



Universität Hamburg

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5th International Conference on the Phenomenon of the Holy Mt. Kailash

**“Compilation of Traditional and New Aspects of
Mt. Kailash and Surrounding Pilgrimage Sites”**

University of Hamburg, March 25-27, 2022

**Khyentse Center for Tibetan Buddhist
Textual Scholarship
Department of Indian and Tibetan Studies**

supported by the

Numata Center for Buddhist Studies

**organized by the Phenomenon of Kailash Research Group
of Bulgaria, Germany and Russia**

Dear Participant of the
5th International Conference on the Phenomenon of the Holy Mt. Kailash

Due to Corona, the conference had to be postponed from March 2020 to March 2021 and again to March 2022, and finally it had to be changed from a live conference to the online webinar via Zoom. Already in 2021 an online performance of the conference was planned. Some of the talks of speakers, who are not present now, are recordings from 2021. I am sorry that you won't see all the wonderful pictures on the large screen of the lecture hall, but just on your computer screen. No other option is left over now. But the online conference yields the advantage of many more attendees from 30 countries: Australia, Austria, Bhutan, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, China, Croatia, Denmark, Finland, France, Georgian Republic, Greece, India, Ireland, Israel, Italy, México, Nepal, The Netherlands, New Zealand, Poland, Russia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, USA, and Germany. Welcome to all of you. The organizers of this conference hope that you will enjoy the presentations. All speakers are experts in their topics and will explain the multitude of aspects, which make Mt. Kailash to such a phenomenal place on earth, both in scientific respect and regarding the rituals of religious practitioners.

As the contributions are from various disciplines, like History and Tibetology, as well as the subject of pilgrimage and religious practice of the four religions which worship Mt. Kailash, the presentations will not go in depth of each scientific field, but will rather be on a popular scientific level. This approach is assumed appropriate for this multidisciplinary conference.

The Conference Program is really comprehensive. In order to keep with the agenda, the speakers will be introduced only briefly. More information about the speakers is given in this conference booklet. At the end of each presentation there are 5 minutes provided for questions, which can be entered via Q&A (F&A). The chat function is reserved for the speakers.

To ensure privacy, except for the speakers, the video function and microphone of all attendees is turned off. This also saves bandwidth for the data

transfer. For documentation, the presentations will only be recorded by the conference host. According to the data protection rules of the University of Hamburg the recording function is disabled for all others.

Aims of the Conference

Mt. Kailash in the far west of Tibet is one of the holiest mountains in the world, revered by Hindus, Buddhists, Jains and Bönpo. During the last two decades, also Westerners set out for this remote region. Improved infrastructure and more liberal issuing of permits let their number and very much that of Indian pilgrims increase on a large scale. This requires new rules and regulations to preserve the landscape of Mt. Kailash and neighbouring sites.

A number of travel guides cover the topic of Mt. Kailash travels. However, many aspects of this exceptional geographical region are outlined just marginally in many of them. These include Lake Manasarovar, Lake Raksas Tal, Tirthapuri and the historical Guge Kingdom, as well as the sources of the four big rivers Brahmaputra, Karnali (headstream of the Ganges), Sutlej and Indus. Also the religious backgrounds, legends and iconographic properties are not dealt with in detail in these guides.

Besides the traditional rules for Tibetan and Indian pilgrims to Mt. Kailash, during recent years new observations and explorations were made and new regulations put into force. The aim of this conference is to compile both traditional and new aspects of the phenomenon of Mt. Kailash and the surrounding area of pilgrimage sites, their interpretation and comparison with old scriptures and tantric vision. Data on Mt. Kailash and the sacred lakes will be introduced and systemized. The knowledge of the sacred regions of Tibet will be shared, the cooperation in further scientific investigation discussed.

Sponsors

The organization of the conference was generously sponsored by the

1. **Numata Center for Buddhist Studies**, University of Hamburg
2. **Garchen Stiftung**, Munich, Germany
3. **Tibetisches Zentrum e.V.**, Hamburg, Germany
4. **Gustav Prietsch-Stiftung**, Hamburg, Germany
5. **Deutsche Tibethilfe e.V.**, German Aid to Tibetans, Hamburg, Germany

Their generosity was an important precondition for the realization of the conference and is greatly appreciated.

List of Speakers

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Ian A. Baker, PhD | Great Britain |
| Dr. Sergei Balalaev | Phenomenon of Kailash Research Group, Russia |
| Ajitkumar Benadi | Jain Association International, Germany |
| Dr. Ram Prasad Bhatt | University of Hamburg, Germany |
| Dmitry Ermakov | Foundation for the Preservation of Yungdrung Bon, UK |
| Susan Griffith-Jones | Great Britain / India |
| Minka Hauschild | Germany |
| Dr. Christoph Klein | Switzerland |
| Galina Kotovskaya | Phenomenon of Kailash Research Group, Russia |
| Niraj Kumar | Society for Asian Integration, India |
| Dr. Diana Lange | University of Hamburg, Germany |
| Prof. Pierre Mercier | Canada |
| Alexey Percsukov | Phenomenon of Kailash Research Group, Estonia |
| Marwin Schwarzbach | Stiftung Sowa Rigpa, Boppard, Germany |
| Prof. Dr. Dorji Wangchuk | University of Hamburg, Germany |
| Dr. Wolfgang Wöllmer | Phenomenon of Kailash Research Group, Germany |

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Program of the online Conference

with 5 minutes for questions after each presentation

The indicated times refer to CET (MEZ), which is UTC+1, check

www.timeanddate.com

Attention!

During the night of March 26 to 27 we switch to CEST (MESZ) = UTC+2.

FRIDAY, March 25, 2022

17:00 ***OPENING OF THE CONFERENCE***

Prof. Dr. Dorji Wangchuk, University of Hamburg, Germany

Dr. Wolfgang Wöllmer, Phenomenon of Kailash Research Group, Germany

Session 1: MT. KAILASH IN SCRIPTURES AND LEGENDS

17:15 **Hindu Scriptures and Legends of Mt. Kailash and Lake Manasarovar**

Dr. Ram Prasad Bhatt, University of Hamburg, Germany

17:40 **The Importance of Mt. Kailash in the Bon Religion**

Dmitry Ermakov, Foundation for the Preservation of Yungdrung Bon, UK

18:05 **The Importance of Mt. Kailash in the Jain Religion**

Ajitkumar Benadi, Jain Association International, Germany

18:30 **Interaction of the 4 Religions in their Beliefs in the Context of Mt. Kailash and Lake Manasarovar**

Prof. Pierre Mercier, Canada

18:55 ***END OF THE PRE-CONFERENCE DAY PROGRAM***

SATURDAY, March 26, 2022

Session 2: HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY OF THE MT. KAILASH REGION

08:30 **Depiction of Mount Kailāśa (Ti-se) in Tibetan Literature**

Prof. Dr. Dorji Wangchuk, University of Hamburg, Germany

08:55 **Sacred Geography: The History of Tibet and the Mt. Kailash Region**

Ian A. Baker, PhD, UK

09:20 **Representation of Mt. Kailash on Tibetan, Chinese and European Maps**

Dr. Diana Lange, University of Hamburg, Germany

09:45 Landscape Geoglyphs in the Region of Mt. Kailash and the Great Lakes

Dr. Sergei Balalaev, Phenomenon of Kailash Research Group, Russia

10:10 *MORNING BREAK*

Session 3: THE MEANING OF PILGRIMAGE**10:55 The Organic Pilgrimage, a Spiral of Consciousness as Described in The Tibetan Book of the Dead**

Susan Griffith-Jones, Great Britain / India

11:20 The Meaning of the Kora of Mt. Kailash for Western Visitors

Minka Hauschild, Germany

11:45 The Magical Duel Between Milarepa and Naro Bönchung: Who Really Won?

Dmitry Ermakov, Foundation for the Preservation of Yungdrung Bon, UK

12:10 “Existential Spinning”, the Meaning Behind the Clockwise and Anti-clockwise Kora

Susan Griffith-Jones, Great Britain / India

12:35 Pilgrimage as Terrestrial Representation of Geometrical Imagination: Inner and Outer Pilgrimage in the *Kālachakra* Corpus

Niraj Kumar, Society for Asian Integration, India

13:00 *LUNCH BREAK*

Session 4: TOURIST AND MEDICAL CONSIDERATIONS**14:30 Access of Mt. Kailash and Overview of the Koras**

Dr. Wolfgang Wöllmer, Phenomenon of Kailash Research Group, Germany

14:55 Tourism Development in Tibet in Recent Years

Alexey Percsukov, Phenomenon of Kailash Research Group, Estonia

15:20 The Tibetan Medical and Astro Institute Mt. Kailash in Darchen

Dr. Christoph Klein, Switzerland

15:45 Sowa Rigpa – The Science of Healing and Holy Mount Kailash

Marwin Schwarzbach, Stiftung Sowa Rigpa, Germany

16:10 *AFTERNOON BREAK*

Session 5: THE PARIKRAMA (TIB: KORA) OF MT. KAILASH AND THE GREAT LAKES**16:55 The Kora of Mt. Kailash**

Minka Hauschild, Germany

17:20 Geometrical Features of the Relief in the Region of Mt. Kailash

Dr. Sergei Balalaev, Phenomenon of Kailash Research Group, Russia

17:45 The Kora of Lake Manasarovar and Raksas Tal

Galina Kotovskaya, Phenomenon of Kailash Research Group, Russia

18:10 Research of the Lake Gyuma Tso in the Region of Mt. Kailash

Dr. Sergei Balalaev, Phenomenon of Kailash Research Group, Russia

18:35 END OF THE FIRST CONFERENCE DAY PROGRAM**EVENING PROGRAM****19:20 Video: Tibet, Place that Changes Lives**Alexey Percsukov, Phenomenon of Kailash Research Group, Estonia
& Viktor Shcherbakov, Russia**Attention!** Check www.timeanddate.comDuring the night of March 26 to 27 we **switch to CEST** (MESZ) = UTC+2.

SUNDAY, March 27, 2022

Session 6: THE STATIONS OF THE BARKOR**08:30 The Sources of the Four Great Rivers: Sacral and Physical Geography**

Dr. Sergei Balalaev, Phenomenon of Kailash Research Group, Russia

08:55 Tirthapuri and Gurugyam and Khyunglung

Minka Hauschild, Germany

09:20 Tsaparang and the Guge Kingdom

Dr. Christoph Klein, Switzerland

09:55 Piyang and Dungkar

Dr. Wolfgang Wöllmer, Phenomenon of Kailash Research Group, Germany

10:10 MORNING BREAK

Session 7: INNER KORA PATHS

10:55 The Inner Kora of Mt. Kailash and the Secret Dakini Path

Dr. Sergei Balalaev, Phenomenon of Kailash Research Group, Russia,

11:20 Other Inner Kora Paths

Dr. Wolfgang Wöllmer, Phenomenon of Kailash Research Group, Germany

11:45 The Basis of the Four Faces of Mt. Kailash: a Sacral Landscape

Galina Kotovskaya, Phenomenon of Kailash Research Group, Russia

12:10 The Spiral Kora

Dr. Wolfgang Wöllmer, Phenomenon of Kailash Research Group, Germany

12:35 Exploration of the Internal Mandala of Mt. Kailash

Alexey Percsukov, Phenomenon of Kailash Research Group, Estonia

13:00 LUNCH BREAK

Session 8: INNER PILGRIMAGE AND TANTRIC RELEVANCE

14:30 The Psychophysical Body Image Represented in Mt. Kailash

Minka Hauschild, Germany

14:55 The Dancing Ground of Śiva: Kailash in Hindu Tradition and Imagination

Ian A. Baker, PhD, UK

15:20 The Chakrasamvara Mandala and the Faces of Mt. Kailash

Dr. Wolfgang Wöllmer, Phenomenon of Kailash Research Group, Germany

15:45 Mt. Kailash in the *Kālachakra* Tantra

Niraj Kumar, Society for Asian Integration, India

16:10 The Physics of 'Rainbow Body'

Susan Griffith-Jones, Great Britain / India

16:35 AFTERNOON BREAK

ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION

17:20 Environmental Problems

International Research Group of the Kailash Phenomenon

18: 50 CONCLUSION OF THE CONFERENCE

Hindu Scriptures and Legends of Mt. Kailash and Lake Manasarovar

Dr. Ram Prasad Bhatt¹, University of Hamburg, Germany

In many faith systems of the world, mountains are central to religion and they are sacred. The most symbolic aspect of a mountain is its peak that is believed to be a purest and holy place, which is thought to be closest to heaven. For Hindus Mount *Kailās* is sacred where lord *Śiva* resides. Mount *Kailās* also plays an important role in the spiritual journey of lord *Rāma* and the *Pāṇḍavas*. Indian literature is full of the legends of Mount *Kailās*, Lake *Mānasarovara*, lord *Śiva* and Goddess *Pārvatī* as well as Goddess *Gaṅgā*. The Lake *Mānasarovara* is believed to be the purest and the most sacred lake for the Hindus and Buddhist and its water ostensibly contains spiritually cleansing powers. It is considered to be a purifier, life-giver, and destroyer of evil. Both Mount *Kailās* and Lake *Mānsarovara* are described as the holiest *tīrtha*, which are the ultimate pilgrimage destinations for Hindus, Jains, and Buddhists. *Tīrtha yātrā* ‘pilgrimage’ is a journey to a holy place, where the divine world meets the human world and where the transcendent descends to earth and where the higher and sacred realm meets the lower or human world. Pilgrimages are auspicious and an integral part of Hindu’s spiritual life. In this paper, I will discuss the legends surrounding the Mount *Kailās* and Lake *Mānsarovara* as mentioned in the Hindu scriptures e.g. *Śiva purāṇa*, *Skanda purāṇa* and the epics *Rāmāyaṇa* and *Mahābhārata*. I shall also discuss the current perspectives of pilgrimage to Mount *Kailās* and Lake *Mānsarovara* among the Hindus.

¹ **Ram Prasad Bhatt** teaches Hindi at the University of Hamburg. He holds a PhD in Hindi from Garhwal University, Uttarakhand, India. His main research focus is the oral traditions of North India, social linguistics of North Indian languages, Historical Hindi Grammar and literature. Currently he is working on the Historical Hindi grammar and the great and the little traditions of Central Himalayas. He organizes the Hindi summer school at the University of Hamburg since past many years, which is a unique Hindi course. In 2018 the prestigious Hindi prize “Nirmal Verma award” was conferred upon him by the Government of Madhya Pradesh, India for his contribution in the field of teaching Hindi to foreign students.

The Importance of Mt. Kailash in the Bon Religion

Dmitry Ermakov², Foundation for the Preservation of Yungdrung Bon, UK

Being the most important sacred geographical feature of Zhang Zhung and Tibet, Mt. Kailash was venerated by Bönpos of various creeds from times immemorial. In this talk I will firstly give a brief discourse on the four types of Bön religions to set the scene. I will then examine how the Dhami and Dhangre tradition of Humla, Nepal is connected to the Kailash region. The rest of the talk will focus on the role Mt. Kailash plays in Yungdrung Bön teachings and history: the meaning of its name in the Zhang Zhung language; Mt. Kailash and Lake Mapang as *la*-receptacles of Zhang Zhung emperors and the people of Zhang Zhung and Tibet; the Buddha Tönpa Shenrab connection; Mt. Kailash in the context of Bönpo Tantra; the extermination of Ligmincha royal line and Srongtsen Gampo's conquest of Zhang Zhung, and Trisong Deutsen's Cultural Revolution; Dzogchen masters Tapihritsa and Nangzher Lödpö and the first restoration of Bön; destruction of Bön by Lha Lama Yeshe Wö in Ngari; the survival of Zhang Zhung Nyengyu in Western Tibet and its spread to Dölpo and Mustang; and finally, the return and restoration of Yungdrung Bön around Mt. Kailash in recent times.

² **Dmitry Ermakov**, b. 1967, Leningrad, USSR. Studied art and archaeology with B. Piotrovsky (Director, Hermitage Museum) and G. Mezentzeva (Prof. Archaeology, Kiev University). Research Assistant to Charles Ramble, Oxford University (2009-10). Currently Chair of FPYB. Studied Tibetan Buddhism since 1989, Yungdrung Bön since 1995. Author of *Bə and Bön* (Vajra Publications, 2008). Produced 100+ edited transcripts of Lopön Tenzin Namdak's teachings, translations of practices for Bönpo sangha and several public books on Bön.

The Importance of Mt. Kailash in the Jain Religion

Ajitkumar Benadi³, Jain Association International, Germany

Kailash or Ashtapad has been mentioned in the various Jain scriptures. Lord Rishabha was the first of 24 Tirthankaras in the current ara, or ford-maker or spiritual teacher of true Dharma , last one being Lord Mahavira, who was contemporary of Lord Buddha. Lord Rishabha had his Nirvana from Kailash, Lord Mahavira from Pavapauri, Lord Nemi from Girnar, Lord Vasupoojya from Champapuri and the remaining 20 from Sammeda Shikhara. As Lord Rishabha was the first Tirthankara, Kailash is the most important Tirtha or spiritual centre. There are 2 volumes published by The Jain Center of America. More details will be presented in session 2.

³ **Ajitkumar B. Benadi** is 82 years old retired structural engineer, born in a Jain family in India. He co-founded Jain Association International (Germany) e.V. in 1989 and president from 2000. He has participated in many conferences and seminars in USA, India, South Korea and Greece. He has given lectures on Jain religion in the universities of Kiel and Frankfurt and also before the Deutsche-Indische Gesellschaft, Darmstadt, Germany.

Interaction of the Four Religions in their Beliefs in the Context of Mt. Kailash and Lake Manasarovar

Prof. Pierre Mercier⁴, Canada

Mount Kailash has been the spiritual repository of 4 great Asian religions (Yundrung Bön, Jainism, Hinduism and Buddhism) for thousands of years. All 4 religions are interconnected through a supreme cosmic mountain named differently as Ri-rab lhun-po, Mount Meru or Sumeru or Mount Ashtapad. In this setting, Mount Kailash reigns supreme on this earth as the spiritual entanglement where Tonpa Shenrab's physical emanation descended to Kailash, where Shiva and Shakti presides over all yogis and yoginis; where the Jain Tirthankar, Bhagwan Rushabdev attained nirvana; where the Buddha, Milarepa, Guru Rinpoche, Gesar of Ling plus other countless deities left a spiritual print for those who are adventurous enough to let go of themselves and be receptive to higher grounds. All the landscape of Kailash is infused with spiritual entanglement, sometimes under the form of sky phenomena, other times under the form of deities engraved naturally or "supernaturally" in the topographic relief between the base and the crest of the faces of Kailash or in surrounding rock formations including valleys and neighbouring mountains such as Nandi.

⁴ **Pierre Mercier** is originally from Quebec, Canada and is a language professor at the College of the North Atlantic since 2007. He has performed a first Kailash-Manasarovar Yatra and Parikrama with Swami Sri Nivas and 46 Shaivites in 2012 and another kora during the year of the horse in 2014 with the company "Rare Journey", managed by Dr. Ian Baker. He translated unofficially with the author's permission, the book only available in Russian language: "Tibet-Kailash, sacred valleys" made in collaboration with a group called the Russian Kailash Phenomenon, led by Dr. Sergei Balalaev. In 2015, he has made, in the context of the Third International Conference on the Phenomenon of Holy Kailash in Varna, Bulgaria, a virtual presentation "Of Kailash, Shambala and the Kalachakra" (inner, outer and hidden dimensions of the path seeker).

Depiction of Mount Kailāśa (Ti-se) in Tibetan Literature

Prof. Dr. Dorji Wangchuk⁵, University of Hamburg, Germany

The popularity of Mount Kailāśa among Tibetans and non-Tibetans and in Buddhist and non-Buddhist religions would hardly require mentioning. A careful study of the cult and culture associated with Kailāśa would be far beyond the scope of the present paper. Instead, what I shall attempt to do is to examine how Kailāśa, which is known by many names, has been depicted in Tibetan literature. I shall discuss briefly how Kailāśa has been portrayed in the contexts of (Tibetan) Buddhist geography, cosmology, and mythology, and so on, in different Tibetan literary genres.

⁵ **Dorji Wangchuk:** After completing his high school education in Bhutan and a nine-year course in the study of Tibetan Buddhism from a traditional Tibetan Buddhist monastic seminary in South India (i.e. sNga-'gyur-mtho-slob-mdo-sngags-rig-pa'i-'byung-gnas-gling, Bylakuppe, Mysore), Dorji Wangchuk studied Classical Indology (first major, with a focus on Buddhist Studies) and Tibetology (second major) at Universität Hamburg (Magister 2002). He wrote his doctoral dissertation on "The Resolve to Become a Buddha: A Study of the Bodhicitta Concept in Indo-Tibetan Buddhism" and received his PhD from the same University in 2005. Between 1992 and 1996, he taught Tibetan Buddhist monks and nuns in monastic seminaries in India. Since 1998, he has been teaching and researching at the Universität Hamburg in various capacities. He also taught as a guest professor at the University of Copenhagen, McGill University, Renmin University of China, Beijing, and University of Tsukuba, Tokyo. Currently he is a professor for Tibetology at the Department of Indian and Tibetan Studies, Asien-Afrika-Institut, Universität Hamburg. His main teaching and research interests lie in Tibetan Buddhist philosophy, Tibetan intellectual history and history of ideas, and Tibetan Buddhist intellectual/literary/textual culture.

Sacred Geography: The History of Tibet and the Mt. Kailash Region

Ian A. Baker⁶, PhD, UK

Long before it became a place of Buddhist pilgrimage, Mount Kailash represented the epicenter of Tibet's Shang Shung civilization, based on the doctrines and culture of Bön. With the expansion of Buddhist lineages in Central Tibet from the eight-century onward, Kailash was gradually absorbed into a tantric Buddhist worldview, with the mountain itself conceived as the mandala palace of the tantric deity Cakrasaṃvara and thermal springs along the Sutlej River designated as geological manifestations of Cakrasaṃvara's consort, Vajravārāhī. The region of Mount Kailash thus became the site of a gradual conversion of Tibet's landscape and beliefs from those of Bön to the tantric form of Buddhism. This presentation reviews the transformation of Tibetan civilization in the context of key events that took place in the vicinity of a mountain that, in Buddhist belief, represents the center of the world.

⁶ **Ian A. Baker** holds a Ph.D in Modern History and an M.Phil in Medical Anthropology. He is the author of seven books on Himalayan religious and cultural traditions, including *Tibetan Yoga: Principles and Practices*, *The Heart of the World: A Journey to Tibet's Lost Paradise*, *The Dalai Lama's Secret Temple: Tantric Wall Paintings from Tibet*, *Celestial Gallery*, and *The Tibetan Art of Healing*. He has also contributed peer-reviewed academic articles on the subject of hathayoga and esoteric geography in Tibetan Buddhist traditions.

Representation of Mt. Kailash on Tibetan, Chinese and European Maps

Dr. Diana Lange⁷, University of Hamburg, Germany

Particularly since the 18th century, Tibetan landscapes have been mapped by different agents, for different reasons and in different “cartographic languages” that resulted in different visual representations of the area. The graphic content and the language are central to the identification of individual maps and can provide insights in the concept and system of rules, ideas and beliefs that led to their production. This is also true for maps of Mt. Kailash and its surroundings. In my talk I will show a selection of such maps and discuss how knowledge about Mt. Kailash and the surrounding area has been formatted in maps, what kind of knowledge was formatted, what purpose the different maps served and how they were used. By doing so I will demonstrate how spatial information of a specific region was conveyed in different cartographic languages, how these different languages influenced each other and how “translations” between different cartographic languages led to the production of hybrid maps.

⁷ **Diana Lange** holds a PhD in Central Asian Studies from Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin (2008). Her research is located in Area Studies with a focus on the history of knowledge and exploration, material and visual culture studies, historical cartography, and cultural interactions. In 2018 she completed her habilitation (HDR) at the EPHE in Paris, published under the title *An Atlas of the Himalayas by a 19th Century Tibetan Lama. A Journey of Discovery* (Brill 2020). Currently she is Principal Investigator at the Cluster of Excellence *Understanding Written Artefacts* at the Universität Hamburg.

Landscape Geoglyphs in the Region of Mt. Kailash and the Great Lakes

Dr. Sergei Balalaev⁸, Phenomenon of Kailash Research Group, Russia

A detailed study of high-resolution satellite images of the Kailash region helped us to discover three groups of huge (up to 4,000 m) prehistoric relief geoglyphs formed by the mountain terrain and visible only from a bird's eye view. They are not mentioned anywhere in ancient texts or in oral tradition, which only emphasizes the antiquity of these unique objects. The first group is south-west from Rakshas Tal Lake (La Nga Tso) and on its islands. It consists of five geoglyphs representing images of anthropomorphic and zoomorphic creatures. The second group is on the axis connecting the two highest peaks in the Kailash and Gurla Mandhata region. The third group is near the Drolma La Pass and consists of two rock formations in the shape of two sacred "Om" symbols with a center of symmetry in the sacred lake Gauri Kund. The most part of the geoglyphs are oriented to the cardinal points, they are visible from different angles and at different times. Considering the numerous relationships in terms of orientation, location, size, and shape of these relief geoglyphs, it is possible to suppose that they were purposefully created by highly intelligent beings before the man appeared on Earth.

⁸ **Sergei Balalaev** began his professional life as a physicist in Russia. He has been in the research group of the phenomenon of Mt. Kailash since 2005, organized regular annual expeditions to the region of Tibet and Mt. Kailash, explored different koras around Mt. Kailash, the holy lakes and remote valleys of the Kailash Mandala, as well as the geographical and traditional sources of the four rivers. The results of his expeditions are published in Russian and English.

The Organic Pilgrimage, a Spiral of Consciousness as Described in The Tibetan Book of the Dead

Susan Griffith-Jones⁹, Great Britain / India

‘Bardo Thodol’, more commonly known as the Tibetan Book of the Dead in the Western world, is a multi-layered masterpiece. Spanning the entire range of embodiment that Consciousness may assume, the text describes the nature of worldly existence according to the higher tantras of Tibetan Buddhist philosophy, elucidating the process of travelling through life, death and in between, warning us of psychological pitfalls and advising us how to reach our highest state of potential. It is, in short, the Ultimate Pilgrimage! As the angle of this talk is to highlight the journey of the natural evolution of existence according to Bardo Thodol, it will generally focus on the whole cyclical pattern described in the book and more closely consider the process and rhythm of transitioning between one state of Consciousness and another.

⁹ Over the last number of decades, **Susan Griffith-Jones** has been studying and practising Tibetan Buddhism with the masters of the tradition, in Nepal and India. Her keen interest in the ‘deeper’ meaning of the teachings has triggered her to find ways to translate them into creative works of writing, film and photography for a modern audience. She is currently working on a large-scale project to produce a mobile phone game that allegorically contains the meaning of Bardo Thodol. www.pyramidkey.com

The Meaning of the Kora of Mt. Kailash for Western Visitors

Minka Hauschild¹⁰, Germany

Western people are fascinated of the holy Mount Kailash, but their religion or spiritual self-development is not related to Hinduism, Buddhism or Jainism. When they take the long way to circumambulate Mt. Kailash, most of them have never been in this altitude before. They are not used to this rough climate and the harshness of this trip. For some of them this journey is life changing. Others get in touch with suppressed or encumbered patterns. Some become sick, others experience a personal breakthrough.

The journeys I organize start with a warmup trekking tour in Humla, then we visit Tirthapuri and Guge, and perform the Kora of Mt. Kailash and the Manasarovar Kora as well. Around 200 people joined me on this trip, and I am always wondering, what this pilgrimage for western people is about? Here I try to give an answer.

¹⁰ **Minka Hauschild** is an artist (painter), teacher and practitioner of Yoga and Buddhist Meditation. She is a tour guide too, specialized on Buddhist Pilgrimages in Tibet, Nepal and India. Due to this, she was living in Nepal for 5 years. She guided the journey to Mount Kailash for German, Austrian and Swiss people for 17 times until now. In Corona times, she stays in Germany and teaches her Yoga and Meditations classes online. www.Minka-Hauschild.de

The Magical Duel Between Milarepa and Naro Bönchung: Who Really Won?

Dmitry Ermakov¹¹, Foundation for the Preservation of Yungdrung Bon, UK

Probably everyone who has even a little interest in Tibet knows or has at least heard of the magical contest between Buddhist yogi Milarepa and Bönpo sorcerer Naro Bönchung. The tale has been told and retold for centuries. Nowadays it can be found on the pages of children's books, in comics and even seen in a movie! But does this story have any grounding in real events? Did this magical duel really happen on Mount Kailash? And who was the real winner? I will attempt to answer these questions by looking into Bönpo and Buddhist sources on Milarepa as well as by referring to oral traditions of various Gurung (Tamu) clans of Nepal.

¹¹ For personal information see page 12

“Existential Spinning”, the Meaning Behind the Clockwise and Anti-clockwise Kora

Susan Griffith-Jones¹², Great Britain / India

Why do the Buddhists and Hindus conduct the kora around Kailash in a clockwise direction, whilst the Jains and Bon-po do it in a counter-clockwise fashion? What is really happening when we circumambulate a monument in a certain way? What difference does it make? Looking at the science behind these directional movements, we find a very precise correlation between the motion of a human body around a sacred monument such as Mount Kailash, and the processes of micro and macro cosmoses within the whole. Here, the effects of motion along each course, as necessary keys for holistic balance are specifically addressed and how this plays a part in the unfolding of consciousness within those who partake in the kora of one or another direction around a pivotal point.

¹² For personal information see page 19

Pilgrimage as Terrestrial Representation of Geometrical Imagination: Inner and Outer Pilgrimage in the *Kālachakra* Corpus

Niraj Kumar¹³, Society for Asian Integration, India

Pilgrimage is a form of geopiety. Sacredness is invested in natural terrestrial formations or man-made structures that through discursive process emerge as metonymic substitution for presence of extraordinary human and/or “other-than-human” beings. Pilgrimage is not limited to only great religions but encompasses the wider belief -systems of transcendence among animists and even atheists. Sanskrit terminology for pilgrimage is Parikramā (परिक्रमा) having meaning of “concerning sequences”. Parikramā was deployed as a method of operation in ancient Indian mathematics.

In Indic tradition, Parikramā involves circumambulation around the sacred site by the pilgrim reiterating the movement of heavenly bodies around the central axis. Since, ancient astronomers found heavenly objects revolving in circles, structure of circle itself has been seen as the expression of natural order (Skt. ऋत, ṛta). Parikramā tethers the believers to a centring authority in a transient and uncertain world. In early Buddhist Tantras, sacred sites do find mention with several different kind of classification. But, the replication of trigonometrically ideas based upon the geometrical structure of circle finds its fullest expression in the *Kalacakra* corpus. In this presentation, I will describe the inner and outer pilgrimage sites in the *Kālacakra Tantra and its commentary Vimalaprabhā* and decipher the *mathematics of pilgrimage sites*.

¹³ **Niraj Kumar** is a well-known proponent of Pan-Asianism. He is the author of a major work on Asian Integration, “Arise, Asia!” (2003), and its sequel “Asia in Post-Western Age”(2014). A commentator on Śākta Tantra, his book, “Śriyantra and Geophilosophy of India”(2014) was internationally well received. He was also the chief editor of an encyclopedic work on Himalayas, “Himalayan Bridge”(2015). His forthcoming work is five-volume translation and commentary over Kālachakra Tantra. The first volume under the title, "The Kalachakra Tantra: Translation, Annotation and Commentary(DK Printworld:2022) has been published.

Access of Mt. Kailash and Overview of the Koras

Dr. Wolfgang Wöllmer¹⁴, Phenomenon of Kailash Research Group, Germany

The basic approach to Mt. Kailash, located in the far west of Tibet, is following rivers. In this region are the sources of the 4 great rivers Brahmaputra, Indus, Sutlej and Karnali, source river of the Ganges. In Tibetan, the river sources are named after the mouths of animals, from which the jewels, the faces of Mt. Kailash are believed to be made of, are derived.

Tibetan pilgrims coming from the direction Lhasa would follow the Yarlung Tsangpo (Brahmaputra) to reach the holy mountain. Those from Amdo in the north of Tibet choose the North Route, which joins the old trading route coming from the Silk Road. Pilgrims from Ladakh would come along the Indus, those from Spiti and Kinnaur along the Sutlej. Another entry from India is the Lipu Lekh pass. After the Simikot Trek along the Karnali in west Nepal, the pilgrim has the first view of Mt. Kailash from the Gurla La. From Kathmandu, the capital of Nepal, most western travelers and many Indians reach the Tibetan border on the Arniko Highway and Nyalam on the Friendship Highway, where a rest day is needed for altitude acclimatization. Then they drive up to the Lalung La, the first pass over 5000 m, and along the Pelkho Tso to Saga and on the South Route to Tokchen with the first view of Mt. Kailash.

Tibetan pilgrims would immediately go on the Kora of Mt. Kailash, then on the Kora of Lake Manasarovar. The Barkor, the Middle Kora, visits the sources of the 4 rivers and Tirthapuri. On an extension to the north, the Takor, Toling and Tsaparang in the historic Kingdom Guge are visited. Western travelers should start in Guge for easier acclimatization to the high altitudes, then Tsaparang, Lake Mansarovar, before walking the Kora of Mt. Kailash with altitudes up to 5600 m. The access roads, the North Route and the South Route, form the 1400 km “Outermost Kora”.

¹⁴ For personal information see page 40

Tourism Development in Tibet in Recent Years

Alexey Percsukov¹⁵, Phenomenon of Kailash Research Group, Estonia

1. General dynamic of tourism development in Tibet. Modern requirements for the quality of services provided.
2. What is needed to enter Tibet. Permits. Terms of registration.
3. Flight to Tibet. Recommended airlines.
4. Accommodation in Tibet. Hotels and Guesthouses.
5. Transport. Main transport companies. Rules for the carriage of tourists.
6. Attractions of Tibet. New rules for visiting some sacred places.
7. The choice of tour operator in Tibet. Tibetan guides.
8. Prospects for the development of tourism in Tibet. Tibet travel guide in Russian

¹⁵ **Alexey Percsukov** is a businessman in Estonia and traveler and visited around 200 countries. He organized many trips to India and Tibet. He has been involved in investigation and promotions of Tibet since 2005 and visited Tibet more than 10 times. He made more than 20 “Inner” Koras, climbed to the summit of Mt. Nandi twice and also crossed all 8 shoulders of Mt. Kailash. In 2016 he wrote and published the first guide of Tibet in Russian language: “TIBET, Country Which Changes Your Life”, Polyglot, 2016, ISBN 978-5-941617540.

The Tibetan Medical and Astro Institute Mt. Kailash in Darchen

Dr. Christoph Klein¹⁶, Switzerland

The Institute was established in 1995 under the sponsorship and guidance of the Tibetan Ngari Korsum Association Switzerland, a nonprofit self-help organization of exile Tibetans in Switzerland. It was started on the initiative and advice of Dr. Gelong Tenzin Wangdrag, an expert authority, to help in the preservation of Tibetan medicine. In a first step the „Tibetan Medical School Mt. Kailash“ was established. It offers room for around fifty students, for a six-years course in Tibetan medicine. After completion of their studies the new medical doctors are mostly returning to their home villages to look after basic health care in the rural communities. In 1997 the „Tibetan Medical Clinic Mt. Kailash“ was added. It is the world's highest altitude hospital, taking care of local people, pilgrims and travelers. Later a small production plant for traditional Tibetan medicines was installed. About forty different high-quality medications are produced. Since 2007 a guesthouse is attached to the Institute Mt. Kailash: the „Sun and Moon Guest House“.

In 2011 the institute was taken over by a Chinese foundation, the well established activities in education and medical treatment however fully continued.

The Tibetan Ngari Korsum Association Switzerland started a new project, the setup and support of a student hostel at Phuntsokling, a Tibetan settlement in Odisha, India.

¹⁶ **Christoph Klein** was born 1941 at Bern, Switzerland. Studies at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zürich in chemical engineering, PhD 1971. Working worldwide as an engineer for a small Swiss company, e.g. in Taiwan, Nigeria, India and China. 1987 first visit to Tibet, on a return trip crossing from China to Nepal. 2009 first visit of Western Tibet, first Kora of Mt. Kailash, 2011 and 2014 further visits and Koras. Always fascinated by Tibetan Buddhism and Tibetan art. Since 2009 assistance to Kailashprojekte of Ngari Korsum Association.

Sowa Rigpa – The Science of Healing and Holy Mount Kailash

Marwin Schwarzbach¹⁷, Stiftung Sowa Rigpa, Germany

Mount Kailash is one of the most important places for Buddhist practitioners and Sowa Rigpa. The medical transmission is from Buddha Shakyamuni himself and passed with different streams to the Himalayas and Tibet for example with Bibi Gahbyed (2nd century) and Guru Rinpoche (8th century)

At Kailash site a multitude of the most effective medical plants and substances can be found. For a Sowa Rigpa physician – called Amchi – it is mandatory to circumambulate the Kailash and take bath in both lakes: Manasarovar and Rakshastal. The great yogi Milarepa who resided at Kailash also kept the Amchi-transmission, as well as other Buddhist Master did.

¹⁷ **Marwin Schwarzbach** is Buddhist practitioner for 10 years and a student of Sowa Rigpa at Stiftung Sowa Rigpa in Germany, Boppard. He has been in the Himalayas several times. He did the Kora at Mount Kailash in 2014. On this pilgrimage he also visited Dolpa (Guru Rinpoche Land) and Lhasa. In Lhasa he was able to circumambulate the holy Jowo and paid homage in the Potala.

The Kora of Mt. Kailash

Minka Hauschild¹⁸, Germany

Depending on the religious orientation of a pilgrim, there are different stations on the Kora where you can stop for prayer and devotion. Here I present the prominent places that can be found on the Kora, when walking it clockwise. I explain their meaning for the respective group of pilgrims. Whether it is the Tibetans, who circumambulate the Kora with prostration, or Indian pilgrims, for whom the north face is the dwelling place of Shiva. Starting with our own death, you wander through the intermediate realm to be reborn at Dölma La, or visit the monasteries that lie along the Kora path.

¹⁸ For personal information see page 20

Geometrical Features of the Relief in the Region of Mt. Kailash

Dr. Sergei Balalae¹⁹, Phenomenon of Kailash Research Group, Russia

The analysis of satellite images of the Kailash region revealed a number of geometrical features with different relief elements. The characteristic size of our planet is manifested in the sizes of some relief elements of the Kailash region. There are some arched mountain ranges representing the parts of circles. It is significant that the radii of these circles are integer-valued multiple to the radii of the Earth, the Sun and some other planets of our solar system. For example, in the upper part of Mt. Takairola there are two arched interleaved mountain ranges which have the radii of 1,060 and 2,120 m. These correspond to the radius of the Earth with factors of 6×10^3 and 3×10^3 , respectively. The sizes of Rakshas Tal and Manasarovar (i.e. the length of the shoreline and the radii of the circumscribed circles) also have features that are associated with the golden section number and congruent to the sizes of the Earth, the Sun and the Moon. Mt. Sri Kailash, Mt. Kailash and Mt. Kading Kangri lie at the same latitude (31°). Furthermore, Mt. Kailash is in the central place, while Mt. Sri Kailash and Mt. Kading Kangri are at the same distance (203.5 km) from Mt. Kailash. At the longitude of 81° there are also two mountain peaks that pass through Kailash: Gurla Mandhata (7,694 m) in the south and Chongtse Shan (6,903 m) in the north. It is suggested that there is a special fine-energy structure, a kind of an energy-information matrix, based on which the mountainous terrain was formed in the course of natural geological processes. It is possible to assume that the sizes and shape of the relief elements of the Kailash Mandala might bring about some special resonance with the Earth, the Sun, the Moon and other extraterrestrial objects.

¹⁹ For personal information see page 18

The Kora of Lake Manasarovar and Raksas Tal

Galina Kotovskaya²⁰, Phenomenon of Kailash Research Group, Russia

Modern pilgrims are familiar only with the two sacred lakes in the Kailash region, Manasarovar and Raksas Tal. At the same time, the Tibetan texts make references to the four lakes that form part of a well-built system associated with the Creation of the World. These lakes are Gunggyü Tsho, La Ngak Tsho (Raksas Tal), Mapang Yumtsho (Manasarovar) and Kurgyal Chungo Tsho, so called “Four Great Spontaneously Whirling Lakes”. This report will provide information on each of these lakes and more detailed data on the Kora around Manasarovar and Raksas Tal. In addition to geographical data, we will discuss how Tibetans have been changing their attitudes towards the lakes. In the days of Zhang Zhung, each lake was inhabited by mighty creatures, Goddesses or Nagas, who helped people in different ways. For example, the king and queen of the Nagas lived in Lake Manasarovar and helped people in their spiritual development. And Lake Raksas Tal was the center of religious worship to Drablai Gyalmo, the mighty female deity in Zhang Zhung. Visiting her abode was considered as a great blessing, and the conception of demonic nature of this lake appeared long after it. We will provide information on ancient archaeological sites, retreat caves, monasteries, megalithic holy places, and identification of sacred places mentioned in ancient texts with their actual locations.

²⁰ **Galina Kotovskaya** began her professional life as a mathematician in Russia. She has been in the research group of the phenomenon of Mt. Kailash since 2006. She is a participant of regular annual expeditions to the Tibet region and Mt. Kailash. She explored various types of koras around Mount Kailash, the sacred lakes and valleys of the Kailash Mandala, and the geographical and traditional sources of the rivers. She is one of the organizers of photo exhibitions about Tibet. In expeditions she pays special attention to the internal perception of the sacred places.

Research of Lake Gyuma Tso in the Region of Mt. Kailash

Dr. Sergei Balalaev²¹, Phenomenon of Kailash Research Group, Russia

We analyzed the high-resolution satellite images of the highest lake in the Kailash region, Gyuma Tso (5,360 m), which is 25 km from Mt. Kailash in the north-east direction. It has an elongated shape, similar to a sword with a hilt oriented with its pointed end towards Mt. Kailash. This line goes across the geographical sources of the Longdhep and Mungjam (the tributaries of the Indus). They are located at the same distance of 6.6 km from the western and eastern edges of the lake. The golden section azimuth of the geographic coordinates of 2.618, which is interpreted as the longitude/latitude ratio (the irrational number $\phi = 1.618033989$), is 65.88 degrees and passes through the Serdung Chuksum Pass (near Mt. Kailash) and the north-east shore of Lake Gyu Ma Tso. The azimuth of the sunrise at the summer solstice is 61.8 degrees, which almost coincides with the direction of the elongated lake. It might be assumed that such shape of Lake Gyu Ma was formed under the influence of powerful energy flows acting in this direction. During the expeditions in 2017-2019 we studied the landscape of the shoreline and the mountain formations around the lake, as well as the flora and fauna of this region. We also made a comparative analysis of the sizes and orientation of the second elongated lake, Dugey Tso. Based on the discovered relationships, it is suggested that the relief of this region was formed in the course of natural geological processes in line with a special energy-information matrix.

²¹ For personal information see page 18

Video: Tibet, Place that Changes Lives

Alexey Percsukov²², Phenomenon of Kailash Research Group, Estonia,
& Viktor Shcherbakov²³, Russia

'Tibet, Place that Changes Lives' is a video guide to Tibet for people who travel there for the first time. The film describes the main monasteries and sights of Central Tibet, and the route to Western Tibet where the magnificent Kingdom of Guge and Holy Land Tirthapuri are located. It provides a description of the Manasarovar Kora and the monasteries surrounding the lake. The film gives a detailed story of Kailash Kora, also featuring unique footage of the approach to the Western face of Kailash, Manjushri Kora, and Nandi Kora.

²² For personal information see page 25

²³ **Viktor Shcherbakov** is an entrepreneur from Volgograd, a metal trader. Since 1992 he has been trading metal mesh and wire. In 2014 Viktor travelled to Tibet for the first time, and now he regularly comes back there. He has walked the Kora around Kailash multiple times. In 2017, upon the crossing of the Khandro-Sanglam pass, an idea of the film about Tibet sprang up and was successfully pursued the following year.

The Sources of the Four Great Rivers: Sacral and Physical Geography

Dr. Sergei Balalaev²⁴, Phenomenon of Kailash Research Group, Russia

Mount Kailash, situated in the west part of the Tibetan Plateau, is, perhaps, the most sacred pilgrimage site on our planet. The four sacred rivers of Asia have their origins in the area of 125 km around Mt. Kailash: the Brahmaputra River, the Karnali River (a tributary of the Ganges), the Indus River, and the Sutlej River (a tributary of the Indus). The sacral geography of the region is based on mythological ideas about Mount Meru and the sources of the rivers that take their origins near it, along with the Tibetan texts describing the sacred places. For more than a hundred years, the study of the sources of these rivers has aroused great interest among foreign researchers. However, for many hundreds of years, Tibet was closed to foreigners due to its geographical features and political restrictions. This report provides information on the geographical and traditional sources of the Indus River obtained from the satellite remote sensing data and results of expeditions to this region in 2011-2019. We determined the exact geographical coordinates of the developed riverbeds and constant watercourses of four rivers. We also found a variety of interesting patterns as to geometry of traditional and geographical sources of the rivers that form the huge natural Mandala. In addition, the report includes the routes to the sources of the rivers used by pilgrims in ancient times, and some actual itineraries.

²⁴ For personal information see page 18

Tirthapuri and Gurugyam and Khyunglung

Minka Hauschild²⁵, Germany

The hot springs of Tirthapuri invite you to take a dip after the dusty kora.

But also the circumambulation of the white-red hill, which consists of sediment deposits from the hot springs, is part of the Kailash Kora for Tibetan pilgrims. At this place Guru Padmashambava and his consort Yeshe Tsogyal stayed. Her cave is surrounded by a monastery. Tirtahpuri is a very magical and powerful place.

From Tirthapuri, following a branch of the Sutley River to the southwest, lies Guruyam Monastery. From here the winding path along the river leads deeper into the rugged mountain world with its caves towards Guge. Following this path we find Khyunglung, the "Silver Palace of Garuda", the center of a lost realm of the Tibetan shamanic Bon tradition.

²⁵ For personal information see page 20

Tsaparang and the Guge Kingdom

Dr. Christoph Klein²⁶, Switzerland

Crossing over from Thirtapuri, across colourful mountains, vast valleys and plains at the back of the Himalayas one arrives suddenly at the overwhelming views of the Sutlej valley erosions, down into the heart of the Guge kingdom, Thöling and Tsaparang. Guge, established in the 10th century, from where the second diffusion of Buddhism in Tibet started, with Rinchen Zangpo and the visit of Atisha. Only few western visitors ever arrived at the remote location. Today Thöling is more a Chinese town, with two remaining museum-like temples. Tsaparang however is the real jewel . When after passing through the fantastic landscape one enters the dark temples the impression is indescribable. After adaption to the darkness another world is opening, in brilliant colours. Much has been lost, partly due to natural erosion after Tsaparang has been deserted, mostly during the cultural revolution. Comparisons with the only available earlier documentations by Tucci and Lama Govinda show the sad recent changes. The temples contained complete mandalas with colossal central statues, which have all been damaged or completely disappeared. The mostly preserved mural paintings however are magnificent, belonging to the most beautiful Tibetan art, in Kashmir-influenced style.

²⁶ For personal information see page 26

Piyang and Dungkar

Dr. Wolfgang Wöllmer²⁷, Phenomenon of Kailash Research Group, Germany

Around Toling is the fantastic landscape of the amazing Sotlej canyon. Driving from Toling to the north through the extraordinary “Earth Forest”, after 30 km a hill is reached perforated with many caves. These are the remainders of the historic village of Piyang with a fortress on top of the hill and a Red Temple, like in Tsaparang. This troglodytic settlement was presumably founded for a branch of the royal family in Toling. In a locked cave there are wonderful murals, which are of another style than those in Tsaparang. They rather resemble the paintings in Dunhuang, 1600 km to the northeast at the Silk Road. It is supposed that painters from India stopped here on their way to the Silk Road and earned some money performing these paintings. The presented pictures are copied from the internet www.himalayanart.org/search/set.cfm?setid=1674&page=1

Looking from Piyang to the northeast, on a steep rock there are some big buildings belonging to Dungkar, the second of these little known towns of the Guge Kingdom. Actually, Dungkar was the capital of Guge, before the capital moved to Tsaparang. The buildings really look unaccessible, like a fortress, but from the village below, one can climb a steep rubble slope and enter a cave entrance with a steep climb inside - like in Tsaparang - to the top of these cliffs. There are rooms with amazing murals, some bleached by weather, others on more protected walls in excellent colors. In some caves are piles of Tsatsas.

Looking back from Dungkar, Piyang is seen in a fantastic panorama. To the right is a valley in between with very long stairs to a cave entrance. In these caves are wonderful murals like those in Piyang. Also the roof of the cupola is painted, and again there are lots of Tsatsas. As taking photographs is strictly forbidden, the demonstrated pictures are copied from the internet www.himalayanart.org/search/set.cfm?setid=1673&page=1

²⁷ For personal information see page 40

The Inner Kora of Mt. Kailash and the Secret Dakini Path

Dr. Sergei Balalaev²⁸, Phenomenon of Kailash Research Group, Russia

In the course of more than 20 expeditions to Mt. Kailash (Tib. = Ti-se / Gangs rin-po-che) in 2005-2019 we frequently passed the routes of the inner kora of Mt. Kailash (Tib. = nang-skor) and Secret Dakinis Path described in this report. The analysis of high-resolution satellite images allowed to study the shape, orientation and size of the valleys within which the koras pass, as well as their mountain ranges.

The Inner Kora route involves going round Mt. Nandi (6002 m) (Tib. Neten Yelakzung) over the Charok Phurdod La pass (5836 m) and includes a worship visit to 13 Gold Stupas Serdung Chusum and two lakes, Kapala Tso (Rakta) and Kavala Tso (Durchi). During the passage of the Nandi Kora we visited and studied some man-made and natural objects: Gyangdrag Gompa monastery, Selung Gompa monastery, west crest of the Inner Kora, Mt. Buddha's Throne, Mt. Nandi, Atma Linga and the sacred river Sailodha that originates here; the niche of Saptorishi with 13 stupas (Tib. Serdung Chusum), Kapala Tso Lake and Kavala Tso Lake, and some other objects. Inner kora is apparently the highest pilgrimage in the world.

The route of the Secret Dakinis Path goes over the Khandro Sanglam pass (5,675 m). When passing the Dakinis Kora we visited and studied Mt. Pakna (6000 m), Mt. Jampeyang (Manjushri) (5,835 m), Kubera Lake, and Vajravaraahi Lake. The routes described are of great importance for pilgrims for internal practices and transformations.

²⁸ For personal information see page 18

Other Inner Kora Paths

Dr. Wolfgang Wöllmer²⁹, Phenomenon of Kailash Research Group, Germany

One of the maps in Swami Pranavananda's book "Kailas – Manasarovar" includes a path connecting Zuthrulphuk Gompa and Gyangdrak Gompa, which is missing in later maps. We tried to find this path in 2002, but it was forgotten even to local Tibetans. Only in 2006, we redetected this path up to the Gevo La, where no human sign was, no cairn, no prayer flag, and to the Sapje La with a wonderful panoramic view over the Barkha Plain, Lakes Manasarovar and Raksas Tal, the Gurla Mandata, and the Gyangdrak Gompa in the west. To complete this Southern Traverse, a path leads from here to the Serlung Gompa, and over the Tugsum La down to the Kora of Mt. Kailash close to the Tarboche.

With this, a Northern Traverse would provide a real Inner Kora of Mt. Kailash, the Nangkor. The classical Inner Kora circles Mt. Nandi, not Mt. Kailash. The Northern Traverse crosses the northern outlier mountains Vajrapani, Avalokiteshvara and Manjushri and joins the Secret Dakini Path.

Glacial lakes are considered sacred as skull cup (tib. kapala) in the hands of deities. Vajravarahi's Kapala is hidden in the northern side valley west of the Khandro Sanglam La. Another glacial lake, the Kuber Kund, is found south of the descent from the pass. The most sacred skull cups are Kapala Durchi and Kapala Rakta in a high side valley close to the Nandi Kora. In Kapala Durchi the key to the secret of Mt. Kailash is believed to be hidden. The reverse Nandi Kora keeps Mt. Kailash on the pilgrim's right side. On the classical Nandi Kora Mt. Kailash is on ones left side.

The Vajra-Kora is a combination of the Nandi Kora and a kora of Mt. Avalokiteshvara. The most challenging kora is the Lotus Kora. In the Mt. Kailash massif, there are 8 valleys going up to the holy mountain in the center. The outlier mountains separated by the valleys can be considered as 8 lotus petals. The Lotus Kora means to follow all 8 valleys up to Mt. Kailash.

²⁹ For personal information see page 40

The Basis of the Four Faces of Mt. Kailash: a Sacral Landscape

Galina Kotovskaya³⁰, Phenomenon of Kailash Research Group, Russia

During the expeditions undertaken in 2005-2019, we developed the trekking routes to the four faces of Mt. Kailash and performed the so-called Kora of Kailash's Faces Touching and the Kora of Confluence of Elements, described in this report. The analysis of high-resolution satellite images of this region allowed us to study the shape, orientation and size of the faces of this mountain. The horizontal sections of Mt. Kailash at different heights allowed us to determine the cross-sectional shape of this rock formation. The shape of Kailash's faces has a symbolic relationship with the Elements: the eastern face, triangular in shape, is associated with the Element of Fire; the western concave face relates to the Element of Air; the southern convex face, rounded in shape, is associated with the Element of Water; and the northern egg-shaped face relates to the Element of Ether. The upper part of the mountain, which has a horizontal square section, is associated with the Element of Earth. We studied the features of the relief elements of the valleys and their mountain ranges adjacent to Mt. Kailash and explored some man-made and natural objects: Atma Lingam and the sacred river Sailodha that takes its origin here; Mount Nandi (Tib. "Neten Yelakzung") that is similar in shape to some Indian and Russian temples; the Saptorishi niche with 13 stupas (Tib. "Serdung Chuksum"), and a number of other objects.

³⁰ For personal information see page 30

The Spiral Kora

Dr. Wolfgang Wöllmer³¹, Phenomenon of Kailash Research Group, Germany

Tibetans, Indian pilgrims and visitors from western countries perform the Kora of Mt. Kailash, a usually clockwise circumambulation of the holy mountain. There are several paths for the circumambulation, but only little information is available for paths closer to the holy mountain than the known Kora of Mt. Kailash, the traditional Inner Kora, the Nandi Kora and the Secret Dakini Path. Several paths closer to the center of the holy mountain than the Kora of Mt. Kailash were described on this Conference. This presentation shows, how paths in the Mt. Kailash massif can be linked to a Spiral Kora with 4 turns with increasing nearness to the central holy mountain. These were named according to the jewels, the 4 faces of Mt. Kailash are believed to be made of. The presentation demonstrates the 4 turns of the Spiral Kora with maps and photographs. All paths of the Sapphire Kora, the Emerald Kora and the Ruby Kora are explored, but for the innermost turn, the Golden Kora, some paths wait to be explored. They are still speculative, and if they are not walkable without equipment of mountaineers, alternative paths may be needed. Except for the Sapphire Kora, the only one without the limitations for the access of the Inner Kora, some of the paths are challenging to be covered without mountaineering equipment, which is to be excluded from the pilgrimage of Mt. Kailash.

³¹ **Wolfgang Wöllmer** spent his professional life as Medical Physicist in Germany. He performed his first Kailash pilgrimage in 2002, the horse year of the Tibetan calendar, others in 2006, 2010, 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2017. He planned various routes and special paths to explore the whole region. He published his experiences and findings in his book “The Inner and Outer Paths of Mt. Kailash”, and in the articles “The Spiral Kora of Mt. Kailash” with A. Percsukov in the Himalayan Journal 2017, and “Ancient Knowledge and Modern Explorations of the Phenomenon of the Holy Mt. Kailash” with S. Balalaev in the Himalayan Journal 2019.

Exploration of the Internal Mandala of Mt. Kailash

Alexey Percsukov³², Phenomenon of Kailash Research Group, Estonia

1. Inaccessible areas of the Kailash mandala. Features of research.
2. South-Western Descent. The main shrines on Mt Mahakala Palace:
3. Stone mirror Dharma King Narsang. Ascent to a stone mirror from the Khandro Sanglam pass. Valleys adjacent to stone mirror.
4. Shingjiong Valley.
5. Minlung Valley, Minlung Kora.
6. Gedhun Valley. Ascent to the southeast shoulder of Kailash. Profile of Swinks, Shiva Lingam, Lesser Kailash (Tisum).
7. Buddhas Throne Kora. Gayandrak pass. Pass of two lakes.
8. Climbing Nandi.

³² For personal information see page 25

The Psychophysical Body Image Represented in Mt. Kailash

Minka Hauschild³³, Germany

In the Yoga Tantras, the psychophysical energy system of the human body is centered in the 3 main channels, the Ida Nadi, Pingala Nadi, and the central channel Shusumna Nadi. At the base of the channels, in our pelvic floor, we find a sleeping snake, the Kundalini Shakti, which is the female life force. The male power is Shiva on top of our crown. This tantric path is about unifying the polarity. For this, the Kundalini must wake up and raise through the central channel in our spine, to unify with the Shiva power on top of our brain. To prepare this, we need to clean, open and strengthen our nadis. That is, what Yoga practice of Asana, Pranayama and Meditation is about. This concept can be seen in the two lakes, where Lake Raksas Tal is the female nadi, and Lake Manasarovar is the male nadi. The column in the south face of Mount Kailash is Shusumna Nadi. Looking at the north face of Mount Kailash, on top of his crown there is a snowcovered overhang, which looks like the head of a snake.

³³ For personal information see page 20

The Dancing Ground of Śiva: Kailas in Hindu Tradition and Imagination

Ian A. Baker³⁴, PhD, UK

Rising near the source of the great rivers of the Indian subcontinent, Mount Kailash is naturally perceived as a dwelling place of the supreme deities of Hindustan, referring to the diverse kingdoms inscribed by the Indus River to the northwest and the Brahmaputra in the northeast. This illustrated talk accounts for the prominence of Kailash and Manasarovar as geographical metaphors for yogic practice based on unification of individual consciousness with an animate cosmos, symbolized by the union of Parvati and Siva, as Nature and Supreme Awareness, on the summit of a mountain conceived as the earthly counterpart of Sumeru, the cosmic peak at the center of the universe and the central column of the yogic body. This presentation discusses how Mount Kailash and Lake Manasarovar, in Śaivite conception, serve as models for other Indic and Tibetan traditions at the interface of nature, cosmos, and the spiritual evolution of the human species.

³⁴ For personal information see page 16

The Chakrasamvara Mandala and the Faces of Mt. Kailash

Dr. Wolfgang Wöllmer³⁵, Phenomenon of Kailash Research Group, Germany

The Kora of Mt. Kailash is designated as a natural mandala. For Buddhists, Mt. Kailash is the residence of Chakrasamvara and His consort Vajravarahi. The Chakrasamvara Mandala is a depiction of Chakrasamvara's palace with the deity couple in the center and their retinue in 5 circles around them. The Mahasukha Chakra (circle of great bliss) is a lotus with 8 petals and the 4 Dakinis. The Trichakra is the combination of the Chitta Chakra (mind circle), the Vak Chakra (speech circle) and the Kaya Chakra (body circle), each with 8 couples of dakinis and heroes in the 8 positions. These 24 couples symbolize the 24 pithas, seats in southern Asia, where Chakrasamvara's Mandala is permanent. The Samaya Chakra (pledge circle) is formed by the 8 guardians of the gates and corners of the palace.

Chakrasamvara's 4 Faces can be visualized at the 4 ridges of Mt. Kailash, the attributes in His 12 hands on a bird's eye view of the Kailash massif. The Chitta Chakra represents the Kora of Mt. Kailash, the Vak Chakra the Barkor, and the Kaya Chakra the 1400 km road of the North Route and the South Route, the "Outermost Kora". The guardians on the Samaya Chakra represent the passes on the access routes. Hence, the Chakrasamvara Mandala can be regarded as a symbolic presentation of the access routes to Mt. Kailash and the pilgrimage site with its various koras, thus as a spiritual map for the pilgrim on the Kailash Pilgrimage.

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- Kyabje Trijang Dorje Chang: „The Ecstatic Dance of Chakrasamvara“, translated by David Gonzales, Dechen Ling Press, Seattle, 2013

³⁵ For personal information see page 40

Mt. Kailash in the *Kālachakra* Tantra

Niraj Kumar³⁶, Society for Asian Integration, India

The Kālachakra Tantra (KCT) is the last major Buddhist Tantrik text written in India. This book has left indelible mark over different regions of Asia in last thousand years of its journey. Kālachakra Tantra has fascinated Mongol Court and the last Czar King. Unlike other world-religions which claim monopoly over Truth, Kālachakra philosophy propagates grand synthesis of epistemic horizons and provides a proto-template for computational transcendence. The text is replete with references to Kalki Kings and Śambhāla. This text is also a repository of different disciplines of knowledge extant at that time like astronomy, geography, alchemy, armament technology, and mathematics. In the first two sections of the text, several references have been made about the Mt. Kailāsh. This presentation will look at description of Asian geography in the text and its 11th century commentary with Mt. Kailash at the centre. References to Mt Kailāsh in soteriological narrative of a post-apocalyptic world to be led by Kalki's two sons will also be discussed.

³⁶ For personal information see page 23

The Physics of ‘Rainbow Body’

Susan Griffith-Jones³⁷, Great Britain / India

The attainment of ‘Rainbow Body’, the intentional dissolution of the physical body, is the highest of any spiritual tradition. For Tibetan Buddhists, whose practise and insight evolve during a process of training that lasts many years if not a lifetime, achieving a ‘Rainbow Body’ is considered the pinnacle of development of their spiritual senses. But what is the actual process of becoming a body of light? How does the solid, material body of a human being dissolve into nothing but thin air, leaving only one’s hair and nails? There is a precise ancient method that teaches the process of this seeming miracle, which would have been also practised in the old kingdom of Zhang Zhung that incorporates the holy Kailash mountain, where practitioners of lore would have spent their days tuning themselves to specific vibrations and frequencies to provoke their attainment of ‘Rainbow Body’.

³⁷ For personal information see page 19

Previous Conferences

1. International Conference on the Phenomenon of the Holy Mt. Kailash “The Phenomenon of Kailas and its Role in Human Evolution”, Moscow, Russia, 4/12-13/2014, <http://en.icr.su/work/conferencies/kailas-2014/index.php>
2. International Conference on the Phenomenon of the Holy Mt. Kailash “The Phenomenon of Kailas and its Role in the Evolution of Human Development”, Moscow, Russia, 3/21-22/15, <http://en.icr.su/work/conferencies/kailas-2015/index.php>
3. International Conference on the Phenomenon of the Holy Mt. Kailash “Assembly of Kailas - The Way of the Spiral of Unity”, Varna, Bulgaria, 3/18-20/2016, <http://www.mt-kailash.ru/english-version/press-release-from-01-april-2016-on-the-third-international-conference-dedicated-to-mount-kailash-assembly-on-kailash-path-along-the-spiral-of-unity.html>
4. International Conference on the Phenomenon of the Holy Mt. Kailash “Ancient Knowledge of Kailas”, Darchen, Tibet, 5/9/2017, <http://www.mt-kailash.ru/events/conference/2017-forum-ancient-knowledge-of-kailash-2.html>

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