

CONFERENCES

Since Shambhala Europe has experience with working in many languages, translation work done worldwide falls naturally under the umbrella of Shambhala Europe, who has organized three translation conferences in Europe so far. They have enabled us to clarify issues about structure, translation and publication process.

At the 1st International Translators Conference held in Germany in 2001, translators agreed to work in a group-oriented process, ensuring that translations are the result of group prajna. These conferences have enabled to establish direct contacts among translators as well as with Vajradhatu Publications Europe, headed by Acharya David Schneider.

In 2005, a coordinating committee was formed, currently consisting of seven members. In the summer of 2006, one of our wishes was fulfilled: the Sakyong performed the first vow and oath ceremony for translators, and translators and interpreters received a magnificent pin. The Sakyong met with translators who translate Vajrayana texts and encouraged us to learn Tibetan. At the 2007 conference, this was discussed further as well as the possibility of translating root texts in retreat.



GLOSSARIES

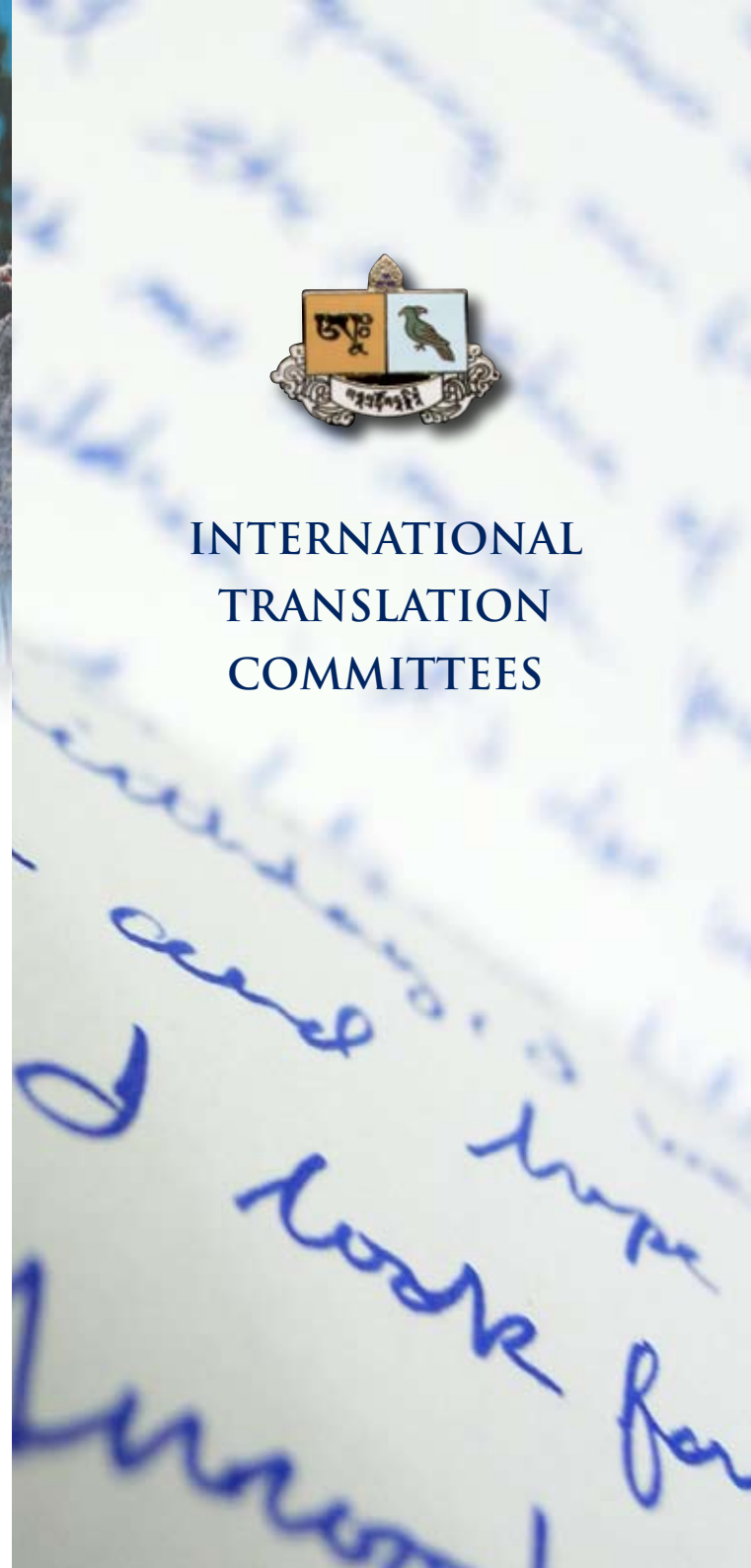
The first translation committee (besides the NTC), Les Traductions Nalanda, was founded in Quebec some 20 years ago. Pioneer translator Richard Gravel compiled English-French and English-Spanish dharma glossaries. The English-French glossary can now be consulted online on the Shambhala Europe website www.shambhala-europe.org. Translation advisor Acharya Fenja Heupers is working on a glossary of dharma terms, listing explanations of the Tibetan meaning given by the Vidyadhara and the Sakyong, to help understand the background of the terms we translate.

With the extraordinary flourishing of dharma teachings in our mandala, this sacred task of those that the Vidyadhara fondly called 'the ladies of his court' is getting ever bigger and urgent. That there is no dearth of work for this flock of two-headed parrots is indeed a testimony of the vitality of Shambhala Buddhist dharma and sangha.

Editor Rohini Schiff
Design: Malgorzata Bielawska, Studio Mak
2007



INTERNATIONAL TRANSLATION COMMITTEES



“In the early Pali texts, there is a record of the Buddha’s disciples asking him in what language they should teach the dharma. They asked him this after he had exhorted them to go forth and teach “for the well-being and happiness of the many”. He replied that they should teach in the languages of the local people wherever they went. This emphasis on speaking to people in their own language is also part of our Shambhala tradition. The Vidyadhara worked very hard to ensure that the dharma was translated properly for westerners. Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche has urged us to continue this tradition in Europe so that the dharma can more and more be taught and heard by people in their native languages. Indeed, translation has been identified as one of the top six priorities for services in our mandala in recommendations being presented to the Shambhala Congress by the working group on structure and governance.”

- President Richard Reoch
Opening address,
Translators Conference, Cologne, January 2005.

Currently, the Shambhala Buddhist dharma is translated into many languages: Austrian, Chinese, Czech, Danish, Dutch (Nalanda Vertalingen), French (Les Traductions Manjushri, France, and Les Traductions Nalanda, Quebec), German (Ajita Übersetzungsgruppe), Greek, Italian, Polish, Portuguese (Brazil), Rumanian, Slovenian, Spanish Traducciones Nalanda (Chile, Mexico and Spain), Swedish and Ukrainian.

For more information on translation committees, please visit www.shambhala-europe.org.

INTERNATIONAL TRANSLATION

Enabling the dharma to take root is a long process. One of the ways to promote this is through translations. Practicing and studying the dharma in our mother tongues is a powerful means by which dharma can take root in our minds and hearts, and gradually in our cultures.

Whilst the Nalanda Translation Committee in Halifax, founded by the Vidyadhara, Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche, translates texts from Tibetan into English, international translation work involves translating Shambhala and Buddhist texts, liturgies and talks from English into all other languages spoken in our mandala. This task is carried out by 19 translation committees worldwide as well as a few individual translators.

All members of our sangha interested in translation, interpretation and publication are warmly invited to get in touch with our representative Rohini Schiff rohini.schiff@free.fr.

VIEW OF TRANSLATION

When translating the dharma, recalling the view is essential. Unlike Marpa, those who have not yet realized the meaning in their being must rely on their own understanding, practice and bodhisattva vows as well as the power of the sangha, the group.

In order to translate the essence of the dharma, translation work has traditionally been accomplished in committees comprised of practitioners who share their knowledge of dharma and linguistic skills. As a result, translations do not reflect only one person’s style, and group prajna helps in transmitting the dharma as purely as possible. The magic of dharma translation is thus largely based on the magic of the third jewel.

TRANSLATION WORK

As English remains the main Shambhala language in our worldwide sangha, students learn dharma English as they progress along the path, in order to read transcripts or to understand the Sakyong directly. However, although they practice in English at international programs, at home they prefer to use their local language.

Unlike the NTC, the new committees did not have the good fortune to receive the direct linguistic assistance from the Vidyadhara or the Sakyong. The translation committees translate a lot of the texts that the NTC has translated from Tibetan, but also many texts that were written originally in English, such as the various chants and liturgies, transcripts of seminary talks, the Sakyong’s various addresses, practice-related documents etc. Although the amount of what needs to be translated is thus much greater, all the work is done by volunteers.

Interpreting is another very important part of our activity. Dechen Chöling regularly hosts programs, including seminaries, with simultaneous interpretation of all talks into several different languages. At the 2006 Seminary in Chile, interpreters translated into three languages and the translators worked very hard beforehand to translate all the practice texts and chants.

