

མཚོ་སངས།

Lake of Lotus

Bimonthly

Issue 7 January 2007

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*The Influence of the Powers of "Mental Concentration" and
of "Awareness" Within the "Unconscious"*

*The Near-Death Experience of the
Unification with God*

*In Commemoration of the 20th
Anniversary of His Holiness
Dudjom Rinpoche's
Parinirvana*



ISSN 1816-8019 01



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文殊師利菩薩

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敦珠法王(二世)圓寂二十週年紀念

In Commemoration of the 20th Anniversary of His Holiness Dudjom Rinpoche's Parinirvana

再傳弟子 移喜泰賢 及 啤嗎哈尊敬撰
By Yeshe Thaye & Pema Lhadren

上一世紀最偉大「上師」之一的藏傳佛教寧瑪派(紅教)法王，大巖取者 **敦珠法王(二世)智者移喜多傑寧波車**(1904-1987)，於西元一九八七年一月圓寂於法國南部，世壽八十四歲。今年剛好二十週年紀念，為緬懷師祖對漢土眾生的恩德，故特別於今期之「蓮花海」刊登師祖來漢土弘化時之法照多幅，非常珍貴。

有關依怙主 敦珠法王二世之簡略生平，已於「蓮花海」第五期刊登。今期主要刊登法王的「歷代降生傳記」：**祈禱降生傳記名曰「水晶珠鬘」**，與及法王之珍貴法相集。於此祈願「敦珠新寶藏」能夠廣弘於世間，利益無盡的如母有情！

One of the greatest Masters of the last century, the Great Terton His Holiness **Dudjom Jigdral Yeshe Dorje Rinpoche** (1904-1987), the Supreme Head of the Nyingma School of Tibetan Buddhism, passed away in January of 1987 in Southern France at the age of 84. As this year marks the 20th Anniversary of this event, this Issue of the "Lake of Lotus" is most sincerely dedicated to His Holiness by presenting some of the rare photos that were taken during His Holiness' Dharma visits to both Hong Kong and Taiwan, in order to commemorate His Holiness' extreme kindness to the Chinese people.

As His Holiness' Life Story has already been published in the 5th Issue of the "Lake of Lotus", this Issue will specially publish "The Prayer to the Legendary Incarnations of His Holiness Dudjom Rinpoche" known as "**The Garland of Crystal Pearls**", together with the rare photos of His Holiness. We sincerely dedicate all these merits for the spreading of the Holy Teachings of the "Dudjom Tersar Lineage" across the whole world, for the benefits of countless motherly sentient beings!



敦珠法王二世1972年蒞臨香港弘法相片集

The Visit of H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche to Hong Kong in 1972



劉銳之金剛上師於香港啟德機場向敦珠法王二世獻上「哈達」(1972)

The Chinese Vajra Master Ven. Guru Lau was Offering Khada to H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche at the Hong Kong International Airport (1972)



劉銳之金剛上師於求法前向敦珠法王二世獻上「哈達」(1972)

The Chinese Vajra Master Ven. Guru Lau was Offering Khada to H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche Before Receiving Teachings (1972)



劉銳之金剛上師於香港啟德機場迎接敦珠法王二世(1972)

The Chinese Vajra Master Ven. Guru Lau was Welcoming H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche at the Hong Kong International Airport (1972)



劉銳之金剛上師於灌頂時向敦珠法王二世獻上「哈達」(1972)

The Chinese Vajra Master Ven. Guru Lau was Offering Khada to H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche Before Receiving Initiations (1972)





敦珠法王二世(右)、劉銳之金剛上師(中)及移喜泰賢(左)合照(1972)

H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche (right), Ven. Guru Lau (middle) and Yeshe Thaye (left) (1972)



敦珠法王二世(中右)、近代「唯識宗」大師羅時憲教授(中左)、與法王之眷屬合照(1972)

H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche (middle), Professor Lo Si Hin, the Contemporary Master of the "Mere-Consciousness School" (left to the middle), together with His Holiness' Family Members (1972)



敦珠法王二世與劉銳之金剛上師於香港啟德機場(1972)

H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche and Ven. Guru Lau at the Hong Kong International Airport (1972)



敦珠法王二世與劉銳之金剛上師(1972)

H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche and Ven. Guru Lau (1972)



敦珠法王二世與劉銳之金剛上師於香港啟德機場(1972)

H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche and Ven. Guru Lau at the Hong Kong International Airport (1972)



敦珠法王二世攝於香港(1972)

H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche in Hong Kong (1972)



敦珠法王二世與移喜泰賢(1972)
H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche and Yeshe Thaye (1972)



敦珠法王二世攝於香港(1972)
H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche in Hong Kong (1972)



敦珠法王二世離港時攝於香港啟德機場
(1972)
H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche Leaving Hong Kong
at the Hong Kong International Airport (1972)



敦珠法王二世攝於香港(1972)
H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche in Hong Kong (1972)



敦珠法王二世1981年蒞臨香港弘法相片集

The Visit of H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche to Hong Kong in 1981



敦珠法王二世與劉銳之金剛上師攝於跑馬地東蓮覺苑(1981)
H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche and Ven. Guru Lau at the Tong Lin Kwok Yuen (1981)



敦珠法王二世為啤嗎哈尊灌頂(1981)
Pema Lhadren was Receiving Initiations from H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche (1981)



敦珠法王二世攝於香港(1981)
H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche in Hong Kong (1981)



敦珠法王二世與劉銳之金剛上師攝於跑馬地東蓮覺苑(1981)
H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche and Ven. Guru Lau at the Tong Lin Kwok Yuen (1981)



敦珠法王二世與劉銳之金剛上師(1981)
H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche and Ven. Guru Lau (1981)



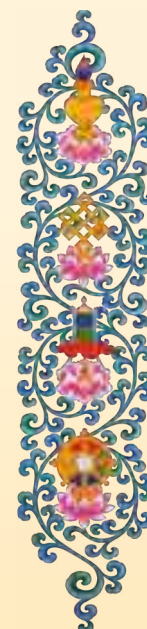


敦珠法王二世為移喜泰賢灌頂(1981)
Yeshe Thaye was Receiving Initiations
from H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche (1981)

敦珠法王二世攝於灌頂法
會(1981)
H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche
was Giving Initiations
(1981)



敦珠法王二世於灌頂法會時攝(1981)
H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche was Giving Initiations (1981)



敦珠法王二世為移喜泰賢灌頂(1981)
Yeshe Thaye was Receiving Initiations from H.H.
Dudjom Rinpoche (1981)



敦珠法王二世 (1981)
H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche (1981)





敦珠法王二世攝於灌頂法會(1981)
H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche was Giving
Initiations (1981)

敦珠法王二世與仙瀟仁波
切(1981)
H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche and
Ven. Shenphen Rinpoche
(1981)



敦珠法王二世 (1981)
H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche (1981)



敦珠法王二世、劉銳之金剛上師與仙瀟仁波切
(1981)
H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche, with Ven. Guru Lau and
Ven. Shenphen Rinpoche (1981)



敦珠法王二世於灌頂法會時攝(1981)
H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche was Giving Initiations
(1981)



敦珠法王二世1984年蒞臨香港弘法相片集

The Visit of H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche to Hong Kong in 1984



敦珠法王二世為啤嗎哈尊灌頂(1984)
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Pema Lhadren was Receiving
Initiations from H.H. Dudjom
Rinpoche (1984)



敦珠法王二世、劉銳之金剛上師、移喜泰賢
與啤嗎哈尊(1984)
H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche, with Ven. Guru Lau,
Yeshe Thaye and Pema Lhadren (1984)



敦珠法王二世與啤嗎哈尊(1984)
H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche and Pema
Lhadren (1984)



敦珠法王二世與移喜泰賢 (1984)
H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche and Yeshe
Thaye (1984)





敦珠法王二世為移喜泰賢灌頂 (1984)
Yeshe Thaye was Receiving Initiations from
H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche (1984)

敦珠法王二世、劉銳之金剛上師與啤嗎哈尊(1984)
H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche, with Guru Lau and Pema
Lhadren (1984)



敦珠法王二世、劉銳之
金剛上師與詩旺堪布
於灌頂法會(1984)
H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche,
with Ven. Guru Lau
and Ven. Khenpo
Tsewang at the Initiation
Ceremony (1984)



敦珠法王二世、仙藩仁波切、移喜泰賢與啤嗎哈尊
(1984)
H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche, with Ven. Shenphen Rinpoche,
Yeshe Thaye and Pema Lhadren (1984)



敦珠法王二世、仙藩仁波切攝於灌頂法會(1984)
H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche and Ven. Shenphen
Rinpoche at the Initiation Ceremony (1984)



敦珠法王二世為移喜泰賢灌頂 (1984)
Yeshe Thaye was Receiving Initiations from H.H.
Dudjom Rinpoche (1984)





敦珠法王二世與劉銳之金剛上師(1984)
H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche and Ven. Guru Lau (1984)



敦珠法王二世於灌頂法會時攝(1984)
H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche was Giving Initiations (1984)



敦珠法王二世為移喜泰賢灌頂(1984)
Yeshe Thaye was Receiving Initiations from H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche (1984)



敦珠法王二世、移喜泰賢與啤嗎哈尊(1984)
H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche, with Yeshe Thaye and Pema Lhadren (1984)



敦珠法王二世為移喜泰賢灌頂(1984)
Yeshe Thaye was Receiving Initiations from H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche (1984)



敦珠法王二世為移喜泰賢灌頂時，劉銳之金剛上師站於法王左邊(1984)
Yeshe Thaye was Receiving Initiations from H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche, while Ven. Guru Lau was Standing at the Left of His Holiness (1984)



敦珠法王二世1984年蒞臨台灣弘法相片集
The Visit of H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche to Taiwan in 1984



敦珠法王二世攝於台灣國際機場(1984)
H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche was Arriving at the Taiwan International Airport (1984)

敦珠法王二世於台灣台中市主持佛像開光法會(1984)
H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche was Consecrating the Buddhist Statues in Taichung, Taiwan (1984)



敦珠法王二世於台灣台中市主持佛像開光法會(1984)
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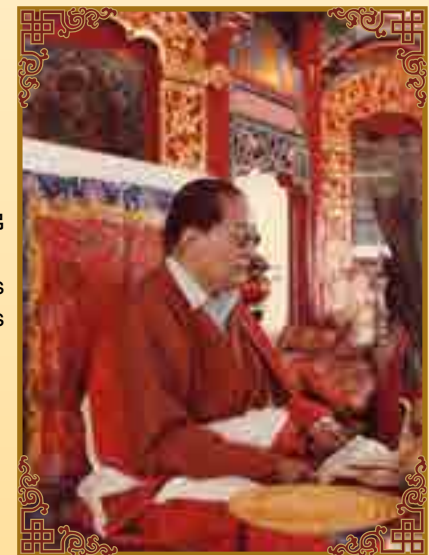


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敦珠法王二世與劉銳之金剛上師攝於台灣台中市 (1984)

H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche with Ven. Guru Lau in Taichung, Taiwan (1984)



敦珠法王二世與劉銳之金剛上師攝於台灣台北市之佛法講座(1984)

H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche with Ven. Guru Lau at the Buddhist Teaching Sessions in Taipei, Taiwan (1984)



敦珠法王二世與劉銳之金剛上師攝於台灣台北市之佛法講座(1984)

H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche with Ven. Guru Lau at the Buddhist Teaching Sessions in Taipei, Taiwan (1984)



敦珠法王二世於台灣台北市佛法講座之全境(1984)

The whole Scene of H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche's Teaching Sessions in Taipei, Taiwan (1984)



敦珠法王二世贈予劉銳之金剛上師之九張「蓮師八變」湯嘉

The Set of Nine Precious Thankas Depicting the "Eight Manifestations of Guru Rinpoche" was Bestowed by H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche to Ven. Guru Lau (1984)



敦珠法王二世贈予劉銳之金剛上師之蜜瑪巴重要密乘經典

All the Important Nyingma Tantras that were Bestowed by H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche to Ven. Guru Lau (1984)



1989年敦珠法王二世法體奉安相片集

The Enshrinement Ceremony of H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche's Kudung at Boudhanath, Nepal in 1989



供奉敦珠法王二世法體之「舍利塔」

The Stupa in Which H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche's Kudung was Being Enshrined (1989)

供奉敦珠法王二世法體之「舍利塔」
The Stupa in Which H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche's Kudung was Being Enshrined (1989)



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供奉敦珠法王二世法體之「舍利塔」
The Stupa in Which H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche's Kudung was Being Enshrined (1989)

廟內之「舍利塔」及所有壁畫全部均由夏札(威操)法王設計及統籌。

All the Wall Paintings and The Stupa Within the Temple were Designed and Coordinated by H.H. Chadral Sangye Dorje Rinpoche.



供奉敦珠法王二世法體之「舍利塔」
The Stupa in Which H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche's Kudung was Being Enshrined (1989)

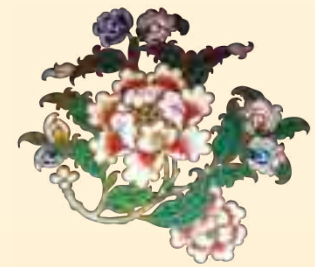




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The Stupa in Which H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche's Kudung was Being Enshrined (1989)



敦珠法王二世法體於「舍利塔」內之近鏡
A Close-Up of the Stupa in Which H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche's Kudung was Being Enshrined (1989)





敦珠法王二世法體於「舍利塔」內之近鏡
A Close-Up of the Stupa in Which H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche's Kuding was Being Enshrined (1989)



敦珠法王二世之法體由法國運返尼泊爾時所專用之寶箱

The Holy Casket, in Which H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche's Kuding was Contained, was Transferred from France Back to Nepal (1989)



位於尼泊爾之敦珠法王二世祖廟全境
The Whole Scene of the Kudung Gompa of H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche (1989)



敦珠法王二世之法體由法國運返尼泊爾時所專用之寶箱
The Holy Casket, in Which H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche's Kuding was Contained, was Transferred from France Back to Nepal (1989)



依怙主 夏札(威操)法王迎接敦珠法王二世之法體回歸尼泊爾之祖廟(1989)

H.H. Chadral Sangye Dorje Rinpoche Led All the Disciples of H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche in Receiving His Holiness' Kuding at the Kudung Gompa (1989)





位於尼泊爾祖廟內之壁畫
The Wall Paintings at the Kudung Gopa of H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche (1989)



位於尼泊爾祖廟內之蓮師像
A Buddhist Statue at the Kudung Gopa of H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche (1989)



供奉於尼泊爾祖廟內之立體壇城
The 3-D Mandala at the Kudung Gopa of H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche (1989)



位於尼泊爾祖廟內之忿怒蓮師像
A Buddhist Statue at the Kudung Gopa of H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche (1989)



位於尼泊爾祖廟內之藏王赤松德贊像
A Buddhist Statue at the Kudung Gopa of H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche (1989)





供奉於尼泊爾祖廟內之
敦珠法王二世法相
The Holy Picture of H.H.
Dudjom Rinpoche That
was Placed at the Kudung
Gompa of H.H. Dud-
jom Rinpoche During the
Enshrinement Ceremo-
ny (1989)



舉行敦珠法王二世法體「奉安晉塔」儀式時，出現在祖廟內窗上之虹光明點
Thigles Appeared on the Window Panes During the Enshrinement Ceremony at the Kudung Gompa of H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche (1989)



舉行敦珠法王二世法體「奉安晉塔」儀式時，出現在祖廟內之虹光
Rainbows Appeared During the Enshrinement Ceremony at the Kudung Gompa of H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche (1989)



頂果法王主持敦珠法王二世法體「奉安晉塔」儀式
H.H. Dilgo Khenytse Rinpoche was Presiding at the Enshrinement Ceremony at the Kudung Gompa of H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche (1989)



舉行敦珠法王二世法體「奉安晉塔」儀式時，出現在祖廟內窗上之虹光明點
Thigles Appeared on the Window Panes During the Enshrinement Ceremony at the Kudung Gompa of H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche (1989)



劉銳之金剛上師(中)與移喜泰賢(右)向頂果法王問安
Ven. Guru Lau (middle) and Yeshe Thaye (right) were Greeting H.H. Dilgo Khenytse Rinpoche During the Break of the Ceremony (1989)





索甲仁波切於祖廟內向劉銳之金剛上師獻上「哈達」
Ven. Sogyal Rinpoche was Offering Khada to Ven. Guru Lau During the Break of the Ceremony (1989)



劉銳之金剛上師與頂果法王之孫兒協慶冉江仁波切合照
Ven. Guru Lau with Ven. Shechen Rabjam Rinpoche, the Grandson of H.H. Dilgo Khenytse Rinpoche, During the Break of the Ceremony (1989)



劉銳之金剛上師與移喜泰賢向頂果法王問安
Ven. Guru Lau and Yeshe Thaye were Greeting H.H. Dilgo Khenytse Rinpoche During the Break of the Ceremony (1989)



於祖廟內劉銳之金剛上師與移喜泰賢之合照
Ven. Guru Lau with Yeshe Thaye During the Break of the Ceremony (1989)



敦珠法王二世及其轉世敦珠法王三世之結合法相
H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche and His Reincarnation Dudjom Yangsi Rinpoche



仙藩仁波切帶引劉銳之金剛上師及移喜泰賢，前往供奉敦珠法王(二世)法體之「舍利塔」，觀看附近牆壁所流出甘露的位置
Ven. Shenphen Rinpoche was Pointing out to Ven. Guru Lau and Yeshe Thaye the Place Where Nectars Were Found Dripping From the Walls Near the Stupa Where the Kudung of H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche was Enshrined (1989)



The Contemporary Mahasiddha with Many Prophecies --- Our Lord of Refuge, His Holiness Chadrak Sangye Dorje Rinpoche (2)

by His Holiness' Humble Disciples Yeshe Thaye & Pema Lhadren

Namo Gurubhya!

We bow down at the Lotus Feet of our most beloved Lord of Refuge, the precious Wish-fulfilling Gem!

Palden Tsa'wai Lama Channo!

Glorious Root Guru, please pay heed to us, and bless us with your Body, Speech and Mind!

Special Prophecy Made by Ekajati, the Main Dharma Protectress of the Nyingmapa

Emaho!

How wonderful and marvelous! With such an exceptional and rare opportunity to hear this story!

**Blessed by the Mahapandita Vimalamitra*
As the True Manifestation of Guru Rinpoche's
Mind
Born in the Year of the Ox, with Dharma Name
of the Buddha**
Will Spread the Holy Dharma Across the Whole
World**

(This is according to the Special Prophecy made by the Main Nyingma Dharma Protectress, particularly on Dzogchen Teachings, Ngak Srungma Ekajati, also known as Ral Chig Ma, more than one hundred years ago)

Notes: *Mahapandita Vimalamitra was reincarnated as Khenpo Ngakchung, the Root Guru of His Holiness Chadrak Sangye Dorje Rinpoche;

**Buddha – in Tibetan as Sangye Dorje (the Buddha Vajra) is the Dharma Name of His Holiness Chadrak Rinpoche.



His Holiness Chadrak Rinpoche



His Holiness Chadrak Rinpoche



His Holiness Chadrak Rinpoche

His Holiness' Unsurpassed Excellent Wisdom

From his early age, His Holiness Chadrak Rinpoche has gained mastery of the Dharma teachings through his wisdom, diligence, humility and high realizations, and he bowed down at the Lotus Feet of many Spiritual Masters who were impartial, great Beings. Out of the boundless teachings of the great Dharma Ocean, and from the great depths of its philosophical wisdom like the endless universe, His Holiness could grasp the most essential quintessence of them all. Not only was he able to merge these teachings with his own mind, His Holiness has, in fact, put them into practice in his daily activities.

Guru Rinpoche has warned us, time and again, that we should be very careful about our “view” and “conduct”, and thus he said: “**Though my view is higher than the sky, my conduct regarding cause and effect is finer than barley flour.**” Hence, it is most important for any practitioners that **one should not lose one’s view in the**



His Holiness Chadrak Rinpoche



His Holiness Chadrak Rinpoche

neither should one lose one’s conduct in the view. However, for many Dharma practitioners, they usually let others see their “views”, but it is very unlikely that they will put them into practice, and thus making the “view” and the “conduct” as two separate entities. All Dharma teachings, if not merged with one’s mind and practiced in one’s “conduct”, will then become empty talks and are meaningless, and these will end up as worldly dharmas of some sort.

The great Khenpo Ngawang Palzang, (also known as

Khenpo Ngagi Wangpo, or secretly as Osal Rinchen Nyingpo Pema Ledreltsal, an emanation of the MahaPandita Vimalamitra, 1879-1941), the Dharma Regent of Kathok Monastery, **was His Holiness Chadrak Rinpoche’s Crowning Jewel (Root Guru).**



His Holiness Chadrak Rinpoche

His teacher conferred a vertical ocean of teachings in the tantras, oral transmissions (lung), initiations (wang) and pith instructions (tri) to him, as if he were filling a perfect container. When His Holiness Chadrak Rinpoche practiced all these teachings, the experience and realization of Great Perfection (Dzogchen) welled up in his mind and he became a true practitioner of the four visions.

On one special occasion, **the great Khenpo Ngagi Wangpo Rinpoche openly acknowledge** His Holiness as his sole inner, special spiritual heir (lineage-holder), his regent of authentic realization, blessed him, and bestowed a second name to crown him: “**Chadrak Sangye Dorje**”, mentioning that “**his mind and my mind are no different**”. (Chadrak means the one who has abandoned all mundane activities; Sangye is Buddha, the enlightened one; Dorje means adamant or “vajra”, which has seven special qualities of “unchanging, cannot be cut, cannot be destroyed, stand firm, still as the sky, never being defeated, and always victorious”.) When one’s own Spiritual Master could have such high regards for his own disciple, it is a rare opportunity to have shown that His Holiness Chadrak Rinpoche has, indeed, achieved great realizations and attainments.

The “Vajra Regent” of the “Dudjom Tersar Lineage” and of Other Lineages

Both His Holiness Dudjom Rinpoche II and His Holiness Chadrak Rinpoche transmitted teachings to each other (which is a common practice in Tibetan Buddhism) and they respected each other very much. When His Holiness Dudjom Rinpoche transmitted all the teachings of the Dudjom Tersar Lineage and other lineages to His Holiness Chadrak Rinpoche and authorized him as his “**Vajra Regent**” (Dorje Gyaltsap), he wrote the following “Proclamation” which is well-known to all Dharma practitioners of the Nyingma school of Tibetan Buddhism.

Proclamation



His Holiness Chadrak Rinpoche

To all endowed with sentience, beings large and small, who live and circle within the realms of existence:

At this time, this Awareness-holder (Skt.: Vidyadhara, Tib.: Rigdzin) Tro-gyal Dorje has received from me the oral lineage instructions of the profound

instruction, heart-blood of the Dakinis. I have entrusted him with the lineage of the meaning, empowered him as the person to act as my "Vajra Regent" to guide beings, and encouraged him to impartially steer the ship of disciples to the path of freedom.

Therefore, any gods, demons, or humans who help Tro-gyal Dorje in an appropriate manner will naturally gain benefit and happiness in this and future lifetimes. However, if even the slightest thoughts or acts of wrongful animosity toward him should arise, the armies of imperious guardians of the doctrine, endowed with wrathful power and eyes of wisdom, will come to his assistance. They will most certainly sever the life-force of beings who have form or block the senses of those without form and banish their name that remains. Where there is a chance of such profit or loss, be extremely careful!



His Holiness Chadrak Rinpoche's Gumpa at Yangleshod, Nepal

This letter, which should be taken to heart, has been written in Kongpo, in front of the Mountain of Wrathful Spirit (Du-ri Namchak Barwa), by the wild, wrathful, blood-drinking yogi, Jigdrak Yeshe Drakpo Tsal (H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche's Wrathful Dharma Name).



In this "Proclamation", it is clearly and firmly stated to all sentient beings that, if there are those who are still carried away by greed, hatred and ignorance, it will be stupid and dangerous for them to have any disrespectful thoughts or actions towards His Holiness Chadrak Rinpoche. Furthermore, this declaration has shown, once again, the great respect, trust and high regard that His Holiness Dudjom Rinpoche had of His Holiness Chadrak Rinpoche. ...(to be continued)



His Holiness Chadrak Rinpoche and Yeshe Thaye (1997)



His Holiness Chadrak Rinpoche with Yeshe Thaye and Pema Lhadren (1997)



His Holiness Chadrak Rinpoche

The Profound Abstruseness of Life and Death : The Meaning of Near-Death Experiences (7)

By Vajra Acharya Pema Lhadren
Translated by Simon S.H. Tang

“Near-Death Experience” is Beyond Doubt

With more and more cases of “near-death experiences” (NDEs) amassed, as well as with many researches on case studies by experts of various specialties, **the factual existence of NDEs is well beyond doubt.** Even for those scientists who have doubtful attitudes, they are unable to deny it with any concrete evidence.

Those scientists, who are doubtful about “near-death experiences” (NDEs), **have queried** as to whether the “sense of joy” as experienced by NDE survivors could have been stemmed from the effect of “endorphins” that were secreted in the brains while they were on the verge of death. When a person is under the states of “shock, pressurization or deficiency in oxygen”, the brain would then secrete “endorphins” which has an anesthetic effect, and so the pain would be vanished and a “sense of joy” would be generated. At the same time, “illusions” might also be created when the brain is deficient in oxygen. Thus, some people would challenge that the various experiences of the NDE survivors are merely “illusions” of some sort due to either medications or oxygen deficiency.

After countless contentions, it has been discovered that those various “near-death experiences” (NDEs) **were not** merely “illusions”, **due to** either medications or oxygen deficiency, with the following reasons:

1. Researches have found that the physical functions of a person, who having been exposed in a condition of “low oxygen for a prolonged period of time”, would gradually debilitate while his/ her mental status, including its sensitivity, memory, thinking ability and so



on, would be dropping significantly. One could not have possessed a “sharp and clear mind”, with a good memory and experiential ability to remember all the vivid experiences, as most NDE survivors did.

- 2 “Illusions” that were due to the effect of medication and oxygen deficiency are mostly shreds of footages or images, and so they are negative in nature. When the person is awakened, even all those painful events of the disorderly “illusions” would quickly be forgotten. On the other hand, the NDE survivors usually have experiences that are filled with joy and proactivity, while their relevant footages are more complete and logical in nature. No matter how long the events have lapsed, sharp impressions can still be maintained in the memories of these NDE survivors.
- 3 “Illusions” that were induced by either medication or oxygen deficiency could not help to generate the kind of unprecedented sense of “life-force, sensitivity and joyfulness”. On the contrary, the various kinds of experiences that the NDE survivors have had did alter their whole lives. Their attitudes towards life have now become filled with compassion and proactivity. Even their own intrinsic potentials would have been ignited by these “experiences” and can thus



derive certain kinds of “supernatural powers” not to be found in ordinary people.

4. After various researches and further examinations when endorphins are to be administered into the human bodies, it was found that most of the recipients would be feeling very drowsy and their “consciousness” would become obscured. It is a vivid contrast to the “sharp and clear mind” of the NDE survivors. Furthermore, the effects on the injection of endorphins into the human bodies would be prolonged and “sustained”. For instance, its effects could last for more than 30 hours when endorphins are used as painkillers for cancer patients. On the other hand, the “painless feelings” for NDE survivors would be gone immediately once the person has been awakened and so its effect is “not sustaining”, while the persons would simply feel the pains again. There were certain cases where the NDE survivors, being awakened, felt unbearable excruciating pains. Whereupon, they immediately fell back into the state of “near-death experiences” (NDEs) again, and had thus repeated this kind of scenario for several times.

The “Near-Death Experience” of the Unification with “God”

Readers can vividly see the true reality of the “near-death experience” (NDE) from the following case study:

Case Seven:

The book entitled “Full Circle: The Near-Death Experience and Beyond” by Barbara Harris, who worked for the International Association of Near Death Studies (IANDS), has introduced quite a few number of cases of survivors who had acquired “supernatural powers” after their NDEs. Barbara Harris herself also possessed a number of “supernatural powers” after her own NDEs. For instance, she could cause damages to electrical appliances and other electronic devices, her ability in predicting the future, as well as in healing patients with headaches by touching upon their heads with her hands. She was originally the wife of a very rich person. After her NDEs, she had become a nurse, filled with great compassion, for taking care of patients of terminal illnesses. She also later became a researcher on NDEs. The following are some of the contents during her interviews:

“I am an ‘atheist’. My parents were Jewish, but I don’t believe in ‘God’ and only believe in things that have

existed on the earth. Because of my spinal problems, I have severe pains on my back. Regardless of the amount of dosages of 'pain-killers' that were administered, **the pains just couldn't stop**. The pains were indeed **unendurable**, and there was no other alternative but to receive a surgery with an operation that lasted for five-and-a-half hours. If the surgery failed, I would rather die. After the operation, I was placed on an electrical turning frame with a stretcher in the middle, the Circle-O-Bed, and the whole set resembles a cable car in an amusement park. My body was tied onto the bed, and even with only a slight motion on my body, the whole system would rock accordingly. In order that my post-operative spine could be fixed in this way, I had to lie in the bed in such a way for a whole month.

Two days after my operation, my blood pressure suddenly dropped to below 30, and my life was in great danger. During that night, I found myself floating in the air above the parlour of the hospital. I went back to the ward where I was and found my body lying on the electrical turning frame. My whole body was all hooked up with a bundle of tubes connecting to various medical instruments. I looked quite pitiful, indeed! However, my mood was excellent at that moment while the scene was so hilarious to me that I just couldn't help laughing. It had been quite a while since I didn't have such kind of a relaxed feeling. **I wished that I didn't have to return to this body again.**

All of a sudden, the surrounding dimmed down a bit and someone was holding my hand. When I took a closer look, I realized that it was my grandmother who had passed away fourteen years ago. My grandmother loved me very much when she was alive. Now that she gave me a big hug, and it seemed that she has passed on to me all her memories about me. I also transmitted to her all my memories about her. Both of our memories fused into one, and our minds were also united as one. **Needless for any words, we had mutual understandings of each other as if there was some kind of telepathy within our hearts.**

After a while, the surrounding gradually lighted up

again. I was surrounded by some kind of a substance similar to a black wall, and then it started to rotate vigorously. It rotated over and over again at a very high speed. Then, I saw a golden beam of light glowing from the whirl, as if **the energy of this whirl has turned into "light" and radiated out**. The intensity of the light has grown greater and brighter, such that I was totally embraced by it. At the same time, a breeze was blowing gently, and later on I heard a low-pitched humming sound.

Unbeknownst to me, my grandmother had disappeared. Without being aware of the time passed, it was at the break of dawn when I returned to my own body. A nurse wanted to pull up the curtain but I **became very frightened of light**, and so I asked her not to do so. I also **became very sensitive to sounds**, when the giggle of noises made me feel unbearable. I told the nurse that I had gone outside yesterday. Whereupon, the nurse replied, "It was only your illusion". When I vehemently upheld that it was true, she administered an injection of tranquillizer upon me.

A week later, I left my body again and entered into darkness. I was floating up in the air and looking down. I found myself situated in a bubble, like a soap bubble, buoying in the darkness. Then, I saw another bubble, inside which I saw "another me" in my infancy. I came up to have a closer look, and found myself as the baby was crying. All of a sudden, I found myself being surrounded by hundreds of thousands -- or even millions -- in short, countless numbers of bubbles. In each of the bubbles, there was a different "me" in it. **My whole life was in all of these countless numbers of bubbles.**

If I entered into the specific bubble, I could then re-live my experiences during that particular moment, even the smell of it. I could understand the emotions and feelings of each and every individual person who was present at that scene. This kind of understanding was going deep down into their inner worlds. I could also objectively observe my own emotions at that moment. Such kind of an understanding was so thorough that it **made me come to understand myself much better,**





and to know better of how to forgive others.

This existence of “me as an observer” was in the form of a “consciousness” but without a body. However, the different periods of the “me” that existed in the different bubbles did possess a physical body. Hence, this “me as an observer” could have the same kind of feelings on the physical body inside the bubble during that particular moment as if I were indeed “inside” the physical body itself. As the same time, this “me as an observer” also had the kind of empathy, in terms of the ups and downs of emotions and feelings, as the “observed me” inside the bubble. It was truly an amazing experience.

To re-live the entire life of myself, from a different observing angle, had changed my whole thinking pattern. Whether it be the standpoint that I used to judge upon other people, or the view that I have towards the value of life, all these had been changed completely. I knew why I had come to this world and felt joyful about life. I have now determined to continue on with my life.

Even though I didn't believe in the existence of 'God' ever since I was a child, but then when these numerous bubbles appeared before me, I felt that 'God' was by my side. When I was small, I imagined that 'God' was an old man with a long white beard. In fact, this was not true, as He was shapeless and was a form of “energy”. I could feel that 'That was God'. Through the

aid of 'God', I was able to re-live my entire life once again.

'God' had embraced me, even penetrated through me, and then fused with me as one. Even up till now, 'God' is still inside my body and not only within myself, but also exists in everyone's body. Anyone who can understand this very point could directly merge with 'God' in an instant. Even at this very moment, this “entity of energy” still continues to exist inside all the things of this universe. The kind of love and affection that this “entity of energy” has upon me is much stronger than that of my grandmother upon me by a million times. He knows and understands all kinds of things, and possesses the 'eternal knowledge' at the same time.

Although I had re-ignited my determination to live on, but then when I thought of my physical body being confined on the bed, I was not eager to go back. I went into the laundry cubicle of the nurse station, and saw a nurse putting a tarnished pillow into a drying machine. I recognized it was the pillow that was used by me. The nurse used to place it beneath my waist and I had wet it that day.

The nurses were talking about my case. The casting from my chest to the waist could only be removed six months later. However, in order to avoid my worries, the attending surgeon and all the nurses had coaxed me that it would only take six weeks. Afterwards, I went back to my ward and re-entered into my physical body. Two nurses came in, and so I told them that I had just finished my tour. One nurse said, “Impossible. This is an illusion.” I told her, “I know it now, the casting will take six months, but you lied to me of only six weeks. Lying is no good! Furthermore, isn't it the soiled pillow ought to be washed first before being put into the drying machine?” At their consternation, the nurses stared at me and couldn't utter a word. Again, I was administered with a dose of tranquillizer later on.

In the past, I have never heard of the cases of “near-death experience” (NDE). When I underwent the experience myself, I was not under any medications that might induce “illusions” in my mind. I had taken injections of morphines before, for the sake of pain-killing, and had experienced “illusions” quite frequently. Nonetheless, “illusions” and “NDEs” are totally different experiences. “Illusions” that were due to the effects of morphines were horrible and disgusting. The memories afterwards would slowly fade out with the drift of time. But “near-death experiences” had made me to become relaxed, and has changed my “attitude towards life” and invigorated me with energy.

Even when the event has long past, the memory is still vividly fresh as if it just took place yesterday.

NDE helps me to believe in the existence of 'God', once again. However, it is not specifically the 'God' of Christianity, or the 'God' of Judaism. It is the **universal 'God' that transcends all religions**. I have read a few books on **Buddhism**, as well as having done some research on the "religious view" of the American Indians. I think we ought not to discuss the issue as to which 'God' is authentic and which is not, but instead we ought to know that all the religions do **have certain 'truths'** in them."

A "Universal Religion" that Embraces, and is Suitable for, all Mankind

According to the study by Kenneth Ring, many "near-death experience" (NDE) survivors would have made changes in their convictions toward religion, and would tend to believe in a **'God', and to yearn for a "universal religious view", that can transcend the constraints of all religions**. The following points concerning the changes made on the "religious views" of NDE survivors can be induced from the results of his study:

1. Their "thoughts" were **inclined towards a refuge to "spirituality"** rather than to "religion";
2. Spiritually, there is a feeling of **having 'God' by one's side**;
3. **Not emphasizing** on "rituals" of "established religions", such as paying homage, going to church, etc.;
4. Regardless of whether the person has a certain "religious" belief or not, they **earnestly believe in the "world after death"**;
5. Does not have any prejudice against the "theory of rebirth and reincarnation", and they **generally recognize the "Eastern" religions** at the same time;
6. Consider that the **"nature"** of all "religions" is basically the same;
7. Hope to establish a **"universal religion" that embraces, and is suitable for, all mankind**.

Since a lot of NDE survivors have gone through the process in the "recovering of part of their 'primordial nature' of the "Dharmakaya" ("**Dharmakaya**": **without any form, non-materialistic, prevailing everywhere, and cannot be detected by any scientific instruments or discernment**. Please refer to the articles on "The Meanings of Near-Death Experiences" in Issues No. 4 and 5 of the "Lake of Lotus"), that is why they will

consider that as the genuine 'God'. Since various NDE survivors have different degrees and levels of their "near-death experiences", and so they have different conceptions of 'God'. At large, there are three levels of conceptions:

1. With the rise of an **"inferiority complex"** – having that overwhelming power of the 'entity of energy', or 'God', perching on its supremacy – thus feeling that "I do not deserve to co-exist with 'him'".
2. With the rise of a **"sense of affinity"** – having that overwhelming power of the 'entity of energy', or 'God', perching on supremacy – thus feeling that "I desire to be with 'him'".
3. With the rise of a **"sense of unification"**, and thus feeling that the 'entity of energy', or 'God', and oneself, to be further expanding to all things, as co-existing together and are of the same "nature", all to be fused together as one.

Why is it that different NDE survivors, in the "recovering of part of their 'primordial nature' of the 'Dharmakaya'", are having different experiences and feelings? It is due to the fact that there are different **degrees** in the "recovering of part of their 'primordial nature' of the 'Dharmakaya'". The power of the 'primordial nature', 'Buddhata' or 'intrinsic nature' is overwhelmingly large. The most basic **ability or characteristic** of it is **"to be able to realize the true nature of all things, which is the source of all knowledge and omniscience"**. If the





degree in the “recovering of part of one’s ‘primordial nature’” is **low**, an “**inferiority complex**” would then arise. If the degree in the “recovering of part of one’s ‘primordial nature’” is **relatively higher**, the “**sense of affinity**” would then arise. If the degree in the “recovering of part of one’s ‘primordial nature’” is **even much higher**, then the “**sense of unification with God as one**” (concept of the Western culture), or the “**fusion with all things**” (concept of the Eastern culture) would arise.

Then, what is the reason that makes all the differences in terms of the various degrees in the “recovering of part of one’s ‘primordial nature’”? Are there any methods to improve the degrees in the “recovering of part of one’s ‘primordial nature’”? What would it be when one’s ‘primordial nature’ is to be recovered to its “utmost degree”?

1. If your conception of a ‘God’ is that “He perches on its supremacy, while a mortal will never be able to be at par with Him and so forever we will be His servants”. At the same time, feeling that oneself to be a “sinner” and so one’s “**inferiority complex**” would arise. In thinking of ‘God’ as a “separate entity” to be different from oneself, then the progress in the “recovering of part of one’s ‘primordial nature’” **would stop immediately**. In

other words, the degree in the “recovering of part of one’s ‘primordial nature’” would be very low. Consequently, the very mortal would not be able to recover part of his/her own ‘primordial nature’ through his/her most basic **ability or characteristic** of “**being able to realize the true nature of all things, which is the source of all knowledge and omniscience**”. In Buddhism, this kind of situation is due to a **totally mistaken conception**, under which the “opposites of duality” is thus derived. The related Buddhist terminology is known as a **severe level on the “grasping of the ego”**.

The “opposites of duality” refers to “the two diametrically opposite concepts of ‘subject’ versus ‘object’ that prevail in the logical reasoning of one’s own thoughts.” As such, it is not feasible for one to be able to identify with the “truth” of certain “unifications”, while having severe **clings and grasps** onto the existence of one’s own “ego”. If a person wishes to **recover one’s own ‘primordial nature’**, one must **have some sense of an identification of “unification” that come from the depth of one’s heart**, believing that one’s own ‘primordial nature’ is the same as that of ‘God’, in order that this identification of “merging together as one” is thus made possible. If the degree of “merging together as one” is up to “the utmost”, then one’s own ‘primordial nature’ could be “completely recovered”. In which case, this is known as the “**attainment of Buddhahood**” in Buddhism. (The “attainment of Buddhahood” is the attainment of the state of absolute freedom, not constraining by any tractions or natural laws, not to be reined into rebirths, not to be wrongly connected to any materials, without any passions, forever in the state of bliss and the possessions of great wisdom, compassion and strength. This is the state of a Buddha. “**Buddha**” means “**The Awakened One**”.)

2. If your conception of a ‘God’ as “a compassionate being who saves people from all kinds of sufferings and calamities”, and that you have a dear impulse “to be close to him”, and you do not have the feeling of oneself being a “sinner”, then the “**sense of affinity**” would arise. Even though the ‘God’ is being perceived as a “separate entity” from oneself, thus causing the **progress** in the “recovering of part of one’s ‘primordial nature’” to **have slowed down**, it still excels the former case mentioned above. In other words, the impulsive eagerness “to be one with God” in one’s “mind”, due to this “sense of affinity”, has

elevated the degree in the “recovering of part of one’s ‘primordial nature’”. Having perceived ‘God’ as a separate entity from oneself, the individual person still would not be able to “recover one’s ‘primordial nature’” through one’s basic ability and characteristic “to realize the true nature of all things, which is the source of all knowledge and omniscience”. In Buddhism, this situation is attributed to a mistaken conception of the **medium level**, and thus inducing the “opposites of duality”. The terminology used in Buddhism is that there is **still a presence of the “grasping of the ego”**.

3. If your conception of a ‘God’ is that “I never believe in the existence of ‘God’, but when it is factually presented in front of me, then I would turn to an attitude of **conforming** to my senses and **accept the situation without the slightest resistance**”, and if you would not feel like being a “sinner”, then there will arise an “**intuition**” of “whatever the feeling is, then just let it be”. In other words, the **natural** eagerness of “being together with God” in one’s “**mind**” that is deriving from the “intuition” would cause the degree in the “recovering of part of one’s ‘primordial nature’” to be further elevated. However, due to the lack of specialized trainings on “**Emptiness: Neither Existence Nor Voidness**” (or “**Sunyata**” in Sanskrit) (please refer to the VCD on “**Emptiness: Neither Existence Nor Voidness**”,



published by **Dudjom Buddhist Association**), resulting in the fact that one **would not be able to totally recover** one’s own ‘primordial nature’ through one’s basic ability and characteristic “to realize the true nature of all things, which is the source of all knowledge and omniscience”. **At most, it is only partially recovered**. The kinds of “supernatural powers” that Barbara Harris had were generated through this sort of “intuition”. In Buddhism, this kind of situation was due to mistaken ‘conception’ and ‘method’ at a **mild level**, and thus inducing the “opposites of duality”. The terminology used in Buddhism is that there is still a **minor prevalence on the “grasping of the ego”**, while there is a **severe level on the “grasping of the methods”** (either grasping on certain misguided directions of the methods, or simply the lack of such methods).

Therefore, all the “Dharma practitioners” of Buddhism must have to **recognize the “truth of all things” in one’s “conception”** by realizing that the “primordial nature” is indeed possessed by everyone. It is only because of the fact that the ‘primordial nature’ is deeply hidden and unexplored, and so “naive and ignorance” were induced in one’s “mind”. Furthermore, “Dharma practitioners” are required to **carry out “confessions, repentances and compensations” for the purification and the re-paying of “karmic debts” for their “sins” before they die**, in order not to develop the senses of “inferiority complex” and “guilty conscience” which will definitely influence the “recovery of one’s own ‘primordial nature’”.

This is a series of special kind of “cognition and training” and there are numerous methods. As a result of the tarnish of the indigenous ethnic and traditional cultures that Buddhism is being misunderstood as a “superstitious religion of idol worship”. What a pity! In fact, **Buddhism** is indeed the “**universal religion**” which **embraces, and is fit for, all mankind** that have been longed for by the NDE survivors. The “religious rites” are not the constraints, but an array of “**psychological and skill trainings**” of **different levels** to advance oneself for the ultimate recovery of one’s ‘primordial nature’, which is also the “aim” for the “attainment of Buddhahood”.

Real “Death”: A “Highly Risky Turning Point” of Life

To different levels of people, there are different levels of explanations and trainings in Buddhism. The unique conduit to achieve “**a fusion with one’s own**



The authentic “meaning of life” is to utilize the limited resources of one’s life to elevate the quality of one’s own “mind”, in order to **recover** the ‘**primordial nature**’ which is hidden due to the confusion and delusion of one’s own “mind”. This is known as the “attainment of Buddhahood”. The true meaning of “attaining Buddhahood” is to recover and regain the “intrinsic ability of **awakening**”. The key to either success or failure will depend upon whether one can master the “true methods and attitudes”, which are the correct “comprehension, application and mastering” of “Emptiness: Neither Existence Nor Voidness” (“Sunyata”). “Any methods and attitudes” that go astray from this direction would be “futile”, or even would lead oneself into “wrong avenues”.

Strictly speaking, “Buddhism” is not just merely a “religion” that teaches others to **become virtuous**, but it is a “description” that transcends “religions”. It accurately and meticulously “describes” the true reality of “Nature”, which is even more accurate than the “physical sciences”, as there is no “creative” part in it simply because there is no “creator” to it. The “Buddhist teachings” **exhibit** an array of “correct methods and attitudes” to recover the ‘**primordial nature**’ of all those who are being entrapped in confused and deluded “minds”. By using the most correct, all-encompassing and genuine methods to unveil the “true meaning of life”, the “Buddhist teachings” can thus be considered as the most “genuine knowledge and view” of the deepest level on human existence. **Human beings, as living organisms that have the best “ability to think”, should try our best during our lifetimes to elevate the quality of our “minds” (that is, our spiritual dimension). Otherwise, it will be too late to have regrets later on.**
..... **(to be continued)**

‘**primordial nature**’ so as to have a full recovery of one’s own ‘primordial nature’” is to receive the trainings on “Emptiness: Neither Existence Nor Voidness” (“Sunyata”). It is a **highly sophisticated level of “spiritual training”**. If a person dislikes the constraints of “religious rituals” and so give up the opportunity to take on this kind of **specialized “professional training”**, this will be a misunderstanding of NDE survivors toward “Buddhism”, which will also be their greatest “loss”.

Due to the fact that NDE survivors **had not yet formally entered into** the “later stages of death”, and were still lingering in the “initial stages of death”. The “great bliss” so derived from the ‘primordial nature’ had led to the wrong conception of “death” as being happiness. **Real “death” is, in fact, a “highly risky turning point” of life.** For just a slight incident of carelessness, the person would be trapped in an excruciating condition and to be wrongly adhered to the inconceivable matters, such as to an entity of a “livestock”. This is a situation “beyond the imagination” of any NDE survivors, and hence they may miss, or would give up, the desire for the specialized “professional training”. Therefore, the mentality of **resisting against established “religions” is unwise and also a defeat.** One should try to have a **deeper understanding of their major “principles”**. This is also the **wisdom** of Barbara Harris.





The Application
of Wisdom

The Wisdom in Directing One's Dharma Practice (7)

By Vajra Acharya Pema Lhadren
Translated by Amy W. F. Chow

Excerpt of Last Issue : The Skills in the Setting-up of "Plans"

The primary condition for "success" is the setting-up of an "objective". In the setting-up of an objective with regards to one's preference, capability and ideal, to be supplemented with the skills in the setting-up of an "objective", a blueprint of grandeur for the ideal of one's life has more or less been drawn up. Then, what is the next step to proceed in order to ensure success "in achieving the objective"?

The next step is to draw up a detailed and concrete "plan" which is also strategic and efficient in nature. To work out a series of "plans" for the major, medium-term and small objectives is like the building up of a network of interconnected highways which would eventually lead to "success". In designing the numerous "plans", attention must be paid to the following items:

1. **Complementarity and the Enhancement of Effectiveness:** The links between "plans" should have compatible, complementary and interdependent effects...
2. **A thorough elimination process to decide what to "adopt and abandon":** Irrespective of working out major, medium-term and small "plan", there must

be a process to prioritize and eliminate with regards to some designated elements and conditions. A thorough elimination process to determine what to "adopt and abandon" ...

Designated Elements & Conditions in Determining What to "Adopt and Abandon"

- (i) **Importance:** To what extent would the "plan" help in achieving the "objective"? To what extent would this "objective", in which one is prepared to achieve, help in achieving the major objective"?.....
- (ii) **The Price to be Paid:** Life is short and limited. All the resources that you presently possess could be lost at any moment. One must clearly understand the characteristics of the "Combination of Resources" and its relations with Destiny in one's own life before making any changes, to realize the price that one has to pay for the different "plans", and then go through the processes of elimination and deployment in order to "adopt and abandon" in these various "plans". In this way, this would enable the limited resources to become

“ever-renewing, inexhaustible and of unusual value for money” within a limited framework of time and space.....

- (iii) **Strengths and Weaknesses:** Every person has his/her own strengths, merits, skills, as well as his/her weaknesses and the Achilles’ heel (weakest point). In order to achieve success of any “objective” or of any “plan”, one must be very clear of one’s own strengths and weaknesses; and then through various skillful arrangements, try to complement and make use of one’s strengths and weaknesses in designing the contents and procedures of the “plans”. This is an “important strategy” in eliminating and deploying the “plans”, and thus should not be underestimated.

The “Leverage on the Strengths to Launch an Attack” & The “Concealment of Weaknesses from Being Attacked”

Many people, irrespective of the handling of their daily affairs, or in the choosing of their occupations, or in the operating of their businesses, or in the handling of their human relations, they would tend to follow the trends and be influenced by the views of other people, or follow the preferences of other family members and/or their partners, **without any consideration of their own ideals and strengths**. If one works out a “plan” in this way, one would not be able to “show one’s strengths”, but this will instead “betray one’s own weaknesses”. In this way, it would enable one’s opponents to “seize the opportunity” in attacking one’s own weaknesses.



The ending of the lives of these people would usually be rather unimpressive, lack of liveliness and creativity, full of unhappiness, and might even **end up in failures**.

There are some others who want to spend

all the energy of their whole lives on improving their “weaknesses”. They think that as long as they could eliminate their “weaknesses”, they would naturally become successful. However, for these people, they did not have the detailed analysis of their “weaknesses”, neither have they analyzed **how much impacts their “weaknesses” have, and in what proportions, upon the “successes” or “failures” of their “plans”**. On the other hand, they have simply neglected their own “strengths”, resulting in the “stunted growth” of those “strengths”. Hence, even if they can overcome their “weaknesses”, they would only turn out to be an ordinary person without any “weaknesses”, but would not turn him/her into a strong person with excellent skills. **Normally, success is determined by the “strengths” that one can possess, but not by the few “weaknesses” that one might have.** Hence, one should spend the “limited” energy of one’s own life appropriately, and not to put it in a wrong position.



Think of the scenario of a war in which there is no strong and powerful spearheading General to guide the ways. On the other hand, there is only a bunch of hardworking soldiers who do not know about strategies for fighting a war. What do you think would be the chance of their success for winning this war? The reason that “weaknesses” become “weaknesses” is due to our own definition on the concept of “values” for this present “life-world”, but it is also because of the accumulation of “habitual tendencies and behaviours” both of “this life” and that of countless “previous lives”. These accumulated “habitual tendencies and behaviours” **have already been saved and stored in one’s “unconscious” and will function by itself through “automatic operations”**. To remove such “habitual tendencies and behaviours” is not an easy matter, and will require a very considerable amount of time and energy. This amount of energy and time, if used to enhance one’s strengths or **to use the “automatic operations” of the “weakness” to attack one’s own “weakness”**, will be a much greater and practical enabling force for one’s success.



How are these “strengths” and “weaknesses” to be handled, operated and complementing each other in one’s “plans” for “Dharma practice”? The article [“On the Three Yanas”](#) by His Holiness Dudjom Rinpoche, in the 5th issue of the “Lake of Lotus”, has described three methods to do so. Let’s talk about the first method: “in evading the serious issues while dwelling on the trifles”.

The Influence of the Powers of “Mental Concentration” and of “Awareness” Within the “Unconscious”

Buddhism generally categorizes all kinds of “weaknesses” to be subsumed under the three poisons of “greed, hatred and ignorance”. Irrespective of the number of “plans” for one’s Dharma practice, one must first understand the number and the degree of one’s own “strengths”, as well as their relative proportions in the different elements of “success”. Similarly, among your own composition of “greed, hatred and ignorance”, which one of them is the worst one that would turn your success into failure?

There is a very classic case in point that can help to illustrate this. Culapanthaka, a disciple of the Lord Buddha Shakyamuni, had a low Intelligent Quotient (I.Q.) and was suffering from serious “amnesia”. His most detrimental weakness was his “ignorance”. His

“strengths” lied in his diligence; his sincerity in Dharma practice without ever thought of either fame, power and glory; his humbleness of heart; and his willingness to take up extremely harsh labour-intensive and low level jobs without ever getting an unhappy or a frustrated mind. His elder brother Mahapanthaka, on the other hand, was a very intelligent person. After being a monk, he rehearsed all the lines in the scriptures (Sutras) during the day time, while meditated and contemplated on the main tenets of these Sutras in the evening. After practicing in this way for a while, he was able to achieve the attainment of the state of “Arhat” (this is the stage of being liberated from the “cyclic existence of karma” or “Samsara” in Sanskrit). However, his “weaknesses” were his lack of “wisdom” (which is quite different from “intelligence”) and impatience. Thus, when he taught his younger brother Culapanthaka to practice, and found that the latter could not even remember a single line of scriptures after having repeated them for him over three months, and so he was very mad at him.

He considered his younger brother’s disease of “amnesia” was an incurable “weakness” and thus obstructed his Dharma practice. As it seemed likely that Culapanthaka would never be able to succeed in any endeavours, and so it would be better to just give him up altogether. But, of course, it would be very different for the Lord Buddha Shakyamuni who, with his great wisdom, could adjust his various and appropriate teaching methods in accordance with the various conditions and qualities of his many students. At this point, Mahapanthaka just pushed his younger brother out of the house, swearing that he would never teach him again of any Buddhist teachings, and so Culapanthaka was very sad with tears while staying outside of their house. At that time, the Lord Buddha Shakyamuni was just passing by, and having considered both the “strengths” and “weaknesses” of Culapanthaka, the Lord Buddha Shakyamuni had thus devised a simple “plan” that was easy to practice for him. Hence, the Lord Buddha Shakyamuni instructed Culapanthaka as follows:

- (1) To do large quantity of cleansing works for all the other “monks”. This would enable Culapanthaka to rapidly accumulate large quantity of merits within a reasonable period of time.
- (2) While performing each cleansing work, he must repeatedly recite the lines of the Sutra: “I sweep away the dust, I take away the dirt.” He was also



required to “concentrate” on each of the repeating cleansing action and its related meanings to the two lines of this Sutra. This action acted as a bridge to enable Culapanthaka to link up his powers of “mental concentration” and of “awareness” within his “unconscious”, together with his own level of “consciousness”, in order to overcome his “ignorance” and “forgetfulness”.

In the initial stage of implementing the “plan”, Culapanthaka’s “weaknesses” had caused him some obstacles. He was not even able to recite these two very simple lines of the Sutra, let alone to mention the possible linkage of his powers of “mental concentration” and of “awareness”. Hence, this great, wise, compassionate and patient Lord Buddha Shakyamuni immediately changed and adjusted this “plan” of Culapanthaka’s Dharma practice. He instructed that all the “monks”, for whom Culapanthaka had worked, have to act like a recorder by repeatedly reciting the two lines of the Sutra to Culapanthaka, together with their explanations of the meanings. Such an arrangement eventually enabled Culapanthaka to remember and recite the two lines of the Sutra, and thus successfully linked up his powers of “mental concentration” and of “awareness” within his “unconscious”. While meditating in the evenings, Culapanthaka could continuously further deepen his understanding on the two lines of this Sutra. As a result, his powers of “mental concentration” and

of “awareness” continued to grow more and more, eventually leading to his final attainment of the state of “Arhat”.

This is a true case, and a successful example, of using the principle of “leveraging on the strengths to launch an attack, while concealing the weaknesses to avoid being attacked”. In the case of Culapanthaka, he worked diligently like a robot and did not mind serving other people. These were his “strengths” which could then be further “strengthened” to become the “main attack” that had finally succeeded in getting into the closely-guarded battle-field of his “unconscious”, and thus enabled the power of “awareness” to successfully take root therein. At the same time, this had successfully skipped over all of his “weaknesses”. This could only happen for a person of great wisdom, who is well experienced in the practical trainings and with thorough and complete “realizations” (“Realization” refers to those experiences that are gained through actual “Dharma practices”, and upon reaching certain levels or stages, one could steadily attain the state of “Emptiness” so as to recover one’s own “intrinsic nature” – please refer to the VCD on “Emptiness: Neither Existence Nor Voidness”, published by the Dujom Buddhist Association), in order to be able to design such a “plan”, which was so meticulous and of such “super-craftsmanship”, for one’s Dharma practice. The “plan” may look simple but its principles of action are so powerful that it would enable one to “move thousand cattles of heavy objects with only four ounces of efforts”. Such a “plan” is, indeed, of the “first-class standard”.

A first-class plan for a person with too many weaknesses may look simple but does include hidden clues.

With proper use of the strengths and weaknesses of a person, one can be successful in moving thousand cattles of heavy objects with only four ounces of efforts.

Getting More Courageous as One Fights On & Getting Even Stronger When Meeting Heads-on With the Strong Ones

The journey for both Dharma practice and the propagation of Buddhism is so far and distant, so tedious and difficult, indeed. Take the case of the

Lord Buddha Shakyamuni himself as our exemplary. Despite the fact that he had already endured numerous hardships and sufferings before his attainment of the perfect enlightenment (“Buddhahood”), he still continued to bare all kinds of difficulties in the spreading of the Holy Teachings of Buddhism all over India while walking bare-footed. **What was it that actually made the Lord Buddha to be so courageous with his continuous fights against all odds and all kinds of difficulties?** The answer to this question was the **“sense of mission and responsibility”**, which was an important element of “success” that was linked to “success” itself. Without this “sense of mission” of “who else without me” to be “compassionate” to all sentient beings, this “fearless” spirit and determination to “fight the unbeatable foes” and to “reach the unreachable stars”, irrespective of all the difficulties and hardships, he would not have had this endless driving force to continuously fighting on fiercely with more and more courage and vigour. It is this “unending driving force” that can bring out all the “alarming potentials” of a “human being”. And so the **speed** of one’s own “success” is also determined by the **degree and strength of one’s own “driving force”**.

At the same time, the **degree and level of success** will also depend upon the **degree and level of one’s own “sense of mission”**. Take for example the attainments of different “realizations” or the “Fruits of Realization” in the Buddhist teachings (the “Fruits of Realization” are the various kinds of fruits that one can attain through the various stages of Dharma practice. Different “Fruits of Realization” refer to the different degrees and levels in the recovering of one’s own “intrinsic nature”: “Solitary Realizer”, “Srotapatti”, “Sakrdagamin”, “Anagamin”, “Arhat”, “Buddhahood”). If one lacks “compassion”, without the aspiration and the “sense of mission” to save others’ lives, it will affect the degree and level of one’s own “realizations” or the “Fruits of Realization”. The reason being that the “sense of mission” not only would enable oneself to have this “unending driving force” to continuously fight on more courageously, it would also help to broaden the endless horizons of one’s own “mental capacity”. **To be filled with “compassion”, and to be endless and boundless in one’s own “mental capacity” and “spiritual dimension”, are, indeed, the most essential and necessary conditions for one’s entering into the “State of Emptiness: Neither Existence Nor Voidness”, which is the only way to recover one’s own “intrinsic nature”**. Hence, this “sense of mission” is the most positive and fundamental condition for the attainment of “Buddhahood”.

No matter what “plans” that one makes, if one does it with a “sense of mission”, it would give him the feelings of **“fulfilling the aspirations, not wasting this life and having great honour despite the fact that it might end up in failure”**. This would make it to be a perfect “plan”. The Great Lord Buddha Shakyamni had urged those Dharma practitioners who have the “great aspiration and will-power” to practice in order to aspire for the salvation of all sentient beings. This would **confer upon them with countless wisdom, life force and stamina, as well as the essential elements for the attainment of “Buddhahood”**. When one makes a “plan” for one’s Dharma practice, if one can inject these elements into it according to the Dharma teachings, then the extent of one’s “success” would definitely be “high”.

The Success and Failure in the “Purification of Passions” and the “Attainment of Buddhahood”

In the Hinayana of the Buddhist teachings, the “purification of passions and the attainment of Buddhahood” are the main methods for removing numerous obstacles on their “Path of Dharma practice”. In the article **“On the Three Yanas”** by His Holiness **Dudjom Rinpoche**, it was recorded that His Holiness has given the following teachings.



“Drawing an analogy which I was often to meet again later, Dudjom Rinpoche answered: All these obstacles – call them sins if you like - **can be thought of in three ways**. Think of them, for example, as a poisonous plant. There are **three possible attitudes** to adopt before a poisonous plant. First of all, **fear and caution**. That is a poison: I shall not touch it, I shall not even look at it; “I shall turn away from it”. This Dudjom Rinpoche went on, is the **attitude of Hinayana**, with its rules and monastic disciplines, chattering is a stone of stumbling, so I keep silent; money is a stone of stumbling, so I say no to it, I refuse to touch it; sex is a stone of stumbling, so I have nothing to do with women, I do not even look at them.... To be correct, the stone of stumbling is to give “desire” and the “secular entanglements” an opportunity “to show their strengths”. Alternatively, it also gives “fear “and “suffering” an opportunity.” (This is the way to practice in the **“purification of passions and the attainment of Buddhahood”**.)

There are different types of “greed, hatred and ignorance”, while generating such powerful forces, that



will make countless and endless sentient beings to be continuously “reincarnated” under the natural “Law of Cause and Effect”. These forces could then be said as a whole group of bondage of “weaknesses”, which makes all of us to be unable to recover our own “intrinsic nature”. Hence, in the Hinayana teachings, these are regarded as the “stone of stumbling” on the path to “success”, and so these must have to be discarded. This is the practice method in the **“purification of passions and the attainment of Buddhahood”**.

Is this the best method? Which type of persons will be suited to use this practice method of treating “weaknesses” as the “stone of stumbling”? What are the pros and cons of this kind of practice? Why did H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche say that **the stone of stumbling is to give “desire” and the “secular entanglements” an opportunity “to show their strengths”**. Alternatively, it also gives “fear “and “suffering” an opportunity”?

“The greater the pressure, the greater the resistance”. “If one drives a dog to a culdesac (blind alley), one might end up being bitten by the dog”. This is a natural “reflex action”, just like an “echo in an empty valley” where it is a force of “bouncing back” in Nature. That is why there is a famous old saying that “things will be reversed upon reaching their extremes”. Why is it that the sound of the echo from an empty valley will be louder than the original sound? This is because the sound waves have encountered obstacles, and **when they crash into these obstacles, they could not get through them and so they are forced to bounce back**. When bouncing back, they have become a “force of sound wave”, to be added with the “bouncing force” that came from the “crashing force”. The combination of these two forces together would, of course, be much stronger than that of the original one.

If your method of Dharma practice is in the **“purification of passions and the attainment of Buddhahood”**, and to regard all “weaknesses” as the “stone of stumbling” in trying to eradicate them, **you may either succeed or you may fail, depending on a number of factors**.

Reasons for the Success:

1. Your “weaknesses” are not “deep-rooted”.
2. When your “perseverance” joins forces with the “determination to overcome your weaknesses” in fighting against your overall “weaknesses”, the “forces of resistance” of your “weaknesses”

are of a smaller degree and magnitude than the “forces of eradication” on your “weaknesses”, or at most they are of equal strengths.

3. The “forces of eradication” is of such a degree and magnitude that your “weaknesses” are **no longer able** to withstand these **in becoming the obstacles** with their “forces of resistance”. As a result, the “forces of eradication” can “get through” them and thus “eradicate” your “weaknesses”. Hence, you will be successful.



Reasons for the Failure:

1. Your “weaknesses” are **so much** “deep-rooted”.
2. When your “perseverance” joins forces with the “determination to overcome your weaknesses” in fighting against your overall “weaknesses”, the “forces of resistance” of your “weaknesses” are stronger in degree and magnitude than the “forces of eradication” on your “weaknesses”. As a result, the “forces of eradication” **fail to “get through”** the barrier caused by the “weaknesses”.
3. The “forces of resistance” of your “weaknesses” are so much stronger than the “forces of eradication” that they become the obstacles in forming a barrier for the “forces of eradication” to bounce back. Since the bouncing back of the “forces of resistance” were so much stronger than the original “forces of eradication”, your “weaknesses” will then be **increased rather than decreased**, like the uncontrollable bursting of the “dams of the Yellow River”, resulting in your “failure”.

Hence, that is the reason why H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche had said that the “**stumbling block**” gives “**desire**” and “**secular entanglement**” an opportunity to “**show their strengths**”. Alternatively, it also gives “**fear**” and “**suffering**” an opportunity. Again, what other reasons behind all these underlying dynamics?

If you regard “greed, hatred and ignorance” as the “stone of stumbling” and hope to eliminate them, it will

lead to the “**forces of resistance**” to bounce back and thus create a “greater nurturing opportunity” for the further development of these “greed, hatred and ignorance”. Hence, an opportunity to “show their strengths” is already an “enhanced force for **bouncing back**” (as part of the “**forces of resistance**”). To give “fear” and “suffering” an opportunity is to give “greed, hatred and ignorance” an ever-expanding opportunity to grow further, and to **keep on increasing like the uncontrollable bursting of the “dams of the Yellow River**”. Since all these are coming so strongly, all of a sudden, that they are close to the point of “losing control” and would thus place the

“Dharma practitioner” in a situation whereby he/she “does not know how to react”, resulting in a state of “fear” and “suffering”.

“Evading the Serious Issues While Dwelling on the Trifles” and “Cultivating the Strong Ones While Helping With the Weak Ones”

The wise Lord Buddha Shakyamuni, having taken into consideration of both **the “strengths” and “weaknesses”** of Culapanthaka, had **designed a set of simple and easily implemented “plans”** for his Dharma practice. In using the strategy of “**evading the major issues while dwelling on the trifles**” to tackle his “weaknesses”; while using the strategy of “**cultivating the strong ones and helping with the weak ones**” in order to make good use of his “strengths”. Through the method of “repeating the same message over and over again” like a “tape recorder”, Culapanthaka was being able to be “brain-washed”, so-to-speak. Through further adopting the approach of “exerting a subtle influence” by supplementing this with his strength of being able to “work like a robot”, it was possible to help Culapanthaka in launching a “**surprise attack**” onto the battle-ground of his “weaknesses” – **the unconscious**. The outcome was a “total success”!

It was a “**surprise attack**” simply because the Lord Buddha Shakyamuni himself had never explained to Culapanthaka, or to any of his disciples, of the



“ingenious working principles” behind this “plan”. The main crux of this has to do with the “strength” of Culapanthaka which was his “total and complete confidence” in the Lord Buddha. He would simply follow all the instructions of his Master (Guru) **without ever questioning or asking for any reasons**. Hence, the result was his total “success”!

If the Lord Buddha Shakyamuni had disclosed the “underlying principles” (or “hidden clues”) behind the “plan”, it will be very dangerous. This is because the “mind” of people is very **cunning**, indeed. If the “mind” knows that it would soon be attacked by some forces, it will automatically enhance its protective powers. A kind of “defense mechanism” will then be formed easily to “fence off” the attack (that is, the “**forces of resistance**” will be formed to “bounce it back”). In comparing the ability of “self protection” of one’s own mind with the “ability of automatic attack” of one’s “immune system” of the physical body, the former is much more “alert, quick and strong” in terms of its protective ability. That is the reason why **so many of the teachings of Vajrayana Buddhism, which involve the trainings on the deeper levels of the “mind” and “channels, winds and wisdom drops” (that is, the inner structures of the physical body, such as the “immune system” and so on), have to be kept “strictly confidential” and could**

never be disclosed to the public. If not kept secret, it would not only lose the effectiveness of the teachings, but it will also sow an “evil seed” of causing the “ruins of the teachings”, resulting in the total “failures” and “destructions” of the Dharma practices for all future “Vajrayana” Dharma practitioners, or even the annihilation of “Vajrayana Buddhism” itself.

Under the guidance of the “**authentic Guru**” (it was the Lord Buddha himself in this case as mentioned above), the “seed of good cause” would then be planted, through the means of “exerting a subtle influence”, into the “unconscious”, and thus enabled the followers to achieve “rapid” successes in no time. Conversely, if one adopts the same approach in planting the “seed for evil cause” into the “unconscious” of the followers, the outcome will be the “rapid” downfalls to the “three lower realms of transmigrations” (which refer to the realms of the “hell, hungry ghosts and animals”) in no time. Hence, if you follow the instructions or teachings of any of those “**fake gurus**”, the outcomes would be so “**bad**” that these will be much beyond our imaginations. The fact that their “instructions or/and plans” consist of so many “greed, hatred and ignorance”, which are hard to recognize and yet difficult to reckon with, would only lead to your own “rapid downfalls” and no where else.

Furthermore, their motives and behaviours, due to **short-sighted “ignorance”**, have twisted and distorted the “Buddhist teachings” and may even **destroy “Buddhism”**, all of which would bring about the “fruits of karma” (the outcomes that are caused by their “karmic effects”) that would be unbearable for their followers. As such kinds of “fake gurus” do not have the protections from both the “Lineage Gurus” and the “Dharma protectors”, and furthermore due to their “greed, hatred and ignorance” that will bring along with them the various “evil forces”, all of which would **put their followers in an “irreversible desperate condition” that can hardly be saved**.

“Supernatural Powers” Cannot Fight Against the “Law of Cause and Effect” (Karma)

Culapanthaka did not know the truth or the reasons for his success in attaining the state of “Arhat”, and **neither could** any of the disciples of Lord Buddha **explain clearly the reasons behind it**. After Culapanthaka had attained the state of “Arhat”, he had also taken up

some disciples upon himself, but he could only teach them the two lines of the Buddhist Sutra: "I sweep away the dust, I take away the dirt". **Apart from this, he did not have any other teachings to teach them.** According to the Volume 12 of the "Four-Division Vinaya", some of his disciples were dissatisfied with being taught on the only two lines of the one Sutra. In order to impress upon his followers of his supernatural ability of being an "Arhat", Culapanthaka had to show his "supernatural powers".

The Lord Buddha himself never would have used "supernatural powers" to preach his teachings, and neither would he allow his disciples to use it to mislead and misguide other human beings by giving them the wrong impressions and misunderstandings that "supernatural powers" as equivalent to the "Buddhist teachings", such that they would become so greedy in trying to pursue "supernatural powers", and would thus **indirectly destroy the genuine "Buddhist teachings"**. But since Culapanthaka did not have any other strength that he could use to explain the Buddhist teachings, and so the Lord Buddha did not stopped him from doing so.

However, "supernatural power" does not really mean that it is "omnipotent", neither does it solely belong to the "Buddhist teachings". There are numerous examples to illustrate the important point that **"supernatural powers" cannot fight against the "Law of Cause and Effect" (Karma)** ("Karma" literally means "behaviours", and can thus refer to both the "good and evil behaviours" that have been accumulated through our "numerous past lives". All of these actions would bring about the creations of countless and endless "mental energies", which will then act as "forces of tractions" in pushing and pulling all kinds of sentient beings to be "transmigrated" and "reincarnated" within the "cycle of karmic existence" known as "Samsara" and to bear all kinds of consequences thereafter.)

Take, for example, the case of the Nun Uppalavanna, who was the champion in "supernatural trans-location" and her ability was "renowned among all deities", died under the beatings by Devadatta. Maudgalyayana (in Sanskrit, while in Pali he was known as Moggallana), **who was best known for his possession of "supernatural powers"**, was unable to do anything to help his mother who was subjected to different kinds of sufferings in the hell realm. Due to his excessive and indiscriminate use of "supernatural powers", Maudgalyayana was

purposefully murdered by being stoned to death. Even though the Lord Buddha himself knew that his own country Kapilavastu would be destroyed completely, but he was rather helpless and could not stop it from happening. Because these happenings were all due to the "Law of Cause and Effect".

"Supernatural power" is being generated from a single person through the working of one's own "mental energy", while **"karma" is a gigantic, inextricable and interconnected web/ networking of "mental energies" that have been generated from countless individuals** through the various forces of tractions from their past deeds since time immemorial. Hence, "supernatural powers" **just cannot** fight against the "Law of Cause and Effect" (karma) simply because "there is always someone who is stronger than you", and that "one will be very likely to fail when one is fighting against many". (Please refer to the VCD on the "Inconceivable Law of Cause and Effect", published by the Dudjom Buddhist Association.) **(To be continued)**



The Essence of Teachings: Emptiness -- Neither Existence Nor Voidness (2)

By Vajra Master Yeshe Thaye

Transcribed by To Sau-chu and Byron K.K. Yiu

(Lecture delivered : July 10, 2003)

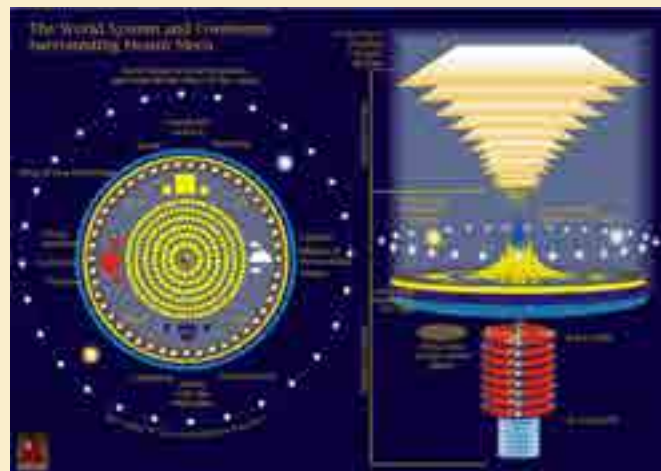
View of the Cosmology: The Structure of the Universe

Our concepts are all definite and finite. Because of this situation, sometimes we do have to wonder the kinds of concepts that we have built into our “everyday life existence” and our so-called “common sense”. They are, in fact, relative in nature such that even in mathematics, there is a symbol for infinity. But this symbol of infinity is only in theoretical terms, but not in practical terms. So this is something that a mathematician will like to draw on, but others (such as a poet, a musician, or an artist) might think of it very differently. Hence, the Buddha has mentioned that the universes are infinite, countless and boundless and so are all sentient beings, who are also countless and infinite in nature.

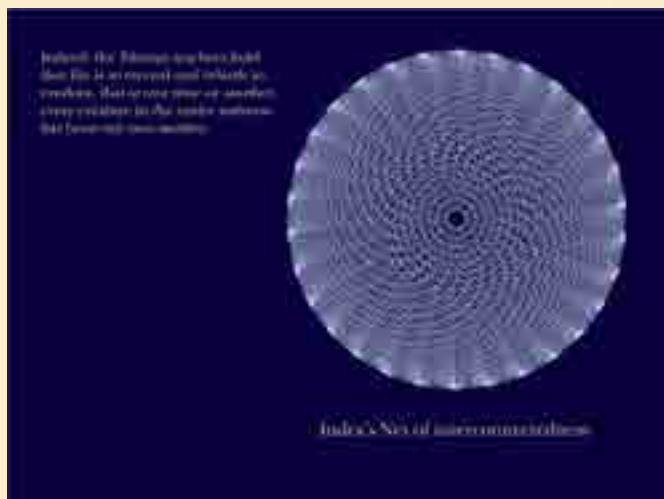
Now, let us now look at the structure of the universe. How would the Buddhist cosmology look like concerning the structure of the universe? In the “**Agama Sutra**”, the Buddha has mentioned about the seven elements that combine together to form a world. They are, namely: a sun, a moon, a Mount Meru, the four continents and the sea. They will all combine together to form what we called as “a world”. For more than two thousand five hundred years ago, at the time of the Lord Buddha, people at that time did not have any scientific knowledge about what their world was like. So they just used their naked eyes to see what was around them, gave them the names and described them in different shapes and forms, etc. So,

for example, what does the Mount Meru really mean? If to be explained by modern scientific terminologies, it actually refers to the “center of a whirling galaxy”. It emits strong light beams with a gigantic shape like a mountain. And that was why the **Lord Buddha** sometimes refers to the Mount Meru as the “Mountain of Brightness”.

As for the four continents, the continent itself is referring to the clusters of galaxies. They are evolving around us so that these four continents are referring to the four different “clusters of galaxies”. We human beings are now living in one of these continents in which our planet earth exists. The sea is referring to the “aerospace” that we are now looking at in the universe. Hence, all these phenomena, from the



Mount Meru



The Indra's-Net

scientific perspective, came to be known to us as having a huge structure of its own.

Furthermore, in the same “**Agama Sutra**”, the Buddha explains that one thousand of these worlds will be equivalent to one “small thousand world”. And then, one thousand of these “small thousand worlds” will be equivalent to one “medium thousand world”. And one thousand of these “medium thousand worlds” will be equivalent to one “large thousand world”. The Buddha mentioned that there are altogether three thousands of these “large thousand worlds” across the whole spectrum of the universe. In other words, the number of worlds in this universe is inexhaustible and endless. Then, how would this be referred to in the scientific community? Contemporary scientists have discovered that there are altogether more than 400 billion “small clusters” of planets, and among which about 100 billion “clusters” of these planets will be of the scale as large as that of the “solar system” itself. So, in terms of the structure of the universe, we can see that what the Buddha has revealed to us is, in fact, very much in tune with what scientists have discovered up till now.

Furthermore, the Lord Buddha has also mentioned that the structure of the universe is like a “space net”, which is composed of innumerable universes just like the countless number of precious gems, moving under mutually attractive forces so as to form layers of nets. This comes to be known as the “**Indra’s Net**”, which was mentioned in the “**Avatamsaka Sutra**” that the “Indra’s Net” has infinite number of superimposing layers, simply because Indra, one of the heavenly gods, has a net that is composed of the various layers of gems. Now, how would scientists look at this kind of structure? If explained by scientific terms, one “small thousand world” can be equivalent to one “galaxy”, one “medium thousand world” can be equivalent to one

“small universe”, while one “large thousand world” can be equivalent to one “large universe”. Thus, the three thousand “large thousand worlds” will be equivalent to the infinite number of “large universes”.

So what the Lord Buddha has revealed to us has again been proven to be true by contemporary scientists, and that all of these phenomena have stood up to scientific scrutiny. Again, in the “**Avatamsaka Sutra**”, it was mentioned that “each and every minute particle displays boundless ‘sacred seas’ of Buddhas. In these ‘sacred seas’, there are again microscopic particles. As such progressing is repeated without a limit, it is **beyond the state that can be comprehended by one’s mind....** Like the world of the “Indra’s Net”, they are like the “**Lights of the Mirror**” with light beams interpenetrating one another. All Buddhas are innumerable as well....”

For example, just like when you light a candle in front of a mirror, whereupon you see the existence of the candle light inside the mirror itself. Then you can find that there is another mirror, and that there is another candle inside it; then another mirror, and another candle inside it, and so on, and so on, without any ending to it. So this is the idea of the “Indra’s Net”, as well as that of the “Lights of the Mirror”. Hence, this whole idea of the “Lights of the Mirror” refers to the infinite numbers of multiple “spatial dimensions” and “multiple universes” (or “multi-verses” if you like) that are interpenetrating each other, and that there are universes within universes.

And it was here that again an American cosmologist, Dr Alan Guth, has proposed a “**Super Big Bubble Theory**” in which he mentioned that the universe is composed of a “super universe” just like a big bubble. And within this big bubble, there are smaller bubbles. And then within these smaller bubbles, there are again smaller and smaller bubbles in each of them. To Guth, this accounts for the innumerable and countless numbers of universes, and indeed the universe is of such kind of nature. In the case of the Buddhist teachings, it not only talks about the infinite amount of universes, but it also talks about the infinite amount of “spatial dimensions” as well..... *(to be continued)*



The Cosmology in Tibetan Buddhism

EPILOGUE

The Buddhist teachings are meticulous and profound, while its methods of practice are practical and achievable. Nevertheless, the teachings are as abstruse and comprehensive as an ocean such that it is not an easy task for one to even just trying to grasp its contents in a concise and accurate manner. Therefore, our Association aims to help reveal the abstruse meanings of the Buddhist teachings in such a way that it can be easily understood by the general public through the distribution of CDs, VCDs and DVDs, either free of charge or with a cost.

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