have supported me in my search for inner peace. It is thanks to Lama Gangchen Rinpoche that Borobudur open its veils in many constructive ways for me and brought me well beyond any expectations. At a certain point it felt, as if the Mandala took over a part of the process and seemed to bring me to making the right things, (like missing a flight so I could connect with Indonesian people, and listen to their own traditional understanding, while I continued to practise NgalSo Self-Healing to balance epilepsy, asthma and burn out.

That such a process was possible remains a surprising miracle to me and lets me wonder: what comes next?

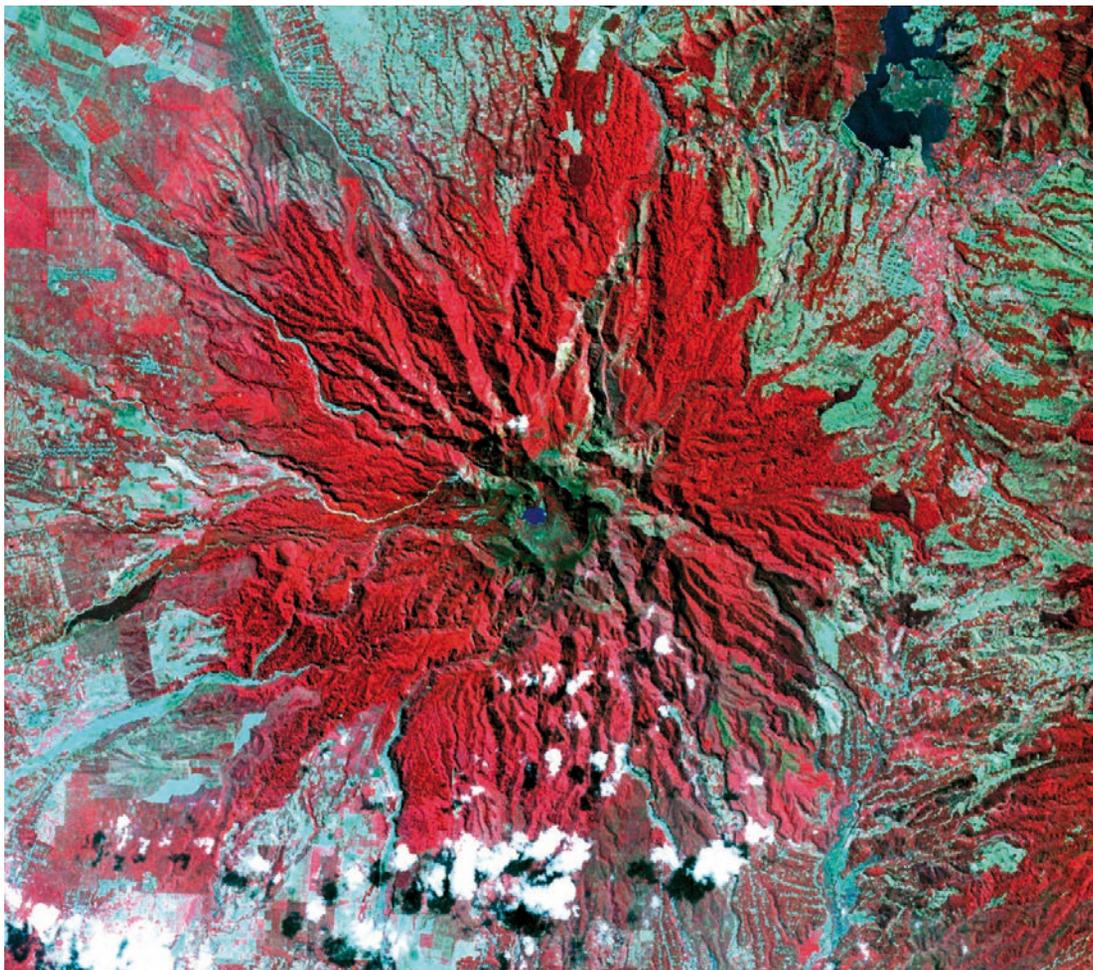


Eruption of the Mount Kelud volcano

The Stupa mandala was shut due to volcanic ash rain spewed from Mount Kelud in Kediri, East Java, which reached the stupa at around 3am on the 14th of February 2014, producing molten lava and black smoke, as we were all still in our rooms before intending to go to the stupa at 4.30am. As we awoke Borobudur was completely shrouded in dust. We got early reports also from the President of PT Taman Wisata Candi Borobudur, Prambanan, and Ratu Boko Laily Prihatiningtyas who said that on the way to Borobudur the ash was quite thick and thus very poor visibility of no more than 7 metres. After coordinating with the Borobudur Conservation office, it was decided the temple should remain closed to visitors as it was covered in volcanic ash. It was kept shut both for safety reasons (very slippery) as well as to facilitate cleaning. The cloud from the eruption forced the shutdown of airports at Surabaya and the cities of Yogyakarta, Solo, Malang and Semarang in East Java and Central Java provinces, stranding thousands of passengers, including our Lama Gangchen, Lama Michel and most of our pilgrims.

Lama Michel flew to Jakarta and hired some coaches to bring over one hundred friends and family safely to Borobudur. An 18 hour journey! Meanwhile, Lama Gangchen and a small group managed to fly into Semarang a few days later.





The eruption sent a huge plume of ash and sand some 15 km into the air and spread 500km west and northwest, causing more problems. Over 100'000 people had to be evacuated from their homes and villages. Schools were closed and volunteers distributed masks and food to evacuees pouring into shelters. We received masks and stayed indoors the first couple of days as the dust was like razor blades on our skin.





Borobudur temple is partially covered with plastic sheets to protect from volcanic ash, from an eruption of Mount Kelud, in Magelang, central Java, Indonesia, Friday, Feb. 14, 2014. An explosive volcanic eruption on Indonesia's most populous island blasted ash and debris 18 kilometers (12 miles) into the air Friday, killing two people while forcing authorities to evacuate more than 100,000 and close six airports. (AP Photo/Slamet Riyadi)

The Jakarta Post ON THE MOVE
SATURDAY February 25, 2014 THIRTY-ONE No. 281



Mt. Kelud eruption paralyzes Java

At least 100,000 people were evacuated from the area around the volcano, and six airports were closed. The eruption also caused power outages and disrupted transportation across the island.

RI thumbs its nose at Oz by accommodating Chinese fleet

Indonesia's government is seen as prioritizing economic ties with China over its traditional ally, the United States.

New gender options for Facebook users

The social media giant has introduced a new gender selection option for its users, allowing for more diverse representation.

NIKKEI 14,500

Sports p10 | Thailand will play an Arsenal match, says Unai Emery

The Jakarta Post Tania Gonzalez American Dream
FEBRUARY 16, 2014 TWENTY-SEVEN PAGES (Rp. 2,100) Sunday edition



Java rebounds from eruption

Life is slowly returning to normal in the region surrounding the volcano, with many people returning to their homes and businesses beginning to open.

Japanese divers missing in Nuna Penida

Two divers went missing during a scuba diving trip in the Nuna Penida area, and their families are searching for them.

The RAID response

The Indonesian police have launched a major operation to combat the growing threat of terrorism in the region.

NIKKEI 14,500









When we arrived to the main gate, we sat on the outside to make puja with Lama Gangchen and Lama Michel, together with all the lamas. After some time, the Borobudur guards opened up the gates for us so that we could enter and do our daily NgalSo Self-Healing practice at the stupa. Our karma is so excellent. Already in 1994 when Lama Gangchen together with Geshe Yeshe Wangchuk and a group of our pilgrims went to Borobudur, there had been a severe volcano eruption yet our group was safe and was able to proceed with the retreat.