Press release of the Critical Forum Kalachakra

The Kalachakra-Tantra
A Ritual of Peace or a Totalitarian Temptation with highly explosive potentials

From July 6 through 16, 2011 the XIV Dalai Lama will offer a *Kalachakra-Tantra-Ritual* in the heart of the U.S. capital, Washington, DC. (www.kalachakra2011.com/) In Sanskrit, *Kalachakra* means "The Wheel of Time." The *Kalachakra Tantra*, as well the sacred text used in its ritualistic performance, is considered to be "the pinnacle of all Buddhist systems." Included in the *Kalchakra Tantra* are: the construction of a so-called *Sand Mandala*, which symbolizes the cosmos, an apocalyptic prophecy known as the *Shambhala Myth*, and several top-secret initiations.

This complicated mystical ritual is presented by the Dalai Lama and the organizers of the event as a dignified and uplifting contribution to world peace, which fosters compassion with all living beings, inter-religious dialog, interracial tolerance, ecological awareness, sexual equality, inner peace, spiritual development, and bliss for the third millennium (*Kalachakra for World Peace*). One of the Dalai Lama's mottos for the whole performance is: "Because we all share this small planet earth, we have to learn to live in harmony and peace with each other and with nature."

But are the *Kalachakra Tantra* and the *Shambhala Myth* truly pacifist? Do they really encourage harmony and cooperation among people? Do they make any real contribution to freedom and justice, equality of gender, religious tolerance or ethnic reconciliation? Are they a comprehensive, politically humanist, democratic and non-violent contribution to world peace?

Andrei Znamenski, Associate Professor of History at Alabama State University and author of an exciting book about the *Shambhala Myth* in Bolshevist Russia (Red_Shambhala – Magic, Prophecy, and Geopolitics in the Heart of Asia) came to another conclusion: "It might be shocking for many readers, but let me start by saying that the *Kalachakra Tantra* has nothing to do with peace, compassions, and freedom. In Tantric Buddhism it was a misogynistic quest performed by male initiates to accumulate sacred power of particular Buddhist deities (the lower seven initiations are open for all) and, through blending male and female fluids (top secret initiations that involved sexuality), to eventually turn themselves into superhuman androgynous beings. Moreover, part of the Kalachakra teaching was a militant Shambhala prophecy, a call for a Buddhist holy war against enemies of Buddhism."

Andrei Znamenski is not alone in this assessment. The *Kalachakra Tantra* and Tibetan Buddhism are coming more and more into focus by critics. (See: Critical Links to Lamaism) In their groundbreaking work The Shadow of the Dalai Lama – Sexuality, Magic and Politics in Tibetan Buddhism, German cultural philosophers, Victor and Victoria Trimondi, not only provide surprising, previously ignored research but also undertake a well-founded interpretation of Lamaism, rendering the Tibetan-Buddhist worldview understandable for

Western readers through a comparison with European religious traditions. The text pays particular attention to an extensive analysis of the *Kalachakra Tantra* and its political, ideological, and spiritual implications. (The book appeared in 1999 through the reputable German publishing house Patmos Verlag. The English version is online. It became the standard work on the critical examination of Lamaism and the metapolitics of the Dalai Lama. In the eighties Victor Trimondi did support the Tibetan religious leader, organized several international congresses and other events with him and featured books about him in his own publishing house, the Dianus-Trikont-Verlag.)

In their book the two authors describe *en detail* the secret rituals of sexual magic in the higher initiations of the Kalachakra Tantra (The Public and the Secret Initiations); they have shown the religious-political intention of the Tantra to establish a world-wide Buddhocracy with a sacred world-ruler (The ADI Buddha); they discuss the intolerance of the Tantra vis-à-vis the monotheist religions, its militant and aggressive warrior-ideology, and its vision of a religious end-time battle against Islam (The Aggressive Myth of Shambhala); and they show how the Tantra is interpreted by the Dalai Lama spokesman Robert Thurman as a symbolic and meta-political instrument to conquer western culture by Lamaism (The Buddhocratic Conquest of the West).

The Trimondis came to very similar conclusions as their American colleague Andrei Znamenski and other critical authors on the topic: "The teachings of the Buddha have so many treasures and wonderful insights, but the philosophy, the vision and the practices of the *Kalachakra Tantra* are neither compatible with fundamentals of Buddha's teachings nor with basic principles of Western Enlightenment. Therein are included an apocalyptic war of religion, the aggressive application of super-weapons, radical transgressions of a humanistic moral code, the dissolution of the ego and the soul of the participants of the ritual, the totalitarian subjugation under the will of the guru, the idea of an imperial and global lama-state (Buddhocracy), and the concept of an absolutist world ruler, the Chakravartin. The sexual rites in the higher initiations of this occult ritual have to be designated as a manipulation of erotic love and a misuse of female energy to produce spiritual and worldly power of men and monks. So the equality of the sexes, democratic decision making, and ecumenical movements are in themselves foreign to the nature of the *Kalachakra Tantra*." The two German cultural philosophers created the Critical Forum Kalachakra to open a wide-ranging debate over the hidden "dark sides" of the *Tantra*, and they published many other articles, including a pamphlet, Eight Questions to the 14th Dalai Lama on the Topic of the Kalachakra.

During the public *Kalachakra Initiation* in Graz/Austria directed by the Dalai Lama (2002), the German-speaking media picked up these critiques from the Trimondis and other authors to discuss the controversial ritual. The Austrian state TV & Radio ORF broadcasted a feature called, "Critique of the 'Peace Ritual' of the Dalai Lama in Graz." 'Peace Ritual' has been written in quotations marks to emphasize the ambivalence of the term in this context. Der Standard (The "New York Times" of Vienna) published a cover article with the title, "A Warrior Ritual of the Dalai Lama: The *Kalachakra,"* and the conservative German Weekly Der Rheinische Merkur wrote: "Extremely wild warriors: what is hidden behind the *Kalachakra* – Thousands have attended the peace ritual of the Dalai Lama. But the 'Religion of Happiness' has also its dark sides." Georg Schmid, Prof. for Religious Studies at the University Zürich (Switzerland) called attention to the fact that the *Kalachakra Tantra* was the product of the religious war between Buddhists and militant Moslems in India around the turn of the first millennium. It was under this influence that the Tantra changed fundamental Buddhist principles. "In this time," said Professor Schmid, "Buddhism had adopted the law of

its enemies and had developed a Buddhist concept of a holy war, a forthcoming apocalyptic conflict between friend and foe of the Buddha-way and a future Buddhist world dominium." Alexander Berzin, a designated *Kalachakra* expert of the Dalai Lama, also confirms that the Tantra proclaims a holy war: "A careful examination of the Buddhist texts, particularly *The Kalachakra Tantra* literature, reveals both external and internal levels of battle that could easily be called 'holy wars.' An unbiased study of Islam reveals the same. In both religions, leaders may exploit the external dimensions of holy war for political, economic, or personal gain by using it to rouse their troops to battle. Historical examples regarding Islam are well known; but one must not be rosy-eyed about Buddhism."

In the meantime, dozens of books, articles, and discussion groups in German and French have carried forward these criticisms and have expanded them--without sparing the person of the Dalai Lama. A lot of the critical voices came also from the Buddhist camp. See, for example, comments to an article about the *Kalachakra Initiation 2011* in the Huffington Post. The latest high point of this critical wave in Germany was a cover story in Germany's biggest magazine "Stern" (2009): The two faces of the Dalai Lama – The soft Tibetan and his undemocratic Regime (trans. in English). This article was written by Tilman Müller, the same journalist who uncovered ten years before--with his Austrian colleague Gerald Lehner--the Nazi past of the Dalai Lama's teacher, Heinrich Harrer: Dalai Lama's friend: Hitlers Champion (trans. in English). Their sensational discovery caused a protest movement in the Jewish community against the film adaptation of Harrer's autobiographical book *Seven Years in Tibet*, with Brad Pitt as Harrer.

Very accurately the historian Andrei Znamenskis calls the *Kalachakra Tantra* "a totalitarian temptation." In his book Red Shambhala he recounts the story of political and spiritual seekers from West and East who used the Tibetan Buddhist prophecies of the *Kalachakra Tantra* (the *Shambhala Myth*) to promote their spiritual, social, and geopolitical agendas and schemes. Red Shambhala proves that people in the Left were no strangers to the occult, and they were equally mesmerized by the Tantra. But even more mesmerized have been people of the far Right. In their second book, Hitler-Buddha-Krishna – An unholy alliance from the Third Reich to the present day (2002) which received international attention, Victor and Victoria Trimondi show how influential Fascists and Nazis used the philosophies, mythologies, visions, and dogmas as well as the religious practices and texts of the spiritual traditions of Asia for glorifying war, and for the deification of the "Führer" and the white race. Some of them have been electrified by the *Kalachakra Tantra* and the *Shambhala-Myth*. The Trimondis uncover how the Nazi-Orientalists who prepared the SS Tibet Expedition of Reichsführer Heinrich Himmler have been interested in the ritual, and how members of the SS Ahnenerbe (the brain trust of the SS) wanted to spare the *Kalachakra* Temple in Leningrad (St. Petersburg) during the siege and barrage of the city by the Deutsche Wehrmacht (1941 – 1944). The *Shambhala Myth* of the *Kalachakra Tantra* and its militant ideologies are a topic in the occult literature of the international Neo-Fascist and Neo-Nazi scene. One example is Miguel Serrano, the recently deceased leader of the Chilean National Socialists. Another is Ernesto Mila, former chief of the Spanish National-Socialists, who writes about the *Kalachakra-Ritual* in his article, The envoys of Hitler in Tibet: "The Kalachakra Tantra and its initiation is not a normal ritual. . . . It is the 'supreme initiation,' that 'assured the renaissance in Shambhala' at the moment of the last battle against the powers of evil. . . . It is the initiation which is appropriate for the warrior caste."

Another example is the accredited expert on the Orient (and Hitler admirer) Jean Marquès-Rivière who after WW II was convicted in absentia and given the death sentence for turning Jews and Free Masons over to the Gestapo and SS in France. He was the author of a

Kalachakra interpretation once popular with some fascist elements. He wrote in his book that the Dalai Lama personally gave a ring to him with the Kalachakra Emblem to demonstrate that he is part of the inner circle of Shambhala adepts. (Kalachakra: Initiation Tantrique du Dalai Lama)

Last but not least, the Japanese Doomsday Guru, Shoko Asahara must be mentioned. He intended a *Shambalization* of our planet by means of nuclear terror. Asahara was responsible for poisonous gas attacks on Tokyo's metro in 1995, killing 12 and leaving hundreds injured. The terrorist sect's leader met the Dalai Lama on several occasions. Even weeks after the first assault, the Dalai Lama called him a "friend, yet not a perfect one." Only later did the Dalai Lama distance himself from the sect leader. (The Doomsday Guru Shoko Asahara and XIV Dalai Lama)

So the "totalitarian temptation" which streams out from the *Kalachakra Tantra* for all sorts of political and religious fanatics makes it absolutely necessary that the text, commentaries, and the ritual itself are discussed and disputed openly and honestly, especially at this time when the ritual is performed in a place where the power of the world is concentrated: Washington DC. The organizers are very conscious of this political acupuncture point when they write, "The Kalachakra for World Peace 2011 will unfold in a world capital where local actions deeply and globally affect the lives of so many." A statement from the Capital Area Tibetan Association, which is putting on the event, also stressed the significance of having it in Washington: "If there is a seed of spirituality in this very city, that seed when it grows is bound to have an effect." The ritual is to be carried out in the Verizon Center approximately mid-way between the White House and the US Capitol Buildings, just a short stroll from the National Mall.

A *Washington Post* article states, "Many still see huge significance in his [the Dalai Lama's] picking the capital of the world's superpower as the place for a ritual about how to reconcile disunity. Some believe the Kalachakra's hopeful explanation about how to deal with differences literally will spread through meditators to area bigwigs coping with national debt, wars, environmental disasters and terrorism." The article cites Clark Strand, former editor of *Tricycle*, a Buddhist magazine: "The most significant thing about this is the time and place, 10 years after 9/11, and in a place where big decisions are being made about the planet."

Yes,10 years after 9/11! But what did happen exactly ten years before 9/11? In 1991 in New York City a so-called *Kalachakra* Sand Mandala was constructed, then destroyed by the Dalai Lama, and the sand was poured into the water near the World Trade Center. Two years later in 1993 another Wheel of Time (*Kalachakra*) Sand Mandala was built by Tibetan Monks in the lobby of Tower One. For over thirty days, many of the World Trade Center workers and visitors were invited to participate during the construction of this Mandala. Although these coincidences may be accidental, they prove that these two *Kalachakra* events were not a remedy for "national debt, wars, environmental disasters and terrorism." If they did have any magical effect at all, it was to produce exactly the opposite.

You will find a résumé of the most problematic contents of the Kalachakra Tantra with original citations under: Critical Forum Kalachakra. The English site of the "Trimondi Online Magazine" under: www.trimondi.de/EN/front.html and the book "The Shadow of the Dalai Lama – Sexuality, Magic and Politics in Tibetan Buddhism" under: www.trimondi.de/SDLE/Index.htm

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