

# D I S K U S

The Journal of the British Association for the Study of Religions ([www.basr.ac.uk](http://www.basr.ac.uk))  
ISSN: 0967-8948

*Diskus* 17.3 (2015), 18-39

## **The Innovative *Stūpa* Project in Andalusia, Spain: A Discussion on Visual Representations of Tibetan Buddhist Art in Europe**

Eva Seegers

Numata Center of Buddhist Studies, University of Hamburg, Germany

[eseegers@gmx.de](mailto:eseegers@gmx.de)

### **ABSTRACT**

*Stūpas* are among the most characteristic and widespread visual representations of Buddhism symbolising the mind of the Buddha (*dharmakāya*). They have been built in Asia for more than 2500 years and over the past decades also in many other countries around the world. One of the largest *stūpas* in the Western world is situated in Spain, at the Costa del Sol in Andalusia highlighting the integration of Buddhism in Europe. The 108 ft. (33m) accessible monument provides space for public lectures on Buddhism. It hosts exhibitions, gives visitors the possibility to meditate regularly, and has thus become part of the local tourist trail. This paper identifies some key-issues which arise when such exotic monuments are transplanted to a new cultural context. When a *stūpa* is transferred to Europe is it likely that its architecture, its traditional meaning and religious significance remains the same? What about local new interpretations and sustainable construction innovations? This paper argues that a *stūpa* is a visual representation of timeless Buddhist values which may support specific needs in contemporary society. Furthermore, it aims to provide a fresh perspective into how cultural and religious transmissions take place.

**Key-words:** Translocation, religious art and architecture, globalisation, sustainability, contemporary Buddhist art in Europe, innovation, local new-interpretation

### **Conventions used in this Essay**

Following the guidelines of *Diskus*, which is intended for a wide scholarly audience, the Tibetan terms are given in phonetic transcription based on the *THL Simplified Phonetic Transcription of Standard Tibetan* by Germano and Tournadre (2003). At the first occurrence of a Tibetan word, the transliteration in italics is enclosed in brackets and follows the international standards (Wylie, 1959); occasionally the Sanskrit form written in diacritics is also given.

\*\*\*

## Introduction

This paper seeks to contribute to debates about the translocation and local new interpretations of religious Buddhist art and architecture in Europe.

It is well known that the Tibetan Buddhist *stūpa* is a specific religious architectural structure, which has been built in the Himalayas since the 7<sup>th</sup> century but is relatively new in Europe. The first part is a literature type review of the research on basic facts about *stūpas*. It includes an overview about the history of *stūpas* in Europe based on the author's Ph.D. thesis. The second part focuses on the following questions: When a *stūpa* is transferred to Europe, is it likely that its architecture, its traditional meaning and religious significance remains the same? What about local new interpretations and sustainable construction innovations? The discussion and analysis is based on a special case study carried out in Spain: a rather large, innovative *stūpa* initiated by a non-Buddhist mayor but constructed by an international Buddhist community.

## Current State of Research

The reception and interpretation of Buddhist art and architecture produced today becomes increasingly the focus of public and scholarly interest. Publications like *The Images of Tibet in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries* (Esposito, ed., 2008) explore visual representations of Tibetan art and other topics from a global point of view. Tibetan contemporary art appeared in the international galleries and museums in the first decade of the twenty-first century and since then the tension between tradition and modernity has continuously followed the Tibetan artists. (Harris, 2012, pp. 207–237). However, Tibet is better known for the production of religious artwork like scroll paintings (*thangka*; *thang ka*), sculptures (*kudra*; *sku 'dra*) and *stūpas* (*chöten*; *mchod rten*). The creativity of the artist is not as important for the composition of an image as it is for non-religious art. It is rather his knowledge of the required iconographic design-vocabulary and the iconometric principles that create proper Tibetan artwork. Research on Tibetan texts dealing with art like Cüppers, van der Kuijp and Pagel (eds., 2012) or Jackson (1996) is crucial for the understanding of the traditional production-methods and the symbolic meaning of Buddhist art and architecture. The old tradition of Indo-Tibetan art which is in the focus of art-historians like Klimburg-Salter (2005), Amy Heller (1999), Christian Luzcanits (2004) and many others is mostly retained until today.

In recent times more and more skilled European artists have learned how to produce traditional Tibetan art. It is obvious that the increasing Buddhist art production by “Westerners” goes hand-in-hand with the growing interest in Buddhism and the cultural interactions between Asia and Europe. This paper argues that the relatively new phenomenon of Buddhist art and architecture produced by Europeans, should be examined with the same attention as it is applied for Buddhist art in Asian countries. Scholarly discussions about these various spheres of artistic production is a relatively new field and requires more focus. It has to be built up on the research on ancient traditional Tibetan art mentioned above and on Buddhism in the West which is a part of Religious Studies (e.g. Batchelor 1994; Baumann and Prebish 2002).

The study of Buddhist *stūpas* so far has never become a separate discipline in itself but during the last two centuries *stūpas* have become objects of interest for scholars of various academic disciplines like Archaeology, Architecture, Art History, Religious

Studies, Indology, Sinology, and Tibetology. As Hawkes and Shimada (2009, pp. xiii–xiv) state, these disciplines analyse them under their respective research approach and thus shape the view of the *stūpa* immensely. We find a large number of academic studies and essays on ancient *stūpas* in Asia<sup>1</sup> but barely anything on *stūpas* in Europe. Research on the transferral of *stūpas* to a variety of Western countries has just started recently (for New Zealand and Australia see McAra, 2007 and 2009). The author of this essay undertook a first stock-taking of more than 220 *stūpas* across Europe partly financed by the Canterbury Christ Church University (Seegers, 2011).

### Methodological Approach

This paper engages in a qualitative, historical-critical and comparative approach. A *stūpa* is a multifaceted piece of art which, from my opinion, requires an interdisciplinary approach as discussed in a broader context for Tibetan and Indo-Tibetan culture by scholars like Klimburg-Salter, Tropper and Jahoda (eds., 2003) or for Indian and Indo-Tibetan sculpture by Luczanits (2011). The classical methods of art history focus on research in iconography and style but in order to fully understand the symbolism and ritual use of *stūpas* the religious approach is very important (Van den Bosch, ed., 1990). Only then are we able to evaluate their symbolic values which are based on Buddhist concepts but may be extended in the course of time. Furthermore, as this paper is about a *stūpa* built in Spain I would like to extend the approach to the question of how the *stūpa* is interpreted by the beholder today.

## PART ONE

### ***Stūpas: The Visual Representations of Buddha's Mind***

The *stūpa* is a visual representation of essential Buddhist concepts. One of the important meanings of *stūpas* is to have soteriological functions just by being visible. Liberation from the circle of existence through the contact with the sense faculties, like “liberation through seeing” (tongdrol; *mthong grol*), is a common practice in Tibetan Buddhism. As explained by Cantwell (2003), *The Tibetan Book of the Dead* (bardo tödrol; *bar do thos grol*) is one of the most well-known examples. It has to be read to a dying person in order to liberate him or her through hearing it (tödrol; *thos grol*).

Traditional Tibetan sources like the *Vaidūrya g.Ya'sel* by Desid Sangye Gyatso (sDe srid Sangs rgyas rGya mtsho)<sup>2</sup> explain the *stūpa* as a representation of the Buddha's mind belonging to the group of the well-known objects of worship which are classified as receptacles of body, speech, and mind of the Buddha (ku sung tuk ten; *sku gsung thugs rten*). Images and scroll paintings are seen as the receptacles of Buddha's physical body (ku ten; *sku rten*). Texts, books, mantras, seed syllables and all written forms of the *dharma* are the receptacles for Buddha's speech (sung ten; *gsung rten*) symbolising his teachings. The mind of the Buddha (tuk ten; *thugs rten*) is represented by a *stūpa*, which is mainly a container for the relics of the Buddha and accomplished masters representing the Buddha. These three visual representations of the Buddha –

---

<sup>1</sup> Exemplary: Tucci, [1932] 1988, Libera-Dallapiccola (ed.), 1980, Lo Bue and Ricca, 1993, Harvey, 1984, Deeg, 2004, Hawkes and Shimada (eds.), 2009, Luczanits, 2010, Skorupski, 2012.

<sup>2</sup> sDe srid Sangs rgyas rGya mtsho, *The Vaidurya g.Ya'sel*, vol. 2, fol. 21r1–30r4.

statues/thangkas, texts, and miniature-*stūpas* – have become important symbols on the Buddhist altars in Asian monasteries and in recent times in Buddhist monasteries and lay-centres around the world.

Where does this tradition come from? It is generally known that these impressive dome-shaped monuments originated from the Indian subcontinent and that they already existed in early Jainism and middle/late Vedic Brahmanism. The earliest explanations on the construction and worship of a Buddhist *stūpa* are said to originate from Buddha Śākyamuni himself. According to the *mahāparinirvāṇa sūtra* (Weber, 1999, p. 230), Buddha told his disciple Ānanda that after his death the corpse should be wrapped in cloth, put in a coffin and then be cremated, as it was a common tradition for a *cakravartin* (ideal universal king). Finally, the bodily relics should be enshrined in a *stūpa* built at a prominent crossroads. In this respect the *stūpa*'s main function is to serve as a reliquary. In doing so, the students of the Buddha would get a proper object of worship after Buddha's passing away.

The beholder can read and experience the visual rhetoric of a *stūpa* also in other ways, as all physical components represent specific key-topics within the Buddhist teachings laid down in the Buddhist canon. Textual sources like the *caitya vinayobhāva sūtra*, cited and translated by several scholars (e.g. Tucci, 1988 [1932]; Dorjee, 1996; Roth, 2009)<sup>3</sup> exactly describe the symbolism of each single part. Furthermore the sections of a *stūpa* form the path to enlightenment (Roth, 2009, p. 14). The Tibetan *stūpa* and thus also the *stūpa* at the Costa del Sol is divided into three parts: The plinth called 'throne' is the *Actual Stūpa* which represents the foundation for the attainment of enlightenment. The *Causal Stūpa* consists of four intermedial terraces in steps leading to an inverted dome called 'vase' and a square element (*harmikā*) above; these parts display the causes for enlightenment. The crowning superstructure with 13 wheels, sun, half-moon and jewel represents the full enlightenment and is called *Resultant Stūpa*.

The *stūpa* is also understood as a representative of Buddha's 'truth body' (*dharmakāya*) (Roth, 2009, pp. 13–22). Among the different categories of relics deposited in *stūpas*, the "relics of the absolute body" symbolising the *dharmakāya* play a major role.<sup>4</sup> As explained by Snellgrove and Richardson (2003, p. 37) the devotees believe that the relics "activate" the *stūpa* to be a real representative of the Buddha. Schopen (2007) states that there was a "functional equivalence of the relic and the living Buddha", therefore "honour or worship done to them should be explicitly equated with honour and worship done to living persons" (p. 131). This is why people have worshipped the *stūpas* for centuries, e.g. by offering all kinds of substances like flowers, candles and incense. By doing so they believe they will gain merit which will lead them to liberation or even to enlightenment. This explains why the *stūpa* plays a key-role as visual representation of Buddhist values and why we find many *stūpas* in different forms across Asia. This tradition has been carried on when the *stūpas* have been transplanted to European countries (Seegers, 2011, pp. 201– 221).

---

<sup>3</sup> In a footnote within my Ph.D., I listed the scholars and editions on which their translations and analysis is based (Seegers, 2011, p. 90, fn. 223).

<sup>4</sup> The five types of relics enshrined in *stūpas* are: relics of the absolute body, mustard-like relics, dharma relics, bodily relics, and indicative relics. On the classification of relics see Bentor, 1994, pp. 16–30; on the relic-cult see Martin, 1994, pp. 273–324.



Fig. 1. 'Eight Great Location *Caityas*', Dengkok, Khams, Eastern Tibet.

The distribution of the ancient dome-shaped *stūpas* in India followed the dissemination of Buddhism starting from the Mauryan Emperor Aśoka (3<sup>rd</sup> cent. BCE) and have spread all over Asia while assuming different shapes. At the Tibetan plateau the 'Eight Great Location *Caityas*' (*aṣṭa mahāsthāna caityas*)<sup>5</sup> became very popular (Fig. 1). They are of Indian origin and were constructed to commemorate the eight great deeds of the historical Buddha which he performed at eight different locations. In this way the *stūpas* are also used as an object of commemoration. The Enlightenment *Stūpa* (*changchub chörten*; *byang chub mchod rten*) is the most frequently built form, a tradition which is pursued in Europe, for example in the *stūpa* at the Costa del Sol, officially opened in 2003. The distribution of *stūpas* in Europe started much earlier.

### The History of *Stūpas* in Europe

A very early approach in erecting Asian architectural structures in Europe emerged from the context of landscape architecture. One of the oldest landscape-pagodas in existence in Europe is the impressive 50m high Chinese pagoda in Kew Gardens, London designed in 1761 by the British architect William Chambers. It is based on the ideals of chinoiserie, a style that represents fanciful European interpretations of Chinese art and architecture (Harris and Snodin, 1996). Another early example is the huge Japanese tower erected in 1905 by the French architect Alexandre Marcel (1860–1928) close to Brussels, Belgium, following the ideals of Japonism.

Tibetan styled *stūpas* had already been erected in Europe for several centuries by the Kalmyks, a Mongolian tribe which from the early seventeenth century on settled in the European part of Russia. In the early nineteenth century Kalmyk temple construction flourished and the number of monasteries at that time reached around 200. Several

<sup>5</sup> See Bagchi, 1941, pp. 223–235. Not to be confused with the so-called relic-*stūpas* or "Droṇa *stūpas*" (Strong, 2007, p. 124). See Pakhoutova (2009) for the commemorative *stūpas* in the medieval art of Tibet.

monasteries contained *stūpas* in the form of individual buildings or on walls or on top of their roofs. Almost all of the Buddhist temples, monasteries, cult objects, and Tibetan religious books in Kalmykia and Buryatia were destroyed during the Second Five-Year Plan (1933–37) and the following years. By 1940 nearly nothing remained of Kalmyk monasteries or *stūpas* (Khodarkovsky, 1992, p. 82, 236). Due to political changes the “Buddhist life” is nowadays developing again. From the 1990s onwards the construction of temples and *stūpas* is increasing. For example a new *stūpa* was built in the capital Elista by Lopön Tsechu Rinpoche (Haderer, 2009, pp. 459–476), who later became the spiritual guide of the *stūpa* at the Costa del Sol.

From the early twentieth century onwards a new approach in constructing *stūpa*-like buildings emerged. One of the first (now demolished) constructions similar to a *stūpa* was erected by one of the pioneers of Buddhism in Germany, Paul Dahlke (1865–1928), on the island of Sylt in Northern Germany before 1924. This building had a very unusual shape but was reported to be a *stūpa* as mentioned by Baumann (1994, pp. 22–26). At the Grünten Mountain in the Allgäu in southern Germany, a memorial for dead soldiers (“Jägerdenkmal”) is shaped similarly to Nepalese monuments (*mahācaityas*). It was erected from 1922–1924 by the architect Bruno Biehler who was inspired by the many *stūpas* he saw in the Kathmandu valley. However, monuments like these have never been traditional *stūpas* as they require the implementation of certain principles of *stūpa*-construction (Seegers, forthcoming).

From 1980 to 1998 the Nipposan-Myōhōji Buddhist Order erected four peace pagodas promoting world peace in Europe. Two in the United Kingdom: 1980 in Milton Keynes and 1985 at Battersea Park, London, one in Austria: 1983 in Vienna and one in Italy: 1998 in Cosimo, Sicily. This innovative *stūpa* type came into existence after World War II as visual representation of the anti-nuclear protests of the Nipposan-Myōhōji Buddhist Order. Worldwide there exist more than 80 peace monuments, most of them in Japan, some in India and Ladakh, Sri Lanka, Europe and USA. (Stone, 2003, pp. 63–94.) Just as an aside, most of these peace pagodas built in the West are administrated by Asian monks. The lay-people, who initiated the construction, stay in the background and hand the pagoda over to dignitaries in robes.

### **Contemporary Tibetan *Stūpas* in Europe**

In the late 1960s and early 1970s people from Europe and the USA met high-ranking Tibetan lamas like the Dalai Lama and the former head of the Karma Kagyu (Karma bKa’ brgyud) school, the 16th Karmapa Rangjung Rigpe Dorje (Karma pa Rang byung rig pa’i rdo rje; 1924–1981) at their exile-seats in Nepal and India. They became their students and invited them to Europe and the USA, which led to the foundation of different Tibetan Buddhist centres and organisations.

As the construction of *stūpas* is a common practice in Buddhism, it is hardly surprising that the Buddhists in Europe also had the wish to build them. Those who initiated the construction of Tibetan *stūpas* across Europe are associated with one of the four major schools of Tibetan Buddhism, namely Nyingma (rNying ma), Sakya (Sa skya), Kagyu (bKa’ brgyud), and Gelug (sGe lugs).

Country	Number of Stūpas	Organisations
Austria	4	DWB
Belgium	3	KSD (1), SDC/TI (2)
Denmark	2	DWB, KWL
France	54	FFCBK (16), SDC (38)
Germany	9	DWB (6), KKV (1), PA (2)
Greece	1	DWB
Hungary	2	DWB, KRDL
Italy	1	KDY
Netherlands	1	KDCPL
Norway	1	KTL
Poland	2	DWB
Russia	3	DWB, PA
Spain	114	DWB (2), KMD (2), SDC (110)
Sweden	1	KDÖL
Switzerland	7	DWB
United Kingdom	17	KSL
16 Countries	222	

Fig. 2. Number of *stūpas* built by Karma Kagyu and Dagshang Kagyu organisations.

The Karma Kagyu and Dagshang Kagyu (Dwags shangs bKa 'brgyud)<sup>6</sup> organisations erected over 220 *stūpas* in 16 countries during the past 35 years as outlined in Fig. 2. The number would increase immensely if the *stūpas* of all Tibetan organisations in Europe were integrated in this study but this remains open for further research projects. The mass of *stūpas* is not accessible reaching heights measuring between 1.08 m and 13 m. They appear as individual buildings standing alone or standing together in groups. Fourteen of them are designed as accessible *stūpas*, so-called walk-in-*stūpas*<sup>7</sup>, and have a size of approximately 11 m to 33 m. The largest monuments are situated in Aubry-le-Panthou, France, 25 m (Fig. 3), and in Benalmádena, at the Costa del Sol in Spain, 33 m (Figs. 8–12).

The late Kalu Rinpoche (Kar lu Rin po che, 1905–1989) inaugurated one of the first *stūpas* in Europe in 1980 shown in Fig. 4. It is located at Dashang Kagyu Ling in Château de Plaige, France. Later more than 35 smaller *stūpas* flanked the central temple, which makes this site together with the 110 *stūpas* of the Spanish monastery Dag Shang Kagyu into the sites with the maximal concentration of *stūpas* in Europe. For the accessible *stūpas* built by the students of Kalu Rinpoche a large contemporary *stūpa* in Salugara, West Bengal, serves as a model. It is not surprising that Kalu Rinpoche founded the Tashi Gomang Shedra in Salugara and that some of the skilled *stūpa*-builders who work now in Europe received their training there.<sup>8</sup> For example, the Bhutanese Lama Sönam Wangchuk erected an impressive *stūpa* at the European headquarter of the Drugpa Kagyu ('Brug pa bKa' brgyud) lineage, a place which is best known under the name Drukpa Plouray located in France (Fig. 5).

<sup>6</sup> See Kapstein (1980, pp. 138–144) on the rather unknown Shangs-pa bKa' brgyud tradition.

<sup>7</sup> I created a new term in order to characterise *stūpas* with an accessible interior: the walk-in-*stūpa*.

<sup>8</sup> Wangchuk, Sönam. *Stūpa*-builder at Dag Shang Kagyu in Panillo, Spain. (Personal communication, 16 July 2009).



Fig. 3. Aubry-le-Panthou, France.

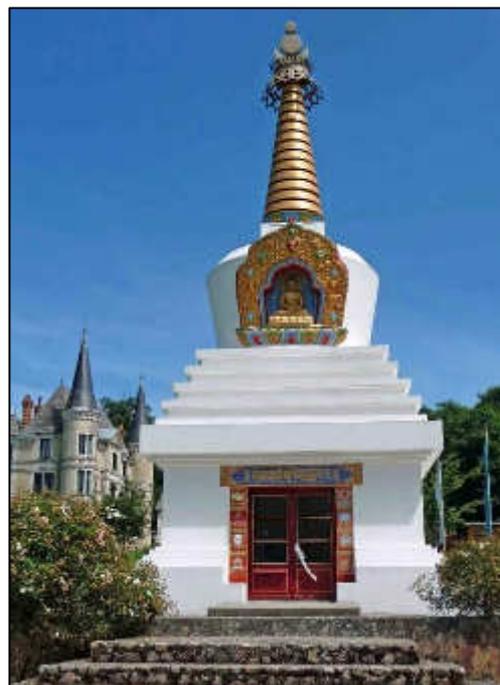


Fig. 4. Château de Plaigne, France.



Fig. 5. Plouray, France.



Fig.6. Søllested, Denmark. Photo courtesy Simon Pruciak.

Another example from the early phase of *stūpas* in Europe is located in Denmark at the Retreat Centre Lolland in Søllested (Fig. 6). It belongs to the Diamond Way Buddhist Centres (DWB) founded by the lay teacher Lama Ole Nydahl and his late wife Hannah Nydahl (1945–2007).<sup>9</sup> The Tibetan master Tenga Rinpoche (bsTan dga' Rin

<sup>9</sup> As cited by Irons (2008, p. 162) the Diamond Way Buddhism is a worldwide Western association of Tibetan Buddhist centers following the Karma Kagyu school. It was founded by Lama Ole Nydahl and his wife Hannah Nydahl, who became one of the first students of the 16th Karmapa. The couple founded more than 640 centers worldwide and in July 2015 were both awarded the annual prize for

po che; 1932– 2012) supervised and inaugurated this *stūpa* in 1982 and marked the starting point of the 27<sup>10</sup> *stūpas* of the DWB centres worldwide.

Two years later, in 1986, Tenga Rinpoche consecrated a large accessible *stūpa* in France at Karma Migyur Ling in Montchardon, Izeron. This is one of the rare sites housing the ‘Eight Great Location *Caityas*’, built in 2001, representing the life of Buddha Śākyamuni (Fig. 7). Two other sets of these eight *caityas* together with one large accessible *stūpa* are located in the United Kingdom (Kagyū Samye Ling, and Holy Isle).

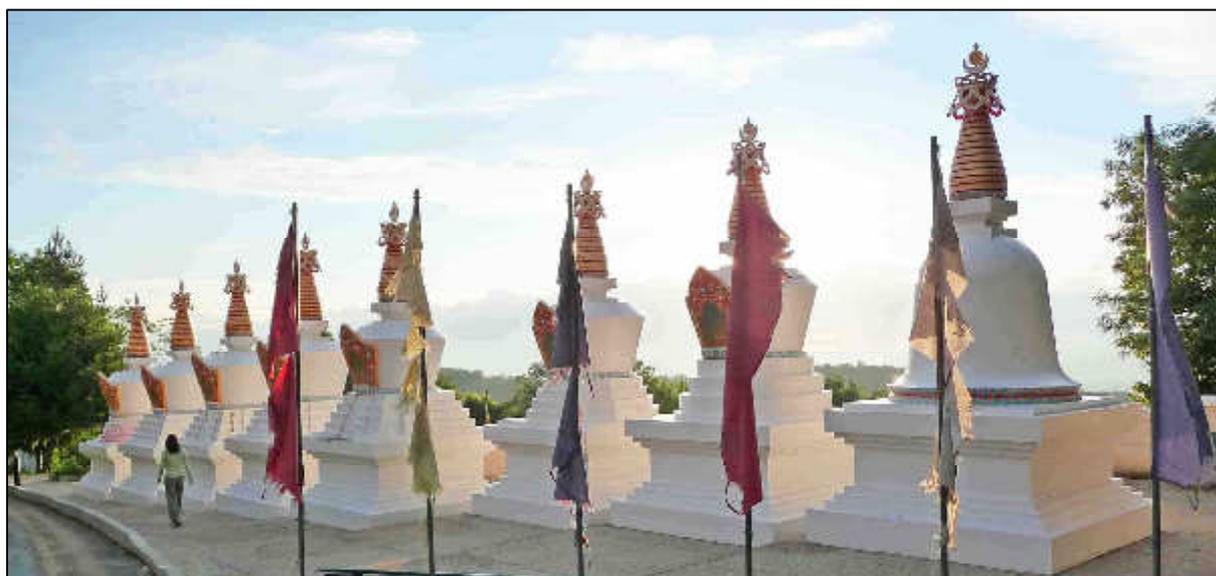


Fig. 7. ‘Eight Great Location *Caityas*’ at Montchardon, Izeron, France.

In 1985 the Dalai Lama inaugurated a small *stūpa* at the well-known Tibet-Institute Rikon in Switzerland. Another *stūpa* built by the Gelugs that should be mentioned here is the rather rare bell-shaped Kadampa *stūpa*, (*bka’ gdams mchod rten*) situated at the Institut Vajra Yogini close to Toulouse in France.

The Nyingma institute Lerab Ling in France, founded in the 1990s by Sogyal Rinpoche (bSod rgyal rin po che; b. 1950), houses a remarkable *stūpa*-ensemble. It is made of white marble and consists of one central *stūpa* surrounded by eight smaller ones.

A striking example for the Sakya organisation is located close to Barcelona in Spain. The accessible *stūpa* was finished in 2002 and is encircled by 108 prayer wheels. Sakya Trinzin recommended building a namgyal chörten (*rnam rgyal mchod rten*) because this type is said to support healing. The residents of the monastery therefore believe that the *stūpa* has “healing activity” which means that anyone who makes offerings to or circumambulates the *stūpa* clockwise will get well.<sup>11</sup> An interesting example of how an existing structure can be adapted to a Buddhist sacred monument is the former laundry that was transformed into a Buddhist shrine containing a *stūpa*. The roofed area of the laundry became decorated with Buddhist symbols and the *stūpa* was placed in the centre. The laundry is crowned by a spire which was filled with consecrated mantra rolls.

---

“Dialogue, Coexistence, Peace” by the UNESCO Association for inter cultural and inter religious dialogue in Málaga.

<sup>10</sup> As of August 2014.

<sup>11</sup> Lopez, S. Buddhist nun at Sakya Tashi Ling, Barcelona (Personal communication, 15th July 2009).

## PART TWO

### The *Stūpa* at the Costa del Sol, Spain

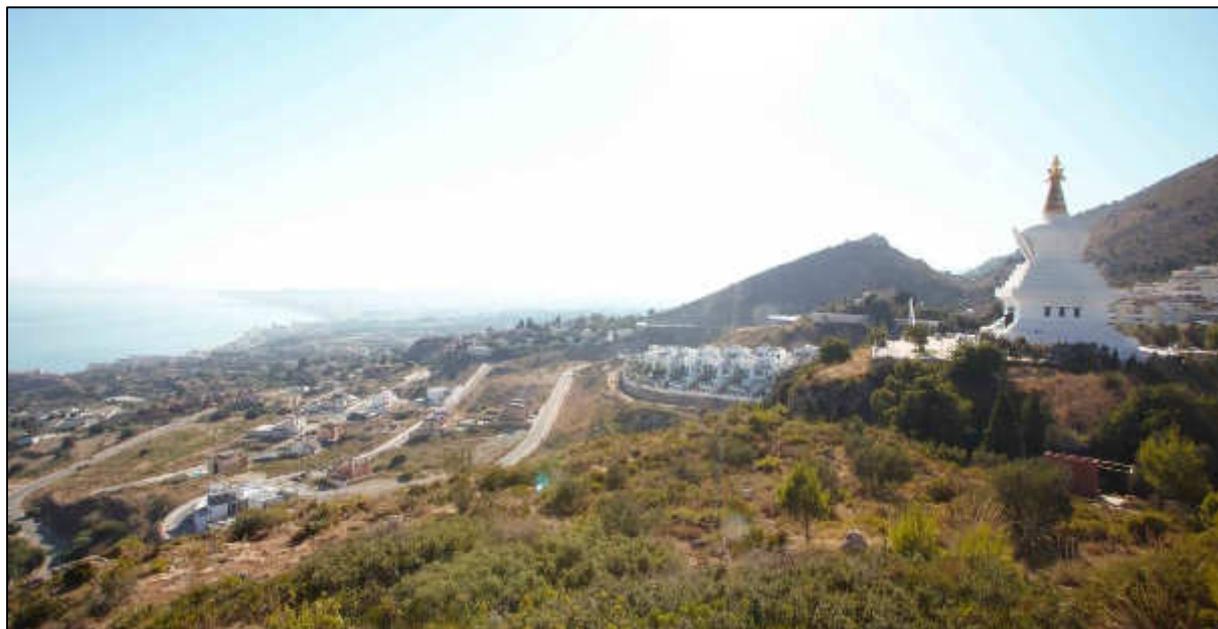


Fig. 8. The *stūpa* at the Costa del Sol, Spain. Photo courtesy Simon Pruciak.

The *stūpa* located in Benalmádena, at the Costa del Sol is an outstanding project in terms of a most innovative design and unique social activities. The monument is 33 m high with a base width of 25.8 m (82 ft.) and hence so far Europe's largest *stūpa* containing a meditation room of more than 100 m<sup>2</sup>. (Figs. 8–12). It is run by the non-profit cultural association Asociación Cultural Karma Kagyu de Benalmádena, under the spiritual guidance of the 17th Karmapa Trinley Thaye Dorje and the presidency of Margarita Lehnert-Kossowski.

The *stūpa* was spiritually supervised by the Nepal-based Bhutanese master Lopön Tsechu Rinpoche (sLob dpon Tse chu rin po che, 1918–2003) and officially inaugurated by the late Shamar Rinpoche (Śwa dmar rin po che, 1952–2014). The opening ceremony was attended by the sister of the Queen Mother of Buthan, Ashi Sonam Choden Dorji, the former Minister of Education and Agriculture of Bhutan, and the former mayor of Benalmádena City, as well as more than 3500 visitors from 38 countries.<sup>12</sup>

The initiator for this project was the former mayor of Benalmádena City, Don Enrique Bolín Pérez-Argemí, who was inspired by the *kālacakra stūpa*<sup>13</sup> erected in the nearby *DWB Retreat Centre Karma Guen* close to Vélez-Málaga. The mayor was invited to the opening ceremony in 1994 and was impressed with the number of visitors. He contacted the people responsible for the *kālacakra stūpa* project and a long-term planning process started.

---

<sup>12</sup> Lehnert-Kossowski, M. President of Asociación Cultural Karma Kagyu de Benalmádena (Personal communication, 8<sup>th</sup> September 2009).

<sup>13</sup> Very rare tantric *stūpa* form.

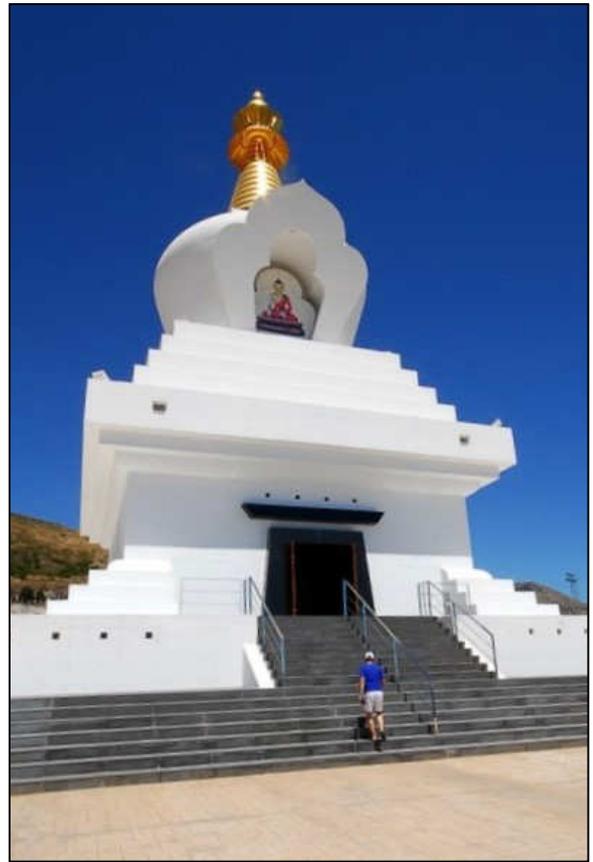


Fig. 9–11. The 108 ft. *stūpa* in Andalusia at the Costa del Sol, Spain. Photo courtesy Greg Smolonski.

The large Buddhist monument at the Costa del Sol is the culmination of the *stūpas* designed by the German based Polish architect Wojtek Kossoski. It is likely that its striking size is influenced by the well-known Svayambhū mahācaitya in Nepal's capital Kathmandu.<sup>14</sup> Finally the construction team decided on a height of 108 feet (33m) which makes it one of the tallest *stūpas* in Europe.

<sup>14</sup> Lehnert-Kossowski, op. cit.

## The Applied Principles of Traditional *Stūpa* Construction

The widely-used term for this *stūpa* is changchub chörten (*byang chub mchod rten*), “Enlightenment Stūpa” because it refers to Buddha’s enlightenment under the Bodhi Tree in Bodh Gayā. It belongs to the ‘Eight Great Location-*Caityas*’ commemorating the eight great deeds of Buddha Śākyamuni which he performed at eight different locations.



Fig. 12. The interior. Photo courtesy Greg Smolonski.

These deeds are depicted on murals in a contemporary version of the Menri (*sMan ris*) tradition<sup>15</sup> (Fig. 12). A *stūpa* is a very complex structure, which cannot be compared to any other historical architecture within European culture. It is more a sculpture carrying Buddhist values than a building and its significance goes far beyond its aesthetic appearance. Tradition has it that there are some fundamental requirements for any *stūpa* project (Seegers, forthcoming).

First of all, the officiant (*vajrācārya*) plays such a significant part that without him the construction of a traditional *stūpa* would not be possible. There are only a few lamas endowed with this expertise either living in Europe or willing to travel to Europe for a single *stūpa*-project. However, the late Bhutanese born and Nepal based Lopön Tsechu Rinpoche guided the project in Spain from the beginning on. He took care about the preparation of the ground and the calculation of the correct timing based on Tibetan geomancy and many other crucial tasks.

The construction of the *stūpa*-body follows certain measurements laid down in traditional construction manuals. Lopön Tsechu Rinpoche read from a hand-written description of the modular system by the 15th Karmapa Khakyab Dorje (Karma pa Kha' kyab rdo rje; 1871–1922) which he received personally from his successor, the 16th

<sup>15</sup> For the later *sMan ris* traditions of Khams see Jackson, 1996, pp. 328–336.

Karmapa.<sup>16</sup> The architect drew up the *stūpa*-plan based on this text: for whatever size the *stūpa* is planned, the total height from the foundation to the top is divided into sixty-four equal small units (*cha chung*) and the width into forty small units.

Furthermore, Lopön Tsechu Rinpoche put strong emphasis on the proper filling consisting of two specific *maṅḍalas* including the corresponding offerings.<sup>17</sup> As the construction of *stūpas* is always bound to a larger system of rituals, Lopön Tsechu Rinpoche took very much care about all necessary rituals. Finally, when the construction and the filling was completed, a special consecration ritual (*rapne*; *rab gnas*) which transforms visual representations into sacred or “holy” objects had to be performed. This final consecration ritual was performed at October 5, 2003 by Shamar Rinpoche as Lopön Tsechu Rinpoche passed away before the *stūpa* was finished.

### Innovations in Design and Construction

The officiant Lopön Tsechu Rinpoche was inspired by the National Memorial Chörten located in Bhutan’s capital Thimphu (Fig. 13), when it came to the drawing of the plan together with the architect Kossowski.



Fig. 13. The National Memorial Chörten, Thimphu, Bhutan.

The Spanish *stūpa* (Figs. 8–12) shows a number of striking differences which has two major reasons. On the one hand the officiant decided not to adopt all the characteristics

<sup>16</sup> Kossowski, W. Architect. (Personal communication, 31<sup>st</sup> July 2010); for the analysis of the text see Seegers forthcoming.

<sup>17</sup> The *Stainless Uṣṇīṣa Sūtra* (*gTsug gtor Dri med mdo*) and the *Stainless Light Sūtra* (*’Od zer dri med kyi mdo*) and their respective offerings as outlined in these *sūtras*. (Seegers, 2011, p. 270).

of the Bhutanese monument. He even wanted the architect to re-draw the plan of the monument several times. One of the drafts shows an accessible viewing platform at the dome similar to the National Memorial Chörten, but this plan was revised.<sup>18</sup>

On the other hand, Kossowski's main concern was to create an innovative Buddhist architectural structure for "modern man" meaning, a functional type of building, without any old-fashioned historical decoration. He therefore designed a more geometric-style *stūpa*, devoid of all ornamentation, but with creative elements inserted at key points in otherwise repetitive designs. In other words he reduced the *stūpa* form to its basic function: to be a proper object of worship. His aim was to design a *stūpa* which is meant to attract people in modern society. One of his major technical innovations was the integration of a lift allowing disabled people to visit the exhibition in the basement.

The *stūpa* at the Costa del Sol is the culmination of Kossowski's *stūpas* in the West. Since 1994 the architect has planned and guided at least 17 *stūpas* in Europe and one in Mexico. Right from the beginning, he changed some details like the shape of the 'sun' (*nyi ma*) on the very top of the structure: the traditional flat disc became a three dimensional sun-ball. Kossowski<sup>19</sup> claimed that for him a ball is more appropriate than a disc as a depiction of the sun because we live in three-dimensional space. It is likely that modifications like transforming a disc into a ball can cause a shift in meaning as the disc could also be interpreted as a mirror.

However, the most characteristic renewals are the simplification of the ornaments and the use of only two colours which is completely different from today's *stūpas* built by exiled Tibetans in their homes in Nepal, Bhutan and India. When made of reinforced concrete, Kossowski paints the *stūpa*-bodies white, or when built with natural stone, he leaves the stone surface as it is. The superstructures and sometimes the frame of the vase door are golden. In Benalmádena the perron is black.

In its formative years this basic *stūpa* architecture caused some irritation, even to Lopön Tsechu Rinpoche who thought the initiators were running out of money. Kossowski explained to Lopön Tsechu Rinpoche, that he wanted to build a *stūpa* which was not overloaded with ornamentation. Kossowski claimed that Western people have a different aesthetic sense. Historical aesthetics in Asia focus on ornamentation and a multitude of colouration as being extremely beautiful. In the West designers and architects try to create beauty using less ornamentation and colour. Lopön Tsechu Rinpoche answered that if Western people hold these views, he would accept the new design.<sup>20</sup> Kossowski often had to fight to gain support for and understanding of his modern outlook on the way in which *stūpas* could be shaped. In most cases the local initiators thought that there was no space for interpretation and every detail would have to be adopted from the Asian forms.

Kossowski was definitely inspired by the aesthetic language of the Bauhaus, a German school of design which influenced or even dominated the twentieth century architecture. Pevsner ([1936] 2005) and others promoted the Bauhaus as an ideal interpreting it as the *Modernist* educational academy *par excellence*. Its founder and most important representative, the architect Walter Gropius (1883-1969), created a

---

<sup>18</sup> Lehnert-Kossowski, op. cit.

<sup>19</sup> Kossowski, W., op. cit.

<sup>20</sup> The Tibetan aesthetics versus the Western aesthetics is analysed by Lo Blue (2008, pp. 687–704).

modern and unique design style which later became known as the International Style of Modern Architecture and spread to the United States, where it was developed by Mies van der Rohe and others. The fundamental characteristics of Gropius's architecture, which we find also in Kossowski's *stūpas*, are rational order and absolute geometrical simplicity including important technical solutions.

Nevertheless, Kossowski always respected the traditional instructions from Lopön Tsechu Rinpoche. All his *stūpa* projects carefully follow the traditional measurements laid down by the 15th Karmapa, but he was free to choose the building material, colour and ornamentation. Here Kossowski transposed some of the principles of contemporary architecture to the construction of *stūpas* by using modern methods of building and building materials. Because of this beneficial collaboration, between architect and *stūpa* master, it is guaranteed that these innovative *stūpas* still follow the required principles which make them authentic objects of worship (Seegers, forthcoming).

### Discussion on the *Stūpa*'s Social Integration and Activities

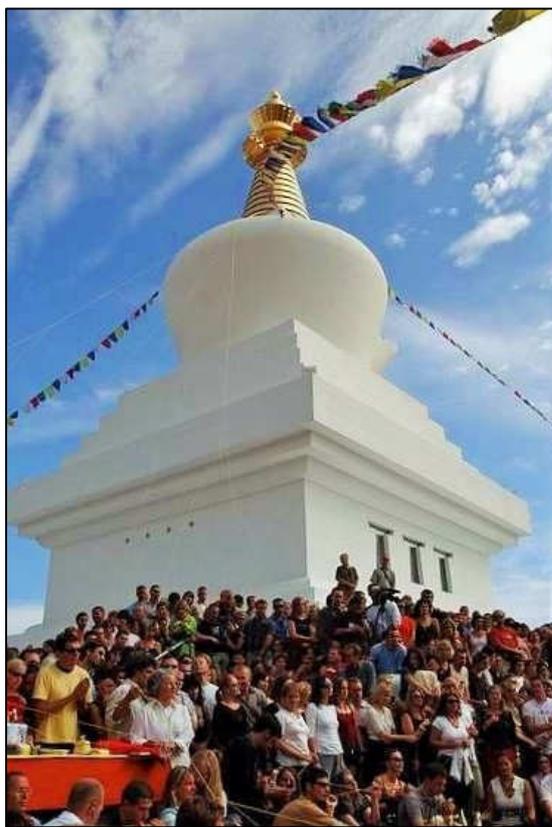
During the first year after completion about 200.000 national and international people visited the *stūpa* which can easily be seen from the motorway close by and from the coast. On account of its exceptional and exotic shape in contrast to the local buildings many people are attracted to it. The Buddhist monument is on the tourist trail and also a lot of non-Buddhists visit the monument. In this way the *stūpa* fulfills its traditional function to liberate sentient beings by just being visible.



Fig. 14. European Buddhists meditate inside the *stūpa* regularly.

If the people are interested, they can participate in weekly guided meditation sessions inside the *stūpa* and are welcome to individually meditate there anytime. The regular public talks on Buddhist topics are well attended. A souvenir shop outside the *stūpa* is

stocked with Tibetan artifacts and books on Buddhism and the income from the shop provides the maintenance of the *stūpa*.



Figs. 15. and 16. An appliqué thangka (15 m x 12 m) was unrolled at the rear of the *stūpa*.

Since completion in 2003 at least one major Buddhist event drawing from several hundred up to 2000 people has taken place every year. High ranking Tibetan lamas regularly visit the *stūpa* to provide teachings and to perform so-called empowerments, special tantric Vajrayāna rituals. In 2006 a large appliqué thangka (dredrupma; *dras drub ma*), depicting Padmasambhava and his eight aspects together with his two main consorts Yeshe Tsogyal (Ye shes mtsho rgyal) and Mandarava (Man da ra ba), was displayed at the rear of the *stūpa* in the presence of more than 1000 visitors. This thangka is made of silk and had been hand-made in Bhutan, a process which had taken two years to complete. The unrolling of large-size thangkas for special occasions is a common tradition in Tibet and Bhutan (Figs. 15. and 16.)

This *stūpa* is valued by European Buddhists as a Buddhist “power-field”<sup>21</sup> and they enjoy meditating there and circumambulating while making wishes or reciting mantras. A major innovation is the use of the basement as a venue for exhibitions on various subject areas in the field of Tibetan art and architecture. One of the exhibitions was entitled “The Stūpas around the World – their Deep Symbolism and Meaning” and displayed a model of the *stūpa* showing its interior and filling.

In 2004 the *stūpa* was awarded with two important prizes. In the category of the most unique work in terms of economic development accomplished in Málaga, the technical team, led by architect Wojtek Kossowski, was selected for their *stūpa* project and

<sup>21</sup> A modern term for *maṅḍala*.

awarded the 1st prize for the province by the Financiera y Minera Arquitectura Construcción de Málaga. In the category of the most innovative design with unique social activities, the 1st prize from Málaga province was awarded to the *stūpa*.<sup>22</sup> The comparison with the winners of the second and third prizes –the newly built Picasso museum at Málaga and the new extension of Málaga airport– puts the true significance of this award for the *stūpa* into perspective.

When *stūpas* are transplanted to modern Europe the question arises whether their symbolic meanings, religious values and significance remain unchanged or if local new interpretations can be observed. The author of this essay proved that the explored *stūpas* carry on the traditional meaning of the Tibetan *stūpas*: being a representation of the mind of the Buddha and the *dharmakāya* which is used by European Buddhists as an object of worship and an object of commemoration, as well as a reliquary. Additionally, it became quite common for the surveyed Tibetan *stūpas* in Europe to be seen as monuments promoting world peace similar to the peace pagodas of Nichiren. Stone (2003, p. 81) claims that this emphasis does not only originate in the Lotus Sūtra or in the teachings of Nichiren “but has been shaped by more recent historical circumstances.”

An inscription on the huge *stūpa* in France, at Dachang Vajradhara Ling, explains that the *stūpa* was erected “to promote worldwide peace and happiness”. The Drikung Kagyus erected a *stūpa* in Medelon Germany which is meant to foster peace. This is mirrored in a wooden “peace column” with the inscription “May Peace prevail on Earth”. Another example is located in Oslo, Norway where the people from Karma Tashi Ling define their *stūpa* (constructed in 2005) on the web as “peace stupa”.<sup>23</sup> In Belgium the Tibetan Institute Yeunten Ling presents its 16m *stūpa* on the web as a “beautiful monument of peace”.<sup>24</sup> During research on-site, the residents told me, that another motivation was to protect the area from the nearby nuclear power plant. In the Netherlands in the small village of Hantum, close to the North Sea, a huge *stūpa* was erected in 1992 specifically to protect the country from a forecast atomic war. In the Tibetan cultural realm it was quite common to build *stūpas* in order to protect the area and its inhabitants from all kinds of negative influences. The European Buddhists adopt this function by extending it to their actual needs.

In one special case (Bremen, Northern Germany) the symbolism of the *stūpa* was even extended to a symbol for environmentalism, an icon for religious freedom and for educating people on a foreign culture. In Bremen non-Buddhists initiated a *stūpa* in a Rhododendron Park with the support of the local Karma Kaygu centre. It's a different kind of dialogue which may have to do in some aspects with a romantic view on Tibet or the Himalayas. This implies the idea of reconstructing typical Asian settings in a new cultural context for the purpose of showing the diversity of the various cultural areas. However, the majority of *stūpas* are free from these extended concepts. Rather their main function is to support Buddhist practice and the transition of Tibetan Buddhism from Asia to Europe. This shows that it is likely that in a new cultural context these ancient Buddhist monuments could adopt some contemporary meanings without losing their traditional functions – if their construction carries on the traditional key-principles of *stūpa* construction (Seegers, forthcoming).

---

<sup>22</sup> Lehnert-Kossowski, op. cit.

<sup>23</sup> Karma Tashi Ling (2008).

<sup>24</sup> Tibetaans Instituut Yeunten Ling Huy (no date).

## Concluding Remarks

The large number of contemporary *stūpas*, which have been erected in Europe, demonstrates that *stūpas* are highly important to European Buddhists. Most of the *stūpas* in Europe are shaped similarly to the contemporary *stūpas* of Bhutan and Nepal but a small group of *stūpas* stands out of the mass of traditional shaped monuments.

The artistic highlight is situated at the Costa del Sol in Spain. A striking fact is that although this *stūpa* adopted some of the principles of the German Bauhaus School and is very modern in shape, it still follows the required traditional principles of *stūpa* construction, which create a proper object of worship. Officially initiated by the former mayor of Benalmádena, who wished to attract more tourists in his region, the *stūpa* was built by European-born Buddhists following the Karma Kagyu school of Tibetan Buddhism. Their intention was to support the mayor but at the same time to create a proper object of worship for their religious needs and not a copy of a distinguished artistic monument, which just looks like a *stūpa*. In this respect, the *stūpa* has to be valued as still performing its traditional soteriological function.

The religious significance of the *stūpa* can be compared to those of its models in Asia as Buddhists circumambulate the *stūpa*, and participate in religious activities organised in the vicinity. But as the *stūpa* is located in a completely different cultural context it also becomes an example for the creation of a new religious and secular space. We observed a combination of religious and secular performances: on the one hand European Buddhists meditate inside the *stūpa* and participate in yearly empowerment rituals performed by Tibetan masters. On the other hand the *stūpa*'s significance has become extended in that it is now a meeting point for non-Buddhists who visit the exhibition, listen to the weekly lectures on various Buddhist topics or meet friends and drink coffee in the affiliated café. From a Religious studies approach, this creates the impression that in this respect there is a strong valuing of tradition over innovation. From the Buddhist studies point of view, in fact, this provides evidence for a proper translocation of the construction of Tibetan *stūpas* from East to West.

As religion is interwoven with the cloth of cultural life, conflicts may arise naturally when something new and unusual turns up, like a Buddhist *stūpa* in a rather non-religious or Christian environment. Whenever such exotic religious monuments are transplanted to another culture, it might be challenging for the non-Buddhist people living there. It even may bring about the potential for a contest of religious and secular space. Surprisingly there are not many examples of *stūpas* in European countries causing major problems as the majority was built on private land. Problems may arise, if a *stūpa* is to be built on public ground like in Hamburg, Germany. The wish to erect a *stūpa* in a park sparked a debate over religious symbols in public spaces which ultimately led to the termination of the project (Seegers, 2011, pp.189–200). However, the *stūpa* at the Costa del Sol was well accepted by the local people, even though it is located very close to a Christian pilgrimage site.

That the *stūpa* adopted local new interpretations deserves particular notice. It is seen as a symbol for world peace, which has become quite common for contemporary *stūpas* worldwide. What makes the *stūpa* at the Costa del Sol unique is its well-visited venue for art exhibitions in the basement accessible by a lift. These new levels of

meaning and some additions and innovations in construction and design did not influence its traditional function. Same is with local new-interpretations of other *stūpas* in Europe, like being a safeguard against a nuclear power plant or being a symbol for human rights standing up for religious freedom. The European Buddhists adopted the traditional functions of a *stūpa* by extending them to their actual needs. In this respect it is likely that a *stūpa* built in Europe serves not only as a visual representation of timeless Buddhist values but supports the specific needs of the country.

It has to be highlighted that the *stūpa* at the Costa del Sol is an outstanding example for a successful transfer of Buddhist visual representations into a new cultural and religious environment. This unique piece of religious architecture has the potential to be the actual starting point of what could be called 'contemporary European *stūpa* architecture.' When the key-principles of *stūpa* construction are retained, the crucial innovations and improvements may lead to sustainable *stūpa* construction methods worldwide. We should keep an eye on further developments.

\*\*\*

Unless otherwise stated, all photographs were taken by the author.

## Abbreviations

DWB	Diamond Way Buddhism Centres
FFCBK	Fédération Française des Centres Bouddhistes Karma Kagyu
KDÖL	Karma Dechen Ösel Ling, Sweden (Fellingbrö)
KDCPL	Karma Deleg Chö Phel Ling, Netherlands (Hantum)
KDY	Karma Dechen Yangtse, Italy (Bordo)
KKV	Karma Kagyü Verein, Germany
KMD	Karmapa Mikyö Dorje, Spain
KRDL	Karma Ratna Dargye Ling, Hungary (Tar)
KSL	Kagyü Samye Ling, United Kingdom
KTL	Karma Tashi Ling, Norway (Oslo)
KWL	Karma Wangchuk Ling, Denmark (Gedstedt)
KSD	Kagyü Samye Dzong, Belgium
SDC	Centres and Monasteries of Samdrub Darjay Choling
TI	Tibetaan Institute, Belgium
PA	Private or public authorities

## References

- Bagchi, P. C. (1941) 'The Eight Great Caityas and their Cult', *The Indian Historical Quarterly*, vol. 17, 2, pp. 223–235.
- Batchelor, S. (1994) *The Awakening of the West. The Encounter of Buddhism and Western Culture*. Berkeley, California, Parallax Press and London: Aquarian, Harper & Collins.
- Baumann, M. (1994) 'Ein Buddhistisches Denkmal auf Sylt', *Lotusblätter*, vol. 2, pp. 22–26.
- Baumann, M. and Prebish, Ch. S. (eds.) (2002) *Westward Dharma. Buddhism beyond Asia*, London, University of California Press.

- Bentor, Y. (1994) 'Tibetan Relic Classifications', in Kvaerne (ed.) *Tibetan Studies, Proceedings of the 6th Seminar of the International Association for Tibetan Studies*, Fagernes 1992, Oslo, The Institute for Comparative Research in Human Culture, pp. 13–60.
- Cantwell, C. (2003) *The Dance of the Guru's Eight Aspects*, [online] Available from: [http://asiatica.org/ijts/vol1\\_no2/dance-gurus-eight-aspects/](http://asiatica.org/ijts/vol1_no2/dance-gurus-eight-aspects/) (Accessed 12 February 2015)
- Cüppers, C. and van der Kuijp, L. and Pagel, U. (eds.) (2012) *Handbook of Tibetan Iconometry: A Guide to the Arts of the 17<sup>th</sup> Century*. Leiden and Boston: Brill.
- Deeg, M. (2004) 'Legend and Cult. Contributions to the History of Indian Buddhist Stūpas, Part 1: the Stūpa of Kanīṣka', *Buddhist Studies Review*, vol. 21, 1, pp. 1–34.
- sDe srid Sangs rgyas rGya mtsho *The Vaidurya g.ya'sel of sDe srid Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho*. vol. 2, New Delhi, T. Tsepel Taikhang, 1971.
- Diez de Velasco, F. (2009) 'Buddhism in Spain', in Abenayake, O., Tilakaratne, A. (eds.) *2600 Years of Sambuddhatva. Global Journey of Awakening*. Sri Lanka, Ministry of Buddhasasana and Religious Affairs Government of Sri Lanka, pp. 483–494.
- Dorjee, P. (1996) *Stupa and its Technology. A Tibeto-Buddhist Perspective*. New Delhi, Shri Jainendra Press.
- Esposito, M. (ed.) (2008) *Images of Tibet in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries*, Paris: École française d'Extrême-Orient
- Germano, D., Tournadre, N. (2003) *THL Simplified Phonetic Transcription of Standard Tibetan*, [online] Available from <http://www.thlib.org/reference/transliteration/#!essay=/thl/phonetics/> (Accessed 28 February 2015).
- Goldstein, M. C., Kapstein, M. T. (1998) *Buddhism in Contemporary Tibet. Religious Revival and Cultural Identity*. Berkley, Los Angeles, London, University of California Press.
- Haderer, E. (2009), 'The Representation of the Sixteen Karmapas in the Stupa of Elista/ Kalmykia', in *Proceedings of the International Conference Vajrayana Buddhism in Russia: History and Modernity*. St. Petersburg, Unlimited Space. pp. 459–476.
- Harris, C. (2012) 'The Invention of Tibetan Contemporary Art', in *The Museum on the Roof of the World: Art, Politics, and the Representation of Tibet*. Chicago and London, University of Chicago Press.
- Harris, J., Snodin, M. (eds.) (1996) *Sir William Chambers. Architect to George III*. Yale University Press.
- Harvey, P. (1984) 'The Symbolism of the Early Stūpa', *The Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies*, vol. 7, 2, pp. 67–93.
- Hawkes, J., Shimada, A. (eds.) (2009) *Buddhist Stupas in South Asia. Recent Archaeological, Art- Historical and Historical Perspectives*. SOAS Studies on South Asia. Oxford, Oxford University Press.
- Heller, A. (1999) *Tibetan Art. Tracing the Development of Spiritual Ideals and Art in Tibet 600–2000 AD*, Milano, Jaca Books.
- Herzog, M. (2014) *The Life of Buddha. The Enlightenment Stupa in Benalmádena and its Precious Wall Paintings*. Benalmádena Pueblo: Asociación Cultural Karma Kagyu de Benalmádena.
- Irons, E. A. (2008) 'Diamond Way Buddhism', in *Encyclopaedia of Buddhism*, New

- York, Facts on File, p. 162, [online] Available from [http://www.khamkoo.com/uploads/9/0/0/4/9004485/encyclopedia\\_of\\_buddhism.pdf](http://www.khamkoo.com/uploads/9/0/0/4/9004485/encyclopedia_of_buddhism.pdf) (Accessed 15 February 2015).
- Jackson, D. (1996) *A History of Tibetan Painting. The Great Painters and their Traditions*. Vienna, Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften.
- Kapstein, M. (1980) 'The Shangs-pa bKa' bgyud: An Unknown Tradition of Tibetan Buddhism', in Aris, M., Kyi, Aung San Suu (eds.) *Tibetan Studies in Honour of Hugh Richardson*. Warminster, Aris and Philips, pp. 138–144.
- Karma Tashi Ling (2008) *Fredstupaen på Karma Tashi Ling*, [online] Available from: <http://www.tibetansk-buddhisme.no/Fredsstupaen/> (Accessed: 21<sup>st</sup> May 2015).
- Klimburg-Salter, D. E. , Tropper, K. and Jahoda, C. (eds.) (2003) *Text, Image and Song in Transdisciplinary Dialogue*. Leiden and Boston, Brill.
- Klimburg-Salter, D. E. (2005) *Tabo Monastery: Art and History*. Vienna: Vienna Austria Science Foundation.
- Khodarkovsky, M. (1992) *Where two Worlds met: The Russian State and the Kalmyk Nomads, 1660–1771*. Chicago, University of Chicago Press.
- Libera-Dallapiccola, A. (ed.) (1980) *The Stupa. Its Religious, Historical and Architectural Significance*. Wiesbaden, Franz Steiner Verlag.
- Lo Bue, E., Ricca, F. (1993) *The Great Stupa of Gyantse. A Complete Tibetan Pantheon of the Fifteenth Century*. London, Serindia Publications.
- Lo Bue, E. (2008) 'Tibetan Aesthetics versus Western Aesthetics in the Appreciation of Religious Art', in Esposito, M. (ed.) *Images of Tibet in the 19th and 20th Centuries*. Paris: École française d'Extrême-Orient, pp. 687–704.
- Lopes, A C. O. (2015) *Tibetan Buddhism in Diaspora. Cultural Re-signification in Practice and Institutions*. Oxon and New York, Routledge.
- Luczanits, C. (2010) 'Maṇḍalas of Maṇḍalas: The Iconography of a Stūpa of Many Auspicious Doors for Phag mo gru pa', in Lo Bue, E.F., Luczanits, C. (eds.) *Tibetan Art and Architecture in Context. Proceedings of the Eleventh Seminar of the International Association for Tibetan Studies: Tibetan Studies, Königswinter 2006*, pp. 281–310.
- (2011) 'Approaches to Historic Indo-Tibetan Sculpture' in Parul Pandya Dhar (ed.) *Indian Art History. Changing Perspectives*, New Delhi: D.K. Printworld, pp. 153–170.
- Martin, D. (1994) 'Pearls from Bones: Relic, Chortens, Tertons and the Signs of Sainly Death in Tibet', *Numen*, vol. 41, 3, pp. 273–324.
- McAra, S. (2007) *Land of Beautiful Vision: Making a Buddhist Sacred Place in New Zealand*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.
- McAra, S. (2009) A 'stupendous Attraction': Materialising a Tibetan Buddhist Contact Zone in Rural Australia, Unpublished PhD. thesis, University of Auckland.
- Pakhoutova, E. A. (2009) *Reproducing the Sacred Places: the Eight Great Events of the Buddha's Life and their Commemorative Stūpas in the Medieval Art of Tibet (10<sup>th</sup>–13<sup>th</sup> century)*, Unpublished PhD., University of Virginia.
- Panofsky, E. (1955) *Meaning in the Visual Arts. Papers in and on Art History*. New York, Doubleday Anchor Books.
- Pevsner, N., [1936] (2005) *Pioneers of Modern Design: From William Morris to Walter Gropius* New Haven, CT, Yale University Press.
- Prebish, C. S. (2002) 'Studying the Spread and Histories of Buddhism in the West: The Emergence of Western Buddhism as a new Subdiscipline within Buddhist Studies', in Prebish, Ch. S., Baumann, M. (eds.) *Westward Dharma. Buddhism beyond Asia*, London, University of California Press, pp. 66–84.

- Roth, G. (2009) 'Symbolism of the Buddhist Stūpa', in Roth, G., Ehrhard, F.-K., Tanaka, K., and Chandra, L. *Stupa. Cult and Symbolism*. New Delhi, Aditya Prakashan.
- Saurma-Jeltsch, L. E., Eisenbeiß, A. (eds.) (2010) *The Power of Things and the Flow of Cultural Transformations: Art and Culture between Europe and Asia*. Berlin, Munich: Deutscher Kunstverlag.
- Schopen, G. (1997) *Bones, Stones, and Buddhist Monks: Collected Papers on the Archaeology, Epigraphy, and Texts of Monastic Buddhism in India*. Honolulu, University of Hawai'i Press.
- Seegers, E. (2011) *Visual Expressions of Buddhism in Contemporary Society: Tibetan Stūpas Built by Karma Kagyu Organisations in Europe*. Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Canterbury Christ Church University, Canterbury.
- Seegers, E. (forthcoming) 'Globalizing Sacred Architecture: The Principles of Contemporary Stūpa Construction', in *Proceedings of the Conference Reading outside the Lines: A Workshop on the Intersection of Buddhist Art and Texts*, Munich, September 13–15, 2013, Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität.
- Skorupski, T. (2012) 'The Buddha's Stūpa and Image. The Icons of his Immanence and Transcendence', *Rocznik Orientalistyczny*, vol. LXV, 1, pp. 180–194.
- Snellgrove, D.L. and Richardson, H.E. (2003) *A Cultural History of Tibet*. Boulder: Prajñā.
- Stone, J.I. (2003) 'Nichren's Activist Heirs. Sōka Gakkai, Risshō Kōseikai, Nipponzan Myōhōji', in Queen, Ch., Prebish, Ch., Keown, D. (eds.) *Action Dharma. New Studies in Engaged Buddhism*, New York, Routledge Curzon, pp. 63–94.
- Strong, J. (2007) *Relics of the Buddha*, Motilal Banarsidass Tibetaans Instituut
- Tsering, T. (2013) 'A Classification of Karma sgar ris and Related Styles', *Journal of the International Association of Tibetan Studies*, vol. 7., pp. 125-192.
- Tucci, G. [1932] (1988) *Stupa. Art, Architecture and Symbolism*. New Delhi, Aditya Prakashan.
- Unione Buddhista Italiana (2015) *Premio UNESCO*, [online], Available from: <http://www.buddhismo.it/premio-unesco-a-lama-ole-e-hannah-nydahl/> (Accessed 3rd February 2015).
- Van den Bosch, L. P. (ed.) (1990) *Visible Religion. Annual for Religious Iconography*, vol. 7, *Genres in Visual Representations*, Leiden: Brill.
- Weber, C. (1999) *Buddhistische Sutras. Das Leben des Buddha in Quellentexten*. Munich, Hugendubel.
- Wylie, T.V. (1959) 'A Standard System of Tibetan Transcription', *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, vol. 22, pp. 261–267.
- Yeunten Ling Huy (no date) *Yeunten Ling: Tuin voor studie en onderricht van de Verlichte*, [online] Available at: <http://www.tibetaans-instituut.org/v2/index.php?page=het-huidige-complex> (Accessed: 21st February 2015).