



# TREE PLANTING IN TIBET

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go to The Tibetan Humanitarian  
Tree planting Project  
to continue the work begun by  
Adzom Paylo Rinpoche  
to create a sustainable future  
for the people of  
the Kham Region of Tibet.*

*<http://www.tibetantreeproject.org:80/>*

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Head-on on Irwin Road, near Emerisa  
Gardens, found an amethyst,  
fractured, peered in, saw Arya Tara

and Coyote  
I know just enough to know  
I know enough to know  
I just don't know

so, I'll only comment,  
"I'll let this go without comment."

Moving to the ghost dance  
moving to drum and wind  
midnight visages under a Shinto moon  
Zephyr rustling the buffalo grass  
my tent covered  
    with tarantula-sized  
spiders

The Medicine Man says,  
"Let me see one. I've heard about those."

Heideggerian questions:  
how to breathe? how to fuck? how to know?

I count seven dancers in the Sun Dance,  
    the first day on Pine Ridge  
including my son, Theo  
    22 on the last day, counting helpers  
The Medicine Man pierces for two women  
    who have cancer  
    pierced deep— broke both the harness  
    and the pins  
tied up again  
and had to be tackled to break free  
thanked the women,  
    Then, he dressed as a clown and  
danced backwards spurting water—  
danced around every dancer, teasing

"What do you think of the teasing round?"  
"Not much, by that time I'm there,  
I'm not much tempted to drink."

You know it'll soon be over.  
The clown is a nuisance,  
more for the audience.  
Still, that guy sure  
could dance.”

Tantra and Sundance—  
    once you've committed,  
you're hooked, it's a one-way trip  
    you're a snake in a bamboo tube  
no way to wiggle backwards  
After doing a bhumi of guru mantra  
my Lama has somehow become my super-ego  
traded up from a hodgepodge to clear light  
I think of him, and I think of a mother hen  
with her chicks in a giant oak's shade  
Quantum physics is @ probabilities  
have to think real small  
details

The world of waves & particles  
the rock Dr. Johnson kicked  
strolling arm in arm w/Bishop Berkeley  
“Refute that!”  
Boswell witnessed

Apollo and Dionysus  
take snapshots of Gaia on a recliner  
this odalisque uncurses my curses  
sets me to rise to apotheosis

Adzom checks the spot on the top of my head  
where the kasalla grass was inserted  
    during the powa ritual  
I tell him my mother says  
she doesn't want a special ceremony  
when she dies, just a closed coffin  
and a simple burial

Adzom asks, sternly  
“Who you gonna listen to  
your lama or your mama?”

Moving on to tree-planting Tibet

How many universes are there?  
I planted on Mount Saint Helens after she erupted  
I planted on Mount Baker in a deluge  
I have planted up the Trail of Tears

And from heaven came  
stubborn timber

Can there be emptiness without awareness?  
Imagine a tree falling and no one hearing it  
Imagine its twisted limbs

The trees arrange themselves  
I have nothing to do with this

And I suppose a forest  
planted in rows is better  
than no forest at all

We plant in the region of Kham  
in the snowy lands of Eastern Tibet

Opportunities like this are exceedingly rare  
How much for a few trees?  
The cost of a pot of tea at Infusions  
A tank of gas for my new red pickup  
The lama has the labor—monks  
whom he protects  
and who are *never apart*  
*from this glorious lama's feet*

Here we are on Diamond Hill

We wake at 4, do our Ngondro  
Bag up at 6  
Climb a mountain  
    deforested by the Chinese 60 years ago

The air thin at 10,000 feet  
treeline is at the scree just ahead

O, mama, is there hope for these trees?

Manjushri instructs the treeplanters  
Watch those scalps  
Keep an eye on spacing  
Don't plant too deep  
No J roots  
I only want to see asses and elbows

We plant ahead of progress rates  
We plant trees for free  
and we come back  
and back again  
    until they grow  
the trees—  
out of their depth  
with this logic  
debated about by tulkus  
like dots on a map

Green fire is the future— an oasis of trees  
to spontaneously arise  
    Take a turn and look  
    at the next century  
        spread your tail feathers  
turn again  
    there's no way into the future but flight

in the meantime

LEARN TO LIVE COMFORTABLY  
IN HELL

and believe me, a treeplanter can be  
comfortable in Hell

Ah, Swift Tara, Lady of my thoughts  
I see your profile in this moonlit rock

Honor and praise  
*OM Chag Tsal Jetsun Tare*  
Save us all from suffering  
*Tutare Yi Dung Wa Kunchob*

Ah, Tara, a strange place to be in such a skimpy outfit  
and the field vibrating with the spirits of young trees  
two-year-old Ponderosa pine,  
2-0s, they're trying, but it's hard

Underground the work gets done  
with a whispered *OM* to go on

#### WHERE ON THE PAPER CHAIN ARE YOU?

flaky footing in the rocky outcroppings  
above the spring Rinpoche caused to come forth  
miraculously  
in this sacred place  
wind cold, cold snow, a bitch  
but it packs well around the pine plugs

We're trying to plant in a week  
what, destroyed in a day  
took hundreds of years to grow

Clear cut 60 years ago—  
and in 60 years, let's hope locals will cut it again  
with prayer flags fluttering above the great monastery  
Orgyen Samten Ling

I hear a little voice: "I want my forest cut into woodchips  
so my grandchildren can have toilet paper."

This is neither a forest nor a farm, it's a war

Green fire on the battlefield  
sustainable forestry on this earth  
We're maybe only a jillian trees  
behind

Welcome to the Forests of Many Abuses  
Breathe into the pain  
or get out of the way

On this moonscape I gain  
stability and confidence  
in my practice  
Some trees I dedicate  
to all sentient beings  
some to the dharmapalas, who protect this mountain

Putting the right tree in the right hole  
and while picking rocks  
made of snot and dust out of my nose  
the gecko, the disciplinarian, walks up  
and raises his stick  
“Stop, stop, don't throw those rocks down the slope  
you're hurting the trees!”

Fantasy of pushing the gecko off a cliff      very bad karma  
—lost in a pause—  
Where should I be on the line?  
always a mystery

Outside the orbit of stars  
lost and found inside  
myself  
creation arises and dis-  
solves  
in a magical display

