

To Be Re-Bitten and to Re-Become: examining repeated embodied acts in ritual performance

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At the core of the use of repetition in ritual performance lies a paradox. Repeating the same action, set of words or musical pattern may appear to establish a sense of fixity or permanence. This repetition can also lead to a fixed and permanent sense of 'me': by repeating a familiar gesture over a long period of time, it becomes fixed as a way to recognise 'me', 'my character', 'who I am'. I know this is me, because I always move my hand through my hair in this particular way, which has been established as a habitual practice over many repetitions. If I moved it in a different way it would be unfamiliar, or 'not me', therefore the repetition seemingly can be a way to fix something into a permanent form. However, in the context of forms of ritual performance, as well as the process of learning somatic and body-based practices, the act of repetition can rather be seen as a means to understand and embody impermanence, change and a transformation of the bodymind. The use of repetition in forms of training such as yoga or martial arts helps to deepen the engagement with the form over time, potentially leading to a greater physical ability as well as stronger concentration. Actions repeated in sports training or dance likewise promote the learning of the form, and develop the body in particular ways according to the specific needs of that form. For an actor, repeating lines is a way to learn them, and repetition in rehearsal is used to practice and develop the relationship with and embodiment of the character in the context of the play. Therefore in the process of learning, training and rehearsing, repetition is being used to generate change. And yet in the context of moving beyond training and rehearsal, and into the moment of performance, there can be an apparent desire for the repetition to be one of fixed exactness, that each repeated performed present is 'the same' as the previous one, that the actor is performing 'the same' every night, as if each present moment is the same, and it is the same actor that is performing that unchanging repeated performance night after night.

Presence – being in the present moment – is in a state of being constantly generated in each moment, and thus every repetition is actually different. However, as seen in the context of learning or training, each repetition also changes the actor, helping

them to practice, embody, develop and create a shift in their bodymind as they learn and practice a part, or as a dancer learns a new form or choreography. So just as no repetition can be exactly the same in each new present moment, that present moment is also created through the act of repetition which has resulted in the particular manifestation of action and being in that moment, which is dependent on the repeated acts that have gone before. Performance theorist and historian Margaret Drewal explains that 'in other words, phenomenologically a thing repeated is never the same as its, or any other, "original", Just as it is at the same time never totally novel' (Drewal 1992: 1). Our experience of repetition is not exactly the same as it was the previous time an action was performed, however the act of repetition means that it is not completely unknown or unfamiliar, and the repetition in the present moment is building on the experiences of previous repetitions to create the performance of it in the present. For Drewal, drawing on Richard Schechner's idea of performance as 'restored behaviour, 'performers recover through memory (of myth, of rehearsal, of the last performance) organized sequences that they then re-behave. Thus a performance is based in actuality on an earlier performance' (Drewal 1992: 3). For Schechner and Drewal, each performance may disappear as it moves from the present to the past, and so will not be 'the same' each time it is repeated. However, it is also not disconnected to those past repetitions, and will build on previous experiences developed through the use of repetition to establish the performance in the present moment.

This article examines two examples of the use of repetition in ritual performance: the annual repetition of the ritual of tarantism in southern Italy, and the use of repeated actions, words and images in the tantric deity yoga practice of the Vajrayana school of Buddhism. These two practices reflect different processes of repetition identified by Drewal, again drawing on Schechner:

It is useful to distinguish two modes of repetition that operate differently, although they are conceptually repeated. The broader mode of ritual repetition is the periodic restoration of an entire performance, as in annual rituals scheduled to correspond in some way to seasonal change (Schechner 1985: 35-116). In this mode, the unit to be repeated is a complete whole, and long gaps of time exist between the repetitions. The other mode is the repetition that

occurs within a single ritual performance, and is experienced in a steady, unbroken flow, as in regular, persistent drumming or vocalizing.’ (Drewal 1992: 2)

The two case studies will reflect this categorisation in that the ritual of tarantism is re-performed annually on the festival of St Paul in Galatina as a restored performance of the original ritual experience, and the deity yoga practice examines repeated performance acts of gesture, voice and image within a single ritual performance. However, there is an overlap within each of these categorisations, in that the annual repetition of the tarantism ritual of the ‘re-bite’ contains repeated patterns of dance and music within the performance, and the deity yoga practice can be performed on specific occasions at particular times of the year. For the purpose of this article, the distinction is made to examine the difference in the experience of repetition in performance according to Drewal’s and Schechner’s two modes. This distinction between the two examples will offer different approaches to the use of repetition in ritual performance, as well as showing ways in which the Buddhist notion of non-self operates in both contexts. Although from very different cultures and with distinct practices, the two examples are usefully placed next to each other in order to examine ideas of transformation of self, leading to non-self, which is achieved through repetition in the act of performing the ritual.

In order to examine the paradox of repetition creating change, and the process of transformation within both examples, I utilise aspects from the philosophy and practice of Buddhism to explore the ways in which the perception of ‘self’ is constructed through repeated acts, and how studying the ways that we repeat thoughts and actions throughout our lives can help to understand the reality of non-self (anattā) and change or impermanence (anicca). Buddhism is an embodied philosophy, and offers a very practical and pragmatic study of, and investigation into, the nature and processes of the bodymind. Through this, there can be an understanding of the way in which we construct the idea of ‘self’, and this understanding can in turn lead to the idea of ‘non-self’ or anattā, which is one of the Three Characteristics of Existence in Buddhist philosophy. Essentially, Buddhism believes that there is no abiding identity, no permanent ‘I’, no fixed ‘self’, which

continues unaltered from moment to moment. Instead, there is a constantly changing or evolving pattern of reactions happening within the bodymind organism. G.P. Malalasekera explains: 'in the Buddha's teaching, the individual's being is a becoming, a coming-to-be, something that happens, an event, a process' (in George 2000: 53). There is a constant movement or stream of ever-shifting patterns, from which humans create a sense of continuity, labelled as the 'self', and which we believe to be the same 'self' existing and being permanently repeated through each moment. Sri Lankan Buddhist monk and scholar, Walpola Rahula explains that instead of the 'self' being a fixed object, the 'series is, really speaking, nothing but movement. It is like a flame that burns through the night: it is not the same flame nor is it another' (Rahula 1959: 34) (in Pali: na ca so na ca anno – 'neither the same nor another'). The opening verse of the key Buddhist text, the Dhammapada, explains the paradox of how repeated actions and thoughts construct our sense of 'self' in each moment, and how each repetition builds on previous ones to effect that constant change within the bodymind: 'What we are today came from our thoughts of yesterday, and our present thoughts build our life of tomorrow; our life is a creation our mind' (Nisiker 2000: 35).

As discussed previously, repetition of a gesture or word pattern repeated over a long time can lead to a sense of a fixed and permanent 'I' through familiarity and habit. As another verse from the Dhammapada explains:

The thought manifests as the word;
The word manifests as the deed;
The deed develops into habit;
The habit hardens into character.
As the shadow follows the body,
As we think, so we become.

(in Anderson 2012: 131)

Repetition that leads to habitual patterns of thought, speech and action can give the illusion of 'me' existing in the same way from moment to moment, rather than the understanding of non-self (anattā) and change or impermanence (anicca). On one hand, repetition and habit are vital for us as human beings in order to function in the

world. For example, we learn essential activities such as eating, speaking and writing through the process of repetition from childhood. However the necessity of this ability to learn through repetition can also lead to habitual patterns of reaction becoming fixed over time to create the sense of a permanent 'me'. Buddhist philosophy and practice offers a way to examine these patterns to discover how they became established. Through this examination, it is then possible to be able to free ourselves from these habits and the suffering or bad formations (dukkha) that arises through the belief in a permanent 'I'. The movement from self to non-self leads to a 'forgetting' of the self, which allows for change to manifest in the bodymind. The 13th century Zen master Dogen wrote in the Genjo Koan:

To study Buddhism is to study the self.

To study the self is to know the self.

To know the self is to forget the self.

To forget the self is to become one with all things of the world.

(in Nisker 2000: 191)

The use of repetition of forms of words, thoughts and actions in Buddhist ritual practice is a means to study and therefore know the self. It is the knowing or understanding of the reality of self that leads to the realisation of non-self, or forgetting of the self. This will be seen particularly in the discussion of the deity yoga practice from Vajrayana Buddhism, where the repeated forms of the ritual lead to a transformation of 'self' in order to forget the habitual 'me' that is the usual way 'I' practice 'myself'. Repetition operates as a way to help focus and concentrate the bodymind in order to transform and free it from the way that it has been fixed through previous practices of repetition which is 'the shadow that follows the body' (Anderson 2012:131). This is the paradox of repetition, to repeat from the beginning, where repeating what is apparently the 'same' thing actually leads to a process of change and transformation.

Rimorso and Repetition in the Ritual of Tarantism

The idea of transformation of 'self' leading to 'non-self' from Buddhism is useful to look at the experience of repeated actions within ritual performance, whilst acknowledging that this is from different cultural tradition. Buddhism will be used as a theoretical framing or discourse to discuss this type of experience, and indeed can be considered helpful as a lens to investigate experience in different cultural contexts, including western performance. It is also as a means to move away from the dominance of western discourse and re-framing ways to understand and articulate the experience of performance. This section will examine the annual 'rimorso' ritual of tarantism in Salento, southern Italy. This example of repetition within ritual performance will show how the use of culturally-specific forms of music and dance can be used to create a strong identification for the practitioner, which aids in the performance of the repetition as well as confidence in the practice of the ritual due to the historical and cultural lineage and acceptability within the community. The ritual has written records dating back to the 14th century, and is a culturally-specific form of the use of music and dance as therapy. The 'story' behind the ritual is that a person or tarantata (female)/tarantato (male) is 'bitten' by a taranta spider, and falls into a state of lethargic trance. They are 'woken' from this trance by musicians playing a special form of pizzica music local to the region. This music incites them to begin to move, and eventually to dance repeated movements of hopping, skipping and circling patterns often for hours on end, until they collapse when the music stops, only for the process to be repeated again when the musicians restart playing. The sequence of dancing and resting could last for up to three days, until the tarantata declares herself to be healed as the poison from the bite has been expelled from her body through the action of dancing. Over the centuries, the ritual became encultured into the Catholic Church (see Daboo 2010 for details), leading to the figure of St Paul becoming associated with the ritual as the agent of both the illness and the cure. As well as the initial illness and ritual performance of the cure, tarantati would often re-experience the symptoms of the bite on an annual basis, and the musicians would need to be called in to repeat the performance process to cure the tarantata once again. With the association of St Paul, this yearly repetition began to coincide with his feast day on 29th June: the tarantati would fall ill ahead of the feast day, and would be brought into the chapel of St Paul in the Salentine town of

Galatina in a state of trance, where they would perform the ritual of being woken up and cured through the repetition of the dance in response to the music and songs of the pizzica.

In 1959, Italian historian Ernesto de Martino gathered together an interdisciplinary research team to conduct an ethnographic study of tarantism and the annual repetition in Galatina. During the three weeks of field work in Salento, they observed an individual ritual in the home of one woman, Maria of Nardó, and then the annual repetition of the ritual by Maria and other tarantati at the festival of St Paul on 29th June in Galatina. The findings from the field work were presented in de Martino's book La Terra del Rimorso (1960) as well as in the ethnographic film La Taranta (1962, directed by Gianfranco Mingozzi). The title of the book is de Martino's play on words: morso is Italian for 'bite', so rimorso is to be re-bitten, echoing the metaphor of the tarantata being ritually re-bitten by the taranta each year, hence needing to repeat the ritual. Rimorso also contains the meaning of remorse in a religious sense; of the need for penitence, forgiveness and redemption through the intercession of St Paul, undertaking the performance of the ritual in his chapel in Galatina on his feast day. De Martino was a Marxist, deeply influenced by Benedetto Croce and Antonio Gramsci. Drawing on Marxist and Gramscian ideas, he developed what he defined as the 'crisis of presence' ('la crisi della presenza') to describe the subaltern southern Italian tarantata who had lost her sense of being-in-the-world due to subjugation by the hegemonic power. This meant she had lost or been denied her place in history and the world, resulting in the experience of the crisis of 'not-being-there' through the lack of agency, hence the 'crisis of presence' as explained by Saunders:

To be "without history" or "out of history" is to lack the consciousness essential to agency, and thus to be unable to make appropriate choices, to be unable to "act" in the moment in order to "make history", and to be, instead, a passive recipient of history as made by others. (Saunders 1998: 186)

De Martino suggested that the need for the annual repetition of the ritual was due to the tarantata responding to the crisis of presence through the illness, and that the cure was a culturally-conditioned and acceptable means of resolving the crisis

through being re-bitten, and re-performing the experience of the ritual as a form of restored behaviour. He interpreted the experience of Maria of Nardó's performance of the ritual through the symbolic 'horizon', as he called it, explaining the purpose of the annual repetition of the ritual was to re-live and resolve the conflicts which are always present:

This is, in essence, the symbol of the taranta as a mythical-ritual horizon of evocation, configuration, release and resolution of the unresolved psychic conflicts which "re-bite" in the obscurity of the unconscious. As a cultural model, this symbol offers a mythical-ritual order for settling these conflicts and reintegrating individuals into the group. [...] Maria periodically released her conflicts and converted her frustrations into symbol, lightening the period between ceremonies – that is, daily life – of the burden of unconscious stimulations which would have been extremely dangerous had she not found a socialized and traditional project of calendrical, festive treatment in tarantism. (De Martino 2005: 36, 45)

What is missing in De Martino's study is the voice of Maria or the other tarantati themselves. This is a recurring feature of the documentation of tarantism from the earliest written records. The tarantati and their experiences have been explored by a succession of doctors, scientists, historians and philosophers who have used the ritual as a means to discuss their own views on the body, medicine and science in their respective age (see Chapter Two in Daboo 2010 for a full discussion). This has resulted in a lack of voice or agency for the people experiencing the ritual themselves: they have been silenced by those writing about them. This is particularly the case for the women who undertook the ritual, who were also often silenced or without agency within the society of Salento, and the ritual was a means for them to be heard and seen in a space where they were made 'present' through the dance.

In relation to the subaltern 'peasant' woman in southern Italian society, Maria Pandolfi discusses why the experience of dancing, and the annual repetition of the ritual, are important if not vital to the ability of the women to cope with the difficulties in their lives, as this was their only means of expression of the inner crisis:

Maria [Pandolfi's subject in the field] tells us about a world of subjective identity – a “minimal” identity that finds in the body, in the experience of the body, the locus of existing and expressing herself; describing herself by way of the body establishes a phenomenological identity. Second, a phenomenological identity, in the sense of being present in the world via the body, is also set forth and defined by the way of social structures that for centuries have defined cultural roles and forms that, in the last analysis, served to control and “normalize” the “female world of emotions”. [...] [Her suffering [...] is inscribed within her body and recounted through her body. [...] The lived experience of Maria is inscribed in a context – like that of “peasant” Italy – that is made up of “stratified centuries” [...] History is absorbed in Maria's story so that its traces survive like the traces of the past in the ruins of the town, a past that people still speak of, age-old events that are described as if they occurred only yesterday. (Pandolfi 1990: 257, 258, 260)

The tarantata experiences the ritual and annual repetition as a way to express herself through her body, but it is also the fact that the ritual has been repeated for centuries that provides it with a history and legitimacy within the society, thereby giving her permission and validity for performing the ritual as a repeated historical past-made-present through the act of the repetition of the ritual process. The ritual will work, because it has worked before over the many centuries it has been repeated; she performs it because she has performed it before, and many other generations of women have repeatedly performed it before her. In this way, as Drewal stated earlier, the tarantati ‘recover through memory (of myth, of rehearsal, of the last performance) organized sequences that they then re-behave. Thus a performance is based in actuality on an earlier performance’ (Drewal 1992: 3), in this case, the performance is one that may have been repeated annually throughout an individual's life, as well as over many centuries in the life and memory of the culture.

The need for repetition of the ritual performance experience can be seen as a way to find relief and release from the difficulties of lived circumstances through a culturally-acceptable form. This was the only space within the society where the tarantata could express what she was feeling. However the underlying problems causing the

crisis were not dealt with or resolved, meaning that so long as the problems and situation remained, the annual repetition was necessary in order to keep re-experiencing the feeling of release and relief through the repetition and restored behaviour of the performance. The repetition of the performance may not be exactly the same experience each year, but it is also not novel, to refer back to Drewal's point. It is the fact that it is known and repeated across history that offers the transformative quality of release to the tarantata.

The repetition of not just the whole ritual, but of the repeated movements within the dance, can allow for a release of the 'self' from the everyday circumstances. Salentine musician Roberto Raheli describes the psychological experience of the repeated spinning and circling movements within the dance as 'andare fuori', to go or spin out, 'that is, to go outside one's normal state of consciousness, to lose sight of one's immediate surroundings' (Raheli, 2005: 263). The repetition both within the ritual, and the annually repeated rimorso restored re-performance, leads to a transformation that allows the 'self' to become non-self, or anattā, in the experience of the culturally-specific form of dance within the society. The sense of the everyday, habitual 'I' is released through the act of repetition leading to the potential for transformation within the bodymind through the experience of the dance, resulting in a 'forgetting of the self' as discussed earlier. The repetition of the same movements and structure leads to a process of change, even if that process needs to be repeated every year to re-experience the release from being re-bitten.

As You Imagine, So Shall You Become: repetition in the practice of deity yoga

The use of repetition within the deity yoga practice of Vajrayana Buddhism ^[1] can also offer a means for transformation that can be developed and ideally fully embodied and realised through the process of many tens of thousands of repetitions of the practice of mudras, mantras and mandalas. The practice makes use of visualisation as an active tool to generate and become the embodiment of a particular deity figure from Buddhism through repeated practice of body (through the physical gestures of the mudras which are physical positions and movements of the hands or whole body), mind (through the visualisation of the mandala), and speech (through spoken repetitions of the related mantra). The repetition of imagining be-

coming the deity figure is used to understand the reality of impermanence (anicca) and non-self (anattā), and re-align outer and inner patterns of the body to be attuned to those of the deity figure: to become the qualities of that deity through constant repetition of those qualities, rather than the habitual and conditioned qualities of the 'self' that have been practised before. Repetition becomes the means to lead to a 'forgetting of the self' through transforming the habitual patterns leading to a freeing from the sense of a permanent and fixed 'me'. As Vessantara explains:

visualization attempts to take us "inside" the Buddha's experience.[...]
Visualization is visionary experience re-enacted. [...] Through visualization we put ourselves into a [transformed] world and, by doing so, little by little using repetition we make it our natural mode of seeing. When we can continuously experience the world as a Buddha does, then we shall have become a Buddha.
(Vessantara 1993: 24)

Tantric [Note]² visualisation is an act whereby in engaging with the image, and then becoming that image, we can have the same kinaesthetic experience of being as the deity figure itself, and can act in the world in the same way and with the same qualities, that the figure does. In this way, the 'self' that we are 'ordinarily', that we have become used to being through repeated conditioned habitual behaviour, is transformed into a different 'self' through imagining it to be different and repeatedly practising it as being different. This assists with the realisation of *anattā*, non-self, with the merging of the subject-self with the object-other-as-visualised, until 'I' and 'it' are one.

The deity yoga practice involves the repeated use of this active visualisation and physicalisation of a specific deity figure from the pantheon of deities within Vajrayana Buddhism, also known as yidams: the word yidam means an "oath" or "promise", and they are 'known as lha [in Tibetan] (deva in Sanskrit), meaning "deity"' (Ray 2002: 212). These Buddha or Bodhisattva figures represent 'both the fully-enlightened state and one of its specific features, such as compassion or wisdom' (Berzin 1997: 19), and are the potential for a quality within the practitioner which they can realise through the repeated process of the performed practice. Chöogyam Trungpa Rinpoche points out that 'Tantra permits different aspects of you to shine through,

rather than you having to be channelled into one set of characteristics' (Ray 2002: 151).

In the visualisation, the vidam dwells in the top level or tier of a mandala. The word 'mandala' in Sanskrit, dkyil khor in Tibetan, means 'centre and circumference': in other words, a circle. The term manda represents the centre in terms of essence or seat, whilst la is the circular circumference, so mandala is a circle which contains the essence at its centre. Within tantric Buddhism, the mandala takes many forms, and is considered to be a thugs rten, a 'mind support' or meditational tool: it both represents and is a sacred space, and is also a blueprint for the journey through that space. The common image of a Tibetan mandala painting is a two-dimensional representation of a three-dimensional structure, based in the Indian pre-Buddhist building of the stupa. The mandala is a replica of a stupa or palace of the deity on three levels, like a tiered wedding-cake; the bottom level is the body-aspect; the next tier up is the speech-aspect; and the top level contains the figure of the deity which is the mind-aspect. The whole mandala represents the universal environment of the deity, who is inseparable from their surroundings. Robert Thurman explains:

A mandala is a matrix or model of a perfected universe, the nurturing environment of the perfected self in ecstatic interconnection with perfected others. It is a blueprint for buddhahood conceived as [...] the attainment of such release and bliss by an individual fully integrated with his or her environment and field of associates. [...] [E]very being is a mandala [...] We are our environment as much as we are the entity in the environment. (in Leidy and Thurman (1997): 127,129

During the visualisation practice, the mandala is always imagined in its three-dimensional form as a palace, rather than as the two-dimensional image seen in paintings which are a tool used as a reminder or aid to the visualisation to generate and embody the image. The mandala below is that of the figure of the deity Vajrayogini:



CAPTION: Vajrayogini and her retinue, from a Tibetan thangka painting. Image courtesy of the Wellcome Trust Library

Each image, colour and form within the three tiers of the mandala has a specific meaning or aspect which becomes part of the visualisation and meditation practice that is repeated many thousands of times to gradually be-come the particular aspects and qualities of that figure through the act of repetition. As Ray explains, the use of repetition in this way is a 'disruption of our normal, habitual egoic visualizing [which] makes room for something deeper and more genuine to emerge, ... [and] in the long term we find ourselves beginning to identify with this enlightened image' (Ray 2002: 220). The repetition also acts as a means to establish calm and concentration in the mind in order to allow the right conditions to generate the insight needed for the practice. Repetition acts as an anchor for the mind, to give it something to focus on to avoid distraction, and develop a heightened awareness through the repetition which can help strengthen the intention and will needed to keep concentrated on the practice.

The practice of the specific deity begins with an initiation ceremony known as an 'empowerment' (abisheka in Sanskrit, wang kur in Tibetan). The teacher, or lama, performs the practice 'perfectly', and in doing so, uses transmission to implant the seed (bija) of the potential for a similar realisation in the student. The notion of lineage is extremely important in Vajrayāna, and the student is not just receiving the empowerment from the physical teacher, but also from the whole lineage of the practice back to its origins. Since the practice is repeatedly passed by on by transmission from teacher to student, there can be a sense of confidence in the authenticity and effectiveness of the practice, as with the use of repetition through history seen in the re-bite repeated ritual of tarantism. The empowerment ritual gives permission to the student to undertake the sadhana practice on their own, as well as providing the potential for that practice to be actualised 'perfectly' in time, with their own efforts of repeated practice. Whenever the sadhana is practiced as a ritual meditation on an everyday level, it is a repetition of the performative process of the empowerment, and so it functions as a reaffirmation and a phenomenological re-entering and re-enactment of that experience, deepening the engagement with and be-coming of the deity with each repetition.

The use of repetition in the deity yoga practice is a means to have a direct transformation of the bodymind, and so experience the reality of non-self (anattā) and impermanence (anicca) at the level of embodied knowing. The repeated acts of body, mind and speech realign the psychophysical patterns and sense of 'self' to become 'not-me', but it is also not an entirely different person. Each repetition might be of exactly the same movement or words, but the experience of it is different in each repetition as it builds on previous repetitions to create the bodymind experience in each present moment, to refer back to the discussion of the ideas of Drewal and Schechner at the beginning.

Neither-the-same-nor-another

The two examples of the use of repetition in the ritual of tarantism and the deity yoga practice embody the paradox of repetition: that a seeming fixity or permanency of repeating the same thing can allow for a process of change or transformation, and

an awareness of the impermanence of 'self' and a forgetting of the 'self'. In relation to theatrical performance, this can also help explain the paradox of repeating the 'same' performance night after night, if understood through Rahula's notion from Buddhism of na ca so na ca anno – 'neither the same nor another'. It is both not-the-same performance that an audience might go to see repeated night after night, and it is also not a completely different performance either. Likewise it may be the same actor in those repeated performances, but they are different in each present moment of every new performance: it is neither-the-same-nor-another. This is the paradox of repetition, as well as the paradox of performance, and it is also the paradox of us: we are repeating the same performance of ourselves, our repeated restored behaviour, in each moment, and yet we are different in each moment, as well as being not-another. Each moment is different, and yet only exists in the way it does because of the repeated actions and thoughts that have created or conditioned it, as stated previously in the Dhammapada: 'What we are today came from our thoughts of yesterday, and our present thoughts build our life of tomorrow' (Nisker 2000: 35). So repetition is itself na ca so, na ca anno: neither the same nor another, and it is this that offers the potential for transformation of the bodymind in the acts of repetition in ritual performance.

Notes

- 1 Vajrayāna Buddhism (the 'Way of the Diamond-Thunderbolt') grew out of the Mahāyāna school of Buddhism, and appeared in India around the 7th Century CE, where it was extremely popular between the 8th and 12th Centuries CE. It contains within it principles from both the previously existing Theravādin and Mahāyāna traditions, but incorporates and adapts tantric yoga and meditation practices to the point that it becomes synonymous with tantra. Its popularity spread north to Tibet in the 8th Century CE, where it fused with the pre-existing shamanic practices of the Bon tradition, and became the primary religion in Tibet, where it was shaped and enhanced with new rituals, initiations, vidams, dakinis, and wrathful deity figures.
- 2 The word 'tantra' means 'thread' or 'woven', and refers to both the tantric texts and the practices. It is 'an everlasting stream of continuity' (Berzin, 18), which

is the continual clear state of mind. Tantric practice, in this context, is that of deity yoga visualization which creates a transformation in the body, mind and subtle energies.

- 3 There are four main schools in Tibetan Buddhism: the Gelug, Kagyu, Sakya and Nyingma, each with a different emphasis in terms of types of practice and favoured deities.

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