



TREE PLANTING IN TIBET

Jampa Dorje

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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

