

DAKINI
March 18, 2012

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Unconditional love,
Has no conditions.
It accepts,
The exceptions.

Total receptivity,
Takes you in,
Until you know,
Nothing.

Emptiness,
Contains everything,
And that includes,
Nothing.

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Speaking of Dakinis, here is a photo of Yeshe Tsogyel, the great Dakini and spiritual partner of Guru Rinpoche (Padmasambhava), who is also shown here. I am sorry these photos are so poor, but they were taken by me years ago in Tibet at a small monastery near the city of Zêtang in the Yarlung Valley. And there is an interesting story that goes with these images.

My family and I were on a pilgrimage in Tibet and among the places we wanted to visit were some of the caves where Guru Rinpoche practiced and lived.

The Crystal Cave of Guru Rinpoche

One pilgrimage spot that everyone tried to talk me out of going to was the legendary Crystal Cave (Shel Drak) of Guru Rinpoche on Crystal Mountain, a key pilgrimage site for Tibetans, in particular those of the Nyingma Lineage. It is said to represent Guru Rinpoche's Buddha attributes. After all, this was Guru Rinpoche's first meditation cave in Tibet. It was here that he bound the demons and Bön influences under oath. Many termas were hidden and revealed here to practitioners like Orgyen Lingpa and others. I felt I had to go there.

Both of the experienced Tibetan trekkers that I knew said it was too hard and that neither of them had ever been there. Even our local Tibetan guide had never been there in his life and suggested that anything that I had read suggesting that it was doable, was probably written by someone who did not know how difficult this journey is. My will to reach the Crystal Cave was not as strong after hearing this and my resolution wavered.

But then we visited Traduk Temple in the Yarlung Valley, some 7 kilometers South of Tsetang. As we wandered through this beautiful gumpa, we came to one room with a striking gold statue of Guru Rinpoche with his consort Yeshe Tsogyel. I remember reading that the original statue of Guru Rinpoche had been removed from the Crystal Cave for safekeeping and placed in a nearby monastery. This had to be it and, as the monk at the temple explained, so it was.

Guru Rinpoche Statue

It is perhaps the most inspiring image of Guru Rinpoche that I have ever seen. And Yeshe Tsogyel was stunning in the true sense of this word. Photos cannot communicate the power of these statues on me.

And seeing that statue rekindled my will to visit the cave where it had been and I again resolved to reach Shel-Drak. Something inside me just had to go to the Guru Rinpoche cave at Crystal Mountain. I informed my guide I was going, even if I had to hire a separate vehicle and go by myself.

This link gives the rest of the story of that long climb. You will have to start with the first photo and read them left to right. Each photo has the next part of the story.

<http://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.459268687657.243588.587252657>